

# Optimizing the Fulfillment of Prisoners' Health Rights: A Case Study at Class IIA Correctional Facility

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## Abstract

This study explores the fulfillment of health rights for inmates at the Class IIA Watampone Correctional Facility, focusing on the provision of adequate healthcare services and the challenges faced in ensuring prisoners' health rights. Despite the legal frameworks guaranteeing the right to health for all citizens, including inmates, significant discrepancies remain in the quality of healthcare provided in correctional facilities. Using an empirical approach, this research examines the existing healthcare systems, resources, and challenges in the prison environment, relying on observations and interviews with correctional officers and healthcare personnel. The study highlights the impact of overcrowding, insufficient healthcare staff, and lack of specialized services as key barriers to effective healthcare delivery. It also emphasizes the need for increased investment in medical infrastructure, staff training, and collaboration with national health systems to address these challenges. The findings underscore the importance of meeting the healthcare needs of inmates to fulfill legal obligations, improve rehabilitation outcomes, and promote public health. The study concludes with recommendations for improving healthcare conditions in prisons to ensure that inmates receive the care they are entitled to, which is crucial for their reintegration into society and the reduction of recidivism.

**Keywords:** Human Right; Health Services; Correctional Institutional

## I. Introduction

This research focuses on the fulfillment of the right to health services for inmates at the Watampone Class IIA Correctional Facility. One of the key aspects of human rights (HR) is the right to health, which applies not only to the general population but also to individuals who are serving sentences in correctional facilities. Inmates, despite having their freedom taken away, retain basic human rights, including the right to receive adequate health services. This right is the responsibility of the state, as outlined in various legal provisions, such as Article 28H paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, which guarantees every citizen the right to proper health (Toebes, 2001). However, in practice, health services for inmates in many correctional facilities, including the Watampone Class IIA Correctional Facility, face various challenges. These challenges include limited medical facilities, a shortage of trained medical personnel, and procedures that are not fully adequate to meet the health needs of inmates. According to research by Freudenberg et al. (2011), the health conditions in correctional facilities are often worse compared to the general population, largely due to limited resources and restricted access to adequate medical care. This study aims to identify the factors influencing the quality of health services at the Watampone Class IIA Correctional Facility and evaluate whether these services comply with the relevant legal provisions.

Moreover, it is important to note that health is a critical pillar in the rehabilitation process of inmates, aimed at improving their quality of life during their incarceration. Good health can help support inmates in serving their sentences and reduce the likelihood of recidivism once they are released back into society. As highlighted by Wang et al. (2021), poor physical health can increase the risk of aggressive behavior and

psychological issues, which, in turn, can negatively affect the rehabilitation process. Therefore, providing optimal health services is not only related to fulfilling human rights but also contributes to the rehabilitation and reintegration of inmates into society.

This research is also motivated by the disparities in the provision of health services between different correctional facilities. Previous studies indicate that some correctional facilities, such as the Makassar Class I Correctional Facility, provide better health services than others, such as the Bengkulu Class II Correctional Facility. Research by Luntamo et al. (2017) identified that the quality of health services in correctional institutions often varies greatly depending on location and available budgets for each facility. Thus, this study aims to analyze and compare the health services at the Watampone Class IIA Correctional Facility with those at other correctional facilities, with the hope of offering recommendations for improving the health service system across correctional facilities in Indonesia.

Given this background, the research is expected to make a significant contribution to understanding how the health system in correctional facilities is implemented and the challenges faced in fulfilling inmates' health rights. As stated by Durcan et al. (2020), it is essential for the criminal justice system to recognize the fundamental health needs of prisoners and ensure that their access to adequate healthcare is not compromised. The findings from this research could serve as a foundation for policy improvements and the development of a more humane health service system in correctional facilities that aligns with internationally recognized human rights standards. Furthermore, research by Piquero et al. (2022) has shown that neglecting inmates' health can adversely affect their mental and physical well-being, ultimately impacting the success of rehabilitation programs within correctional facilities. This further underscores the importance of fulfilling health rights within the correctional system.

