

1999 - 2000 Ventura County Grand Jury Report

Status Report: Who Provides Inpatient Indigent Care In Ventura County?

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Background

Under Section 17000 of the California Welfare and Institutions (W&I) Code, counties are required to provide health care services to those who are uninsured, lack adequate private insurance coverage, or are not eligible for publicly funded health programs such as Medicare or Medi-Cal.

This report presents information on hospitals in Ventura County that provided inpatient services to county indigent patients during fiscal year 1993-94 (the latest year for which data is available). Information in this report is based upon data reported by counties to the California Department of Health Services (CDHS) using the Medically Indigent Care Reporting System (MICRS). This report is a result of a review by the Ventura County Grand Jury of the above data.

Methodology

The Grand Jury reviewed the California Department of Health Services, Office of County Services, Medically Indigent Care Reporting System Unit Data Summary Report 98-2: Inpatient Hospital Providers That Served County Indigents, Fiscal Year 1993-1994, dated July 1998. Ventura County data from this report was analyzed, along with data from other county hospitals in the State, and university based hospitals which serve as county hospitals in those counties which have no county hospital.

Findings

- F-1 Data from the Inpatient Hospital Providers That Served County Indigents, Fiscal Year 1993-1994 report (the latest report from the CDHS addressing indigent care) is summarized and analyzed in following Table 1.

	TOTAL PATIENT DAYS	DISCHARGES	COUNTY REIMBURSEMENTS	COST PER PATIENT	AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY	COST PER DISCHARGE
Counties with a County Hospital						
County Hospitals	307,528	67,207	\$478,724,725	\$1,557	4.6	\$7,123
Non-county Hospitals	25,632	8,369	\$27,269,487	\$1,064	3.1	\$3,258
TOTALS	333,160	75,576	\$505,994,212	\$1,519	4.4	\$6,695
Counties w/No County Hospital						
University Hospitals	32,225	6,438	\$39,093,634	\$1,213	5.0	\$6,072
Non-university Hospitals	54,022	11,273	\$40,345,988	\$747	4.8	\$3,579
Totals	86,247	17,711	\$79,439,622	\$921	4.9	\$4,485
Ventura County Hospitals						
St. John's Reg. Med Cntr - Oxnard	463	144	\$151,726	\$328	3.2	\$1,054
Community Memorial - Ventura	39	14	\$38,575	\$989	2.8	\$2,755
Simi Valley Hospital	123	39	\$34,676	\$282	3.2	\$889
Santa Paula Memorial	71	21	\$30,339	\$427	3.4	\$1,445
Los Robles - Thousand Oaks	141	41	\$27,679	\$196	3.4	\$675
Ojai Valley Community	64	15	\$8,232	\$129	4.3	\$549
St. John's Pleasant Valley	91	11	\$2,191	\$24	8.3	\$199
Total for Non-county Hospitals	992	285	\$293,418	\$296	3.5	\$1,030
Ventura County Medical Center	2,263	684	\$2,884,593	\$1,275	3.3	\$4,217
Totals for Ventura County	3,255	969	\$3,178,011	\$976	3.4	\$3,280

Table 1. Comparison of 1993-94 County Reimbursed Indigent Care Statistics for County and Non-county Hospitals in Ventura County and in the State of California

- F-2 Counties report statistics to the CDHS, through MICRS, on inpatient days, discharges and expenditures for hospitals that provided inpatient services to the medically indigent and received reimbursement for those services from the counties.
- a) Because counties, rather than hospitals, report through MICRS, data for indigent care provided by hospitals, which were not reimbursed by the county, are not reflected.
 - b) While county indigents are also seen at hospital outpatient departments, the data for this report pertain only to inpatients.
- F-3 Across California, counties with a county hospital were the predominant providers of county-reimbursed indigent inpatient care. This care occurred primarily through their county hospitals. This situation was also the case in Ventura County.
- F-4 University hospitals, such as the UC Davis Medical Center, play a prominent role in providing county reimbursed indigent inpatient care when located in a county with no county hospital, as is the case in Sacramento County.
- F-5 Of the twelve private hospitals in Ventura County, eight were reported as having received some reimbursement from the County for inpatient indigent care.

