

NEWS RELEASE

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

Commissioner Claire DeMatteis

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Delaware inmates receive specialized wound care treatment

DOC and its healthcare provider make new investments to improve inmate health

Dover, DE – Today the Delaware Department of Correction reported that innovative wound care being provided by its correctional healthcare provider is showing promising results in improving health care treatment for inmates.

Inmates have a wide variety of routine and recurring healthcare needs and newly-arriving inmates may have open and infected wounds from a variety of conditions including injection drug use, uncontrolled diabetes, obesity, and physical trauma. Skin irritation from opiate withdrawal and other causes such as parasitic infestations can also prompt prolonged scratching that exacerbates open wounds. Thanks to an innovative wound care service brought to Delaware by [Centurion Health, DOC's correctional healthcare provider](#), inmates are receiving enhanced treatment and are recovering faster from skin wounds compared to traditional courses of treatment.

“DOC has made a concerted effort over the past year to improve the quality of medical care inmates in our custody receive, and Centurion's specialized wound care treatment is just one more example of our renewed focus on strengthening prison-based healthcare services,” **said Department of Correction Commissioner Claire DeMatteis.** “With the national expertise Centurion brings to the Delaware DOC, inmates are recovering more quickly and need fewer visits to outside emergency rooms and hospitalizations, which reduces the strain on our healthcare system. We will continue to expand upon these innovative ideas to provide the highest quality and cost-effective care to offenders.”

Every offender in DOC custody receives medical screenings that identify treatment needs. Inmates with chronic and recurring conditions receive ongoing care planning and follow-up treatment. Previously, inmates with open wounds and wound-related skin infections received standard wound care treatments. DOC's medical provider [Centurion Health, which was awarded the contract to provide healthcare to Delaware inmates this past spring](#), focused early on improving inmate access to high quality and specialized wound care services. As the nation's largest provider of correctional healthcare, Centurion had employed the national wound care service, "MyWoundDoctor" in other states. It began leveraging MyWoundDoctor services in Delaware four months ago and has experienced noticeable results improving patient outcomes.

Through this treatment service, prison-based medical staff employed by Centurion provide patient information, case notes, and photographs electronically to MyWoundDoctor, whose wound care specialists design an individualized treatment plan using a variety of evidence based approaches. Treatment materials and a wound care package that takes into account the patient's underlying chronic health conditions, present condition of the wound, and location of the wound are prepared individually for each patient and delivered by express mail. Prison medical staff administer the specially-designed course of treatment and closely monitor the patient's condition. Regular updates are transmitted electronically to MyWoundDoctor specialists, who adjust the treatment protocol as needed.

“Centurion is committed to leveraging proven best practices from our national network of caregivers and healthcare partners to provide excellent care to our Delaware patients and support their wellbeing,” **said Dr. Johnny Wu, Centurion's Chief of Clinical Operations.**

The first Delaware inmates to receive this specialized treatment experienced accelerated healing and these cases highlight the value of specialized wound care in DOC facilities. In one example of success using this approach, a detentioner arrived in DOC custody with an active heroin addiction. Multiple injection sites on the detentioner's arms and legs had become open infected wounds, with significant skin damage in multiple locations that placed the patient at significant risk of infection-related complications. Because of these wounds, specialized MyWoundDoctor consultation was ordered by correctional medical staff. The combination of specially-designed bandages, topical medication, and ongoing close monitoring by medical professionals resulted in noticeable improvement within days and the inmate progressed rapidly to healing.