## **II. Literature Review**

The fulfillment of health rights for inmates in correctional facilities is a critical issue in human rights law, medical ethics, and the broader criminal justice system. Incarceration results in the deprivation of personal freedom; however, it does not entail the forfeiture of an individual's basic human rights, including the right to health. This right to health is universally recognized in international human rights law, notably in instruments such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), and the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules). These instruments emphasize that prisoners should receive health services equivalent to those available in the general community. In this review, we explore the current literature on health rights for inmates, the challenges faced in the provision of healthcare, and the implications for human rights in the correctional setting.

### **1. Health Rights and Legal Frameworks**

The right to health, as enshrined in international human rights law, is also incorporated in national legal frameworks. The 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, in Article 28H (1), guarantees that every citizen has the right to health, a provision that is equally applicable to individuals incarcerated in correctional facilities. Inmates, despite being deprived of their liberty, remain entitled to essential health services as part of their human dignity. According to Brigit Toebes (2001), health is a fundamental right that cannot be denied to individuals regardless of their legal status, and this is especially relevant in the context of prisoners. Furthermore, Article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) underscores the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, which includes access to medical services during imprisonment.

Research by Freudenberg et al. (2011) emphasizes that correctional institutions are often environments where health disparities are heightened, particularly due to overcrowding, insufficient healthcare

infrastructure, and limited access to specialized medical care. The legal obligations for governments to ensure the right to health for prisoners should, therefore, include adequate healthcare provision, which is essential not only for the well-being of inmates but also for public health reasons. Moreover, the lack of access to proper healthcare services in prisons can lead to the exacerbation of pre-existing conditions or the development of new health issues, many of which may be communicable and thus pose risks to the broader community upon release of inmates.

## **2. Challenges in Providing Healthcare to Inmates**

Despite the legal and ethical mandates for the provision of health services in correctional facilities, numerous challenges persist in the practical application of these rights. A significant issue is the under-resourced healthcare systems within many correctional facilities. Inadequate funding, a lack of qualified medical professionals, and insufficient medical supplies contribute to the poor quality of healthcare services in prisons (Luntamo et al., 2017). In many countries, including Indonesia, correctional facilities often struggle with overcrowding, which exacerbates these issues, leading to limited access to healthcare for inmates. The challenge is particularly severe in remote or underserved areas where healthcare facilities in prisons may not be equipped to handle the diverse medical needs of the incarcerated population.

Wang et al. (2021) argue that the health infrastructure in many prisons is inadequate, often resulting in poor physical and mental health outcomes for prisoners. Their research found that overcrowded conditions, inadequate sanitation, and poor access to preventive care contribute to higher rates of chronic diseases, infectious diseases, and mental health disorders in correctional facilities. These issues are compounded by a lack of mental health services, which are crucial for addressing the psychological needs of incarcerated individuals. Additionally, many prisons fail to address the social determinants of health, such as nutrition and sanitation, which further contribute to the poor health of inmates.

Furthermore, research by Durcan et al. (2020) highlights the impact of healthcare neglect on the rehabilitation of prisoners. Poor health can affect an inmate's ability to participate in rehabilitation programs, impacting their chances of successful reintegration into society upon release. Inmates suffering from untreated physical and mental health conditions are more likely to exhibit behavioral problems, which can undermine the rehabilitation process and increase the risk of recidivism. Thus, health should not only be seen as a fundamental human right but also as a key component of successful rehabilitation and reintegration efforts.

## **3. The Role of Healthcare in Inmate Rehabilitation**

Healthcare in correctional facilities is not only a matter of human rights but also plays a vital role in the rehabilitation of inmates. The rehabilitation process in prisons is meant to prepare inmates for reintegration into society, which includes addressing their physical and mental health needs. According to Piquero et al. (2022), the neglect of healthcare in prisons undermines rehabilitation efforts by failing to address the root causes of criminal behavior. Many prisoners have underlying health issues, including mental health disorders, substance abuse problems, and chronic illnesses, that contribute to their criminal behavior. By providing adequate healthcare, prisons can address these issues, offering inmates the chance for rehabilitation and reducing the likelihood of reoffending.

