The Stiles Files

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For the past year, POZ *has tracked the shoddy treatment of prisoners with HIV in the Lone Star State. Now, leaked memos dating back to 1996 and 1997, from the desks of Drs. Russell N. McDonald and Charles Adams, Texas Department of Criminal Justice health officials, detail the disrespect behind the disregard.*

"The State of Texas and we as professionals and humane individuals are obligated to see to the 'medical needs' of all persons under our care. However, we are not obligated nor can the state afford for us to address issues of inmate 'comfort.'

Never issue double mattresses, pillows, extra sheets or thermal underwear.

When patients claim wool allergies and want a cotton blanket, bring them into the clinic, have them disrobe to their underwear and wrap a wool blanket around them. After one hour of observation, examine the patient for signs of an allergic response.

Don't confuse comfort items with medical treatment.

Stop using canes and replace them (if they are necessary in the first place) with a single crutch. The patient's orthopedic need will be met, and a single crutch does not make as good a weapon as a cane, nor does it look as 'dashing' or 'suave.'

Sometimes no treatment is the best treatment."

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