

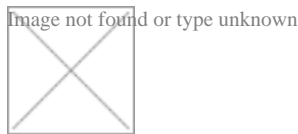


Weekly Checkup

Prison Health Care Spending Suffers From Aging Risk Pool

CONOR RYAN | JULY 10, 2014

When policy analysts talk about health care reform, providing care for prisoners is usually not a top priority. However, a recent report from the Pew Charitable Trust and the MacArthur Foundation is a grim reminder that the rising health care costs have far-reaching consequences.^[1] Researchers found that state spending on health care for the incarcerated rose by a median of 10 percent between 2007 and 2011. Unsurprisingly, high per-inmate health care spending results from similar problems that plague other national health care programs. Between 1999 and 2012, the percent of inmates over the age of 55 grew from 3.3 percent to 8.6 percent. And just as the aging population exacerbates the financial burden of Medicare and Medicaid, the chart below demonstrates that a high percent of inmates over the age of 55 correlates with higher per-inmate spending on health care for a given state.



^[1] *State Prison Health Care Spending*, The Pew Charitable Trust and MacArthur Foundation, July 2014, available at: <http://www.pewtrusts.org/~media/Assets/2014/07/StatePrisonHealthCareSpendingReport.pdf>