A study by Freudenberg et al. (2011) revealed that the lack of healthcare in prisons contributes to a cycle of recidivism, with inmates returning to prison due to untreated health conditions. This not only results in poor health outcomes for the inmates but also places additional strain on the criminal justice system. Effective healthcare services can play a crucial role in breaking this cycle, providing inmates with the medical care they need to overcome health-related barriers to rehabilitation.

## **4. Policy Implications and Recommendations**

The evidence presented in this review indicates that while significant legal protections exist for the health rights of prisoners, there are substantial gaps in the implementation of these rights in many correctional facilities. Governments and policymakers must take proactive steps to ensure that health services in prisons are adequate, accessible, and capable of addressing the full range of medical and psychological needs of inmates. This may include increasing funding for prison healthcare, improving training for prison healthcare providers, and ensuring that prisoners have access to specialized care when needed.

Luntamo et al. (2017) recommend that governments increase investment in the healthcare infrastructure of prisons, particularly in terms of staffing and medical supplies. Additionally, they advocate for better coordination between correctional facilities and public health systems to ensure that inmates receive timely and appropriate medical care. Durcan et al. (2020) suggest that prisons should be required to implement comprehensive health screening upon admission to identify pre-existing health conditions and provide ongoing healthcare support throughout an inmate's sentence.

Moreover, Piquero et al. (2022) highlight the need for the integration of mental health services into correctional healthcare systems. As mental health disorders are prevalent in prison populations, providing adequate psychological care is essential for both the well-being of inmates and the success of rehabilitation programs.

### **III. Research Methods**

This study employs an empirical (non-doctrinal) research method aimed at exploring the implementation of the right to health services for inmates at Class IIA Watampone Prison. The empirical approach was chosen as it allows the researcher to understand the enforcement of laws as social phenomena in real-world contexts. According to Rachmad Baro (2007), this method is used to identify the implementation of laws and various factors influencing their success in the field. The study is designed to systematically collect primary and secondary data, which are then qualitatively analyzed. The research adopts a descriptive qualitative approach to explain phenomena based on data directly obtained from the field. This approach enables in-depth analysis of the implementation of health service policies in prisons, focusing particularly on the challenges and obstacles encountered. Through this approach, the study provides a comprehensive overview of the quality of health service policy implementation in the prison system.

The data used in this research consist of two types: primary data and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through direct observation at Class IIA Watampone Prison, semi-structured interviews with prison officials, healthcare staff, and inmates. Secondary data were sourced from legislation, decisions by the Directorate General of Corrections related to health service standards, as well as literature and journals relevant to the research topic. Data collection techniques included in-depth interviews, observation, and document analysis. In-depth interviews were used to gather information from respondents directly involved in the implementation of health services in the prison. Observations were conducted to directly examine the condition of healthcare facilities, including infrastructure and supporting equipment. Document analysis involved reviewing official documents such as the prison's annual reports, healthcare service data, and applicable regulations.

The data collected were analyzed using qualitative analysis techniques. The analysis process involved four stages: data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data were narratively analyzed to provide a comprehensive depiction of the phenomena studied. To ensure the credibility of the research, data triangulation was conducted by comparing findings from interviews, observations, and document analyses. The study was conducted at Class IIA Watampone Prison, with research subjects including prison officials, healthcare workers, and inmates.

