

EASY PAY AS THEY FELL LIKE FLIES
A CASE STUDY FOR COMPASSIONATE MEDICAL RELEASE

MCI Shirley, a medium security prison calls itself the "medical facility" of the D.O.C. There are 41 total beds: *four wards with five beds, eight "bubbles"- cells with one wall being all plexiglass, no TV, no appliances and typically used for prisoners from segregation who are ripping out (why not put them with guys who are seriously infirmed on their death beds), four medical singles, and one big ward of 11 beds called assisted daily living.* Forty-one beds! Impressive right? Not when you look at the Corrections Master Plan for its medical population that estimates they will soon have 635 prisoners suffering from long term chronic illness require sub-acute care. Coupled with the fact that over 33% of the prison population is serving terms exceeding 15 years and over 1,600 are over the age of 50. What's impressive is how this impending problem is about to explode and the D.O.C. remains quiet about an alternative to support legislation that would provide for early release under parole supervision for the terminally ill. They've got to keep the prison population numbers up and the demand for two C.O.'s to sit by every terminally ill prisoner's outside hospital bed under the guise of public safety. Their self-serving "job's program" is of primary concern.

Most men in the hospital unit here are incapable of walking, many are not in their right mind, and many go on outside hospital trips a few times a month. Each trip requires an ambulance accompanied by a chaser D.O.C. vehicle with two correctional officers to assure "public safety". The cost is astronomical. The public safety risk is minimal. So why would a public safety department that spends approximately 87% of its budget on manpower and medical services keep people who can't walk, drive, or even think (in many cases) under guard? Could it be to keep the manpower employed in their self-serving "jobs program"?

In the last 18 months, the following prisoners have died while being "cared for" in the MCI Shirley hospital unit - **Frank Ferinand, Bernard Sanderson, Glen Breese, Humberto Feijoo, Peter Ladetto, David McCall, David Owens, Franz Kebabrew, Edward Parragh, Everard Genius, Kevin Hicks, Richard Schulman, John Early, Herbert Earl, and Modesto Espejo.** Several others are on the verge of dieing. But one thing the public can be sure of is these blind, lame, dementia, bed ridden, terminally ill patients are well guarded in prison and on trips to outside hospitals so they can't make a run for it and cause criminal mayhem.

More sound criminal justice policy! Why not pass the no-brainer medical compassionate release bills H1628 & S843? Or is the guard union really that strong to keep the insanity of not passing it intact?

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