

**§ 148-19.3. Health care services to county prisoners.**

(a) All charges that are the responsibility of the transferring county for health care services provided to prisoners held under a safekeeping order pursuant to G.S. 162-39, or the Statewide Misdemeanant Confinement Program pursuant to G.S. 148-32.1, shall not be paid by the Department and shall be submitted by the health care provider to the Inmate Medical Costs Management Plan through the North Carolina Sheriffs' Association for the Plan to review and negotiate all charges for health care services to avoid overpayment and reduce overall health care service costs. The Department shall notify the health care provider when services are being provided to the prisoner that the invoice for health care services shall be submitted by the provider directly to the Plan. In the event an invoice is sent to the Department by a health care provider for health care services provided to a safekeeper under this section or G.S. 148-32.1, the Department shall forward the invoice to the Plan within three days of receipt. All unreimbursed charges for health care services provided shall be documented and presented to the county for payment in accordance with G.S. 162-39 or the Statewide Misdemeanant Confinement Program in accordance with G.S. 148-32.1. Upon expiration of the terms of the order and a determination that the prisoner may be safely returned to the custody of the county, the Department shall notify the sheriff, or the sheriff's designee, by telephone and electronic mail and request the transfer of the prisoner to the custody of the county.

(b) The Department shall update the medical services schedule of charges assessed to counties for the provision of health care services to county prisoners housed in the State prison system pursuant to safekeeping orders under G.S. 162-39 or the Statewide Misdemeanant Confinement Program under G.S. 148-32.1. In updating the schedule of charges, at a minimum, the Department shall consider the actual rate for services provided and current established Medicaid rates for respective services. The schedule of charges shall be updated annually and shall be included in the Department's policies and procedures. The Department shall assess charges to counties for health care services provided to county prisoners at all State prison facilities. (2019-171, s. 2(a); 2020-83, s. 9(a).)