### **IV. Results**

The fulfillment of healthcare rights for inmates at the Class IIA Correctional Facility Watampone reveals critical insights into the implementation of existing legal frameworks. Observations and interviews with facility officials and healthcare personnel indicate that while efforts to provide healthcare services are ongoing, several challenges hinder optimal service delivery. These include limited medical personnel, inadequate medical infrastructure, and logistical constraints in accessing specialized treatments. Empirical data highlights discrepancies between the healthcare standards outlined by the Directorate General of Corrections and the reality on the ground. For instance, while inmates are entitled to basic medical care and nutrition as per Articles 9(d) and 12(d) of the Correctional Law, resource limitations often result in delayed or insufficient care. This gap underscores the need for better alignment between policy directives and their practical execution.

Interviews with healthcare staff further reveal systemic issues, including a lack of continuous training and insufficient support for mental health services. Mental health, a critical aspect of overall well-being, often receives inadequate attention, leaving inmates vulnerable to untreated psychological conditions. This shortfall highlights the necessity for a more holistic approach to healthcare in correctional settings. Analysis of secondary data, such as regulations and national healthcare standards, indicates that the facility faces difficulties in meeting benchmarks due to funding and logistical constraints. Although some improvements have been made, particularly in routine medical checkups and emergency care, these efforts fall short of ensuring comprehensive healthcare access as mandated by law.

In conclusion, the empirical findings call for a multifaceted response to improve healthcare services at the Watampone Correctional Facility. Key recommendations include increasing budget allocations for medical resources, implementing continuous training programs for healthcare staff, and establishing partnerships with external healthcare providers. Such measures can enhance the overall quality of care, ensuring the fulfillment of healthcare rights for inmates as envisioned in Indonesia's legal and human rights framework.

## **V. Discussion**

The fulfillment of healthcare rights for inmates at Class IIA Correctional Facility Watampone reflects broader challenges in ensuring equitable access to health services in correctional settings. Inmates, despite their restricted freedom, retain the fundamental right to health as emphasized by international standards, including the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules). However, as highlighted in a study by Kinner et al. (2018), correctional facilities worldwide often struggle with inadequate medical resources, which leads to disparities in healthcare delivery compared to the general population. Findings from this study align with international research showing that overcrowding and limited funding are significant barriers to health service delivery in prisons. Fazel and Baillargeon (2011) identified that such systemic issues contribute to poor health outcomes among inmates, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. These factors exacerbate vulnerabilities among inmates, including those with pre-existing conditions, making the provision of comprehensive healthcare services a pressing concern.

Mental services in correctional facilities are frequently underprioritized, despite their critical importance. For instance, a study by Prins (2014) demonstrated that untreated mental health conditions among inmates not only compromise individual well-being but also contribute to behavioral issues, increasing the challenges for prison management. The findings from Watampone similarly show a lack of dedicated mental health programs, highlighting an urgent area for improvement. The role of healthcare professionals is paramount in addressing inmates' health needs. Research by Dolan et al. (2016) underscores the significance of continuous professional development for medical staff in correctional settings, ensuring they are equipped to handle the unique challenges of prison healthcare environments. In Watampone, the limited availability of trained personnel hinders the facility's ability to meet healthcare standards effectively.

Addressing these gaps concerted effort from policymakers and correctional authorities. As suggested by a global review conducted by Rubenstein and Amon (2019), collaboration with external healthcare providers and non-governmental organizations can enhance service delivery in prisons. Such partnerships can help overcome resource constraints and introduce innovative healthcare models tailored to correctional facilities. Implementing these recommendations in Watampone could significantly improve inmates' access to healthcare, aligning practices with human rights principles.

## **VI. Conclusion**

The provision of health rights for inmates is a crucial issue in the broader context of human rights and the justice system. Based on this study, it is evident that while there are robust legal frameworks in place, there are still significant gaps in the fulfillment of health rights for prisoners, particularly in overcrowded and underfunded correctional facilities. This conclusion draws on the findings and discussions throughout the research, underscoring the challenges faced in ensuring adequate healthcare services for inmates and proposing recommendations for improvement. In terms of legal and ethical considerations, the right to health for prisoners is enshrined both in international human rights law and national legislation. According to these frameworks, every inmate is entitled to the same level of healthcare as the general population. This includes access to medical treatment, preventative care, and mental health services. However, despite these legal guarantees, there is a wide discrepancy between the established rights and the actual healthcare conditions in correctional facilities. Inmates often face neglect and substandard care, primarily due to resource limitations, understaffing, and overcrowding. These gaps between law and practice are not just a matter of legal failure but also reflect a systemic issue that requires urgent attention.

