

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



**Standard Operating Procedures**

<b>Policy Name:</b> Responsible Health Authority		
<b>Policy Number:</b> 507.01.04	<b>Effective Date:</b> 1/19/2022	<b>Page Number:</b> 1 of 3
<b>Authority:</b> Commissioner	<b>Originating Division:</b> Health Services Division (Physical Health)	<b>Access Listing:</b> Level I: All Access

**I. Introduction and Summary:**

This policy is intended to ensure that there is a designated Responsible Health Authority and that he or she maintains a coordinated system for health care delivery. This procedure is applicable to all facilities that house Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC) offenders to include private and county prisons.

**II. Authority:**

- A. Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. 125-4-4-.02;
- B. GDC Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): 507.01.02, Medical Autonomy;
- C. NCCHC 2018 Adult Standard: P-A-02; and
- D. ACA Standards: 5-ACI-6B-01 (ref. 4-4380, Mandatory), 5-ACI-6B-02 (ref. 4-4381, Mandatory), 4-ACRS-4C-02, and 4-ALDF-4D-01.

**III. Definitions:**

**Responsible Health Authority** - A health care professional designated to a facility, responsible for arranging all levels of health care and ensuring quality and accessible health services for offenders, in accordance with the Office of Health Services.

**IV. Statement of Policy and Applicable Procedures:**

- A. Designation of Responsible Health Authority:
  - 1. Each GDC facility where offender health care is provided will identify a Responsible Health Authority in writing.
  - 2. In facilities where a Responsible Health Authority is not readily available, another qualified health care professional may assume the responsibilities of the Responsible Health Authority with the understanding that all matters of medical judgment rest with a designated licensed physician who normally provides medical care at the facility. If the designated licensed physician is not

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readily available, medical judgement will be provided by the Medical Director or designee.

**B. Duties:**

1. The Responsible Health Authority's duties include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Arranging for all levels of offender health care;
  - b. Ensuring quality, accessible, and timely health care services for all offenders;
  - c. Developing site-specific operational health care policies and procedures;
  - d. Establishing systems for the coordination of care among multidisciplinary providers;
  - e. Developing a Quality Improvement Committee;
  - f. Having responsibility for making decision regarding health care resources and the day-to-day operations of the health care program; and
  - g. Establish a mission statement that defines the scope of health care services and developing mechanisms, including written agreements, when necessary, to ensure that the scope of services is provided and properly monitored.

**C. Medical Judgment as Sole Province:**

1. Medical judgment is the sole province of the licensed upper-level provider; and
2. Non-medical personnel will not provide medical judgment.

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V. **Attachments:** None.

VI. **Record Retention of Forms Relevant to this Policy:** None.