The Grand Jury, in the course of analyzing the MICRS data, determined that:

1. The following percentages of total county reimbursed indigent inpatient days were reported in fiscal year 1993-94:
 - a) Statewide, in counties with a county hospital, the county hospital provided 94.6 % of county indigent care.
 - b) Statewide, in counties with no county hospital, university hospitals provided 49.2% of county indigent care.
 - c) In Ventura County based upon the reimbursements by the County (see Figure 1):
 - i. VCMC provided 90.8% of Ventura County indigent care.
 - ii. St. John’s Medical Center - Oxnard provided 4.8% of County indigent care.
 - iii. Community Memorial - Ventura provided 1.2% of County indigent care.
 - iv. Simi Valley Hospital provided 1.1% of County indigent care.
 - v. Santa Paula Memorial Hospital provided 1.0% of County indigent care.
 - vi. Los Robles – Thousand Oaks provided 0.9% of County indigent care.
 - vii. Ojai Valley Community Hospital provided 0.3% of County indigent care.
 - viii. St. John’s Pleasant Valley provided 0.1% of County indigent care.

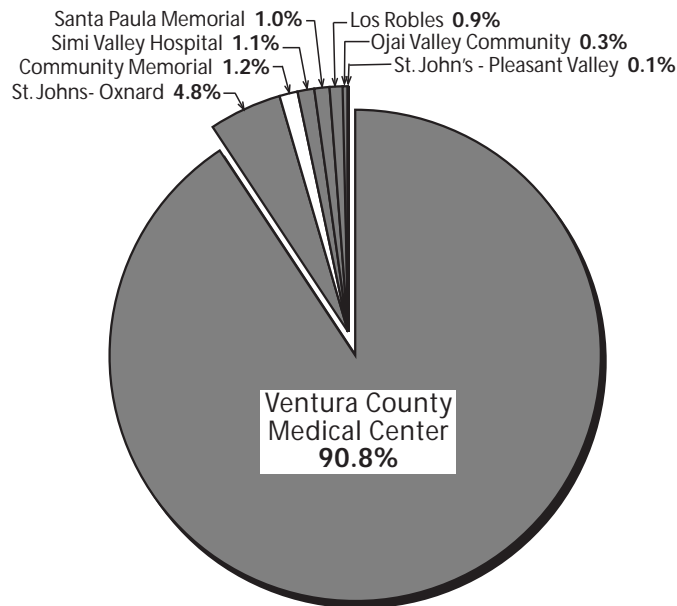


Figure 1. Providers of Inpatient Care for the Indigent in Ventura County

2. Reimbursed costs for a single day of patient care were calculated by dividing a hospital's total reimbursement from the County by the total patient days reported to the State. The results of this analysis are as follows:
 - a) VCMC averaged \$1275 per day
 - b) County hospitals across the State averaged \$1557 per day
 - c) University hospitals (who serve the indigent population in counties without a county hospital) averaged \$1213 per day

Conclusions

The Grand Jury, as a result of its analysis of the above findings, concludes that:

- C-1 VCMC is the primary provider of indigent inpatient medical services to the residents of Ventura County.
- C-2 VCMC provides these services at costs to the County that are significantly lower than comparable costs from other county hospitals in the State.

Recommendations

As a result of these conclusions, the Grand Jury makes the following recommendation:

- R-1 The Board of Supervisors vigorously continue to support the County's health care system and the VCMC.
- R-2 The CAO continue to support a public information campaign that highlights the care and services offered by VCMC and the client base that VCMC serves.

Responses Required

- The Board of Supervisors.
- The Chief Administrative Officer.