One of the key challenges identified in this study is overcrowding, which exacerbates many of the issues related to healthcare in correctional facilities. Overcrowding in prisons leads to a strain on medical resources, such as healthcare personnel, equipment, and facilities, making it difficult to provide timely and effective medical care to inmates. The lack of adequate space and privacy also hinders the provision of essential health services. Overcrowding often leads to the spread of infectious diseases, worsens chronic health conditions, and exacerbates mental health problems. The inability of correctional facilities to cope with the increasing number of inmates further complicates the situation, leaving inmates with insufficient medical attention and worsening their overall health outcomes. In addition to overcrowding, there is a lack of specialized healthcare services in many correctional facilities. While basic medical care may be available, mental health services, addiction treatment, and care for chronic conditions are often neglected. Mental health issues, including depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder, are prevalent among the incarcerated population, but the lack of trained professionals and resources to address these issues leaves many inmates untreated. This not only affects their well-being during their incarceration but also hinders their rehabilitation and reintegration into society. Inadequate mental health care can result in worsened conditions, contributing to higher rates of self-harm, violence, and recidivism among prisoners. Thus, it is essential that healthcare services in prisons be holistic and address both physical and mental health needs.

Moreover, the quality of healthcare in correctional facilities is often compromised by insufficient staff, outdated medical equipment, and a lack of proper training for prison healthcare workers. Medical personnel in prisons often face heavy workloads, which reduces the amount of time they can spend with each inmate. This limited interaction further decreases the quality of care, as inmates' health concerns may not be adequately addressed. The shortage of healthcare professionals, especially those with specialized training, is a critical issue that hampers the delivery of effective healthcare in prisons. This situation highlights the need for increased investment in both staffing and medical infrastructure in correctional facilities. To address these challenges, the study emphasizes the importance of improving the healthcare system within correctional facilities. The first step is to ensure adequate funding for prison healthcare services, which can help improve the availability of medical supplies, staff, and equipment. Governments and relevant

authorities must prioritize the allocation of resources to address the healthcare needs of prisoners, as part of their obligation to uphold human rights. Additionally, it is crucial to implement comprehensive training programs for prison healthcare workers to ensure they have the necessary skills to handle the diverse health needs of the inmate population, particularly in areas such as mental health care, infectious disease prevention, and chronic disease management.

Another important recommendation is the integration of prison healthcare systems with national healthcare systems to improve the quality of care. This can be achieved by establishing partnerships between correctional facilities and public health agencies, ensuring that inmates have access to a broader range of medical professionals and specialized services. Collaboration between correctional facilities and national healthcare systems would facilitate the exchange of knowledge, resources, and best practices, ultimately leading to better healthcare outcomes for prisoners. Furthermore, regular health screenings upon admission and continuous health monitoring during incarceration would help identify potential health issues early on, ensuring that inmates receive the care they need in a timely manner. In conclusion, while the right to health for inmates is legally guaranteed, the reality is that many correctional facilities are unable to provide adequate healthcare due to various systemic challenges. Overcrowding, lack of specialized care, insufficient staff, and inadequate resources all contribute to the substandard healthcare conditions in prisons. Addressing these issues requires a concerted effort from governments, policymakers, and correctional authorities to improve healthcare infrastructure, increase staff training, and ensure that prisoners receive the healthcare services they are entitled to. Improving healthcare in prisons is not just about meeting legal obligations but is also essential for the rehabilitation and successful reintegration of inmates into society. By prioritizing the health and well-being of prisoners, societies can help break the cycle of recidivism, reduce public health risks, and promote justice and human dignity.

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