

## Jail's methadone license lapses

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Written by **Jonathan Bandler**

VALHALLA — Federal investigators are looking into whether the health care provider at the Westchester County jail improperly dispensed methadone without a license over the past 10 months.

Agents with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration were at the jail twice in recent weeks, reviewing the methadone issue and checking how narcotic medications are monitored and dispensed at the infirmary.

**Tennessee-based Correct Care Solutions has run the infirmary since July** but was never added to the jail's license to provide methadone, which is generally used to ease withdrawal for addicts of heroin and other opiates. "We had a license here in place," said Justin Pruyne, deputy commissioner of corrections. "Maybe, arguably, it should have said Correct Care Solutions."

The DEA issued its last methadone license to the jail on April 2, 2010, and it expired Tuesday. The license named the county Department of Corrections and Westchester Medical Center, which provided care until Correct Care Solutions took over.

Patrick Cummiskey, executive vice president of the company, said such audits are a "normal course of business for CCS." He did not say why the license was not updated. "There are no allegations of criminal activity or unlawful diversion of medication put forth by the DEA, nor has there been any indication that patient care was compromised at any time," Cummiskey said.

Pruyne called the DEA visits a "normal regulatory review." He said it was an "oversight" that the county had not sought a new license to be in place by this week. Pruyne said the DEA had not yet reported its findings but that he felt confident in the service provided by the company.

A spokeswoman for the DEA, Special Agent Erin Mulvey, said the matter was handled by the Office of Diversion Control but she had no immediate comment about the investigation. **Mulvey said such regulatory searches were common to ensure that prescription drugs were being handled legally.**

Until last year, Westchester Medical (Center) provided health care at the jail for about a decade. Officials notified County Executive Rob Astorino in January 2010 that it would no longer be able to provide the services.

The administration looked at several companies before settling on Correct Care Solutions and the county Board of Acquisition and Contract — comprising Astorino, the Board of Legislators chairman and the commissioner of public works — approved the contract.