



Fact-Sheet Mumia Abu-Jamal and Hepatitis C

Dr. Paul Noel of the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections[1] and Dr. Carl J Keldie of “Correct Care Solutions” [2] are allowing people to die of the infectious disease Hepatitis C, when a lifesaving cure is available,[3] in the form of one pill a day for 12 weeks.

This is intentional medical neglect, a violation of the 8th Amendment[4] and a violation of their Hippocratic oath.[5]

On March 30th 2015 Mumia Abu-Jamal, 61 years old, was near death in renal failure and hospitalized from medical neglect, at the Schuylkill Medical Center in Pottsville, PA.[6]

Mumia Abu-Jamal is ill with active Hepatitis C,[7] and the medically indicated care is a new regime of anti-viral drugs with a 90%+ cure rate.[8]

Abu-Jamal is a noted writer, who spent 30 years on death row and is now serving life in prison. He has received support from Amnesty International, Nelson Mandela[9]and Desmond Tutu, among many others.

As the drug’s inventor, Michael Sofia of Doylestown, PA notes, “How can you deny people access to a cure?”[10]

Hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection is a major public health problem for persons of all races, and it has become the most common cause of death associated with liver disease in the United States.[11] There are presently 3.2 million infected with the disease in the U.S., and half a million people in prison have Hepatitis C.[12]

Mumia Abu Jamal’s organ failure and potential liver damage puts him, by the Federal Bureau of Prisons’ standards, among those who should be treated.[13]

As that number rises, we must always keep in mind that one in every 100 Americans is in currently in prison or jail and that 11.5 million people will be released from jail back into the community, often with high rates of infectious disease.[14]

It is imperative to treat this, the deadliest infectious disease,[15] especially as it affects people in prison.[16]

Pennsylvania has a contract with for-profit health care provider Correct Care Solutions, [17] and that group’s Chief Clinical Officer is responsible for “ensuring appropriate care to all patients.”[18]

But the bottom line on for-profit health care means sacrificing public/prisoner health for profit margins. In fact, these companies establish a cap on health care, which literally means that inmates are dying to improve

their bottom line. That 70% of states have privatized prison health care means this issue can only be exacerbated.[19]

In order to protect the public health, we must stop this shameful practice of denying lifesaving health care to Mumia Abu-Jamal and Pennsylvania prisoners. We also must expose the public health imperative of treating Hepatitis C inside and outside of prisons.

Correct Care Solutions, one of the four largest providers of inmate health care in our country, was established to manage health care costs for inmates in order to turn a profit.[20] These companies have guaranteed prison officials and municipalities cost savings, at the expense of the health and well-being of prisoners. Their contracts give state and local governments in need of money a way to establish fixed costs for healthcare services through contracts based on a global rate per inmate.[21]

Due to continued prejudice in the justice system, Black men and the community that they return to are most likely to suffer from the for-profit medical model. Black men are, as the Pew Research Center has discovered, six times more likely to go to prison than white men are.[22]

Additional Facts

The United States has 22% of the world's prisoners and only 5% of the world's population.¹
From 1978 to 2014, our prison population has risen 408%.²

Over a million Black people are incarcerated in prisons and jails.³

African Americans and people of color are targeted and racially profiled by law enforcement, and African Americans 13% of the total American population⁴, meanwhile making up 37.7% of those incarcerated.⁵

Pennsylvania's prison population is 46% Black, and its general population of Black people is 11%.⁶

4% of those convicted of capital crimes are innocent, and the great majority of innocent defendants convicted of capital murder are then sentenced to life and languish in prison.⁷

Innocent people are being sentenced to death. In the past 30 years, 139 inmates were found to be innocent and released from death row, including six in Pennsylvania.⁸

There have been 1,678 exonerations in the United States 47% of whom are Black,⁹

¹ <http://www.politifact.com/virginia/statements/2014/dec/15/jim-webb/webb-says-us-has-5-percent-worlds-population-25-pe/>

² <https://www.aclu.org/prison-crisis?redirect=safe-communities-fair-sentences/prison-crisis>

³ <http://www.naacp.org/pages/criminal-justice-fact-sheet>

⁴ <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/00000.html>

⁵ https://www.bop.gov/about/statistics/statistics_inmate_race.jsp

⁶ http://www.prisonpolicy.org/graphs/2010percent/PA_Blacks_2010.html

⁷ <http://www.pnas.org/content/111/20/7230>

⁸ <http://www.deathpenaltyinfo.org/innocence-list-those-freed-death-row>

⁹ <https://www.law.umich.edu/special/exoneration/Pages/about.aspx>

One out of three Black males will be incarcerated in his lifetime; and one in fifteen are currently imprisoned.¹⁰

Once convicted, Black prisoners receive longer sentences than white prisoners.¹¹

There is no possible way of restoring the life of a person sentenced to LWOP¹².

Mass incarceration raises concerns regarding bias identification, police and prosecutorial misconduct, judicial apathy in protecting the rights of the accused, faulty evidence, inadequate defense representation, coerced confessions, and fabricated testimony.¹³

Mumia Abu-Jamal spent 34 years in prison, 29 of which were in solitary confinement on death row.¹⁴

Mumia is now serving a life sentence in Pennsylvania.¹⁵

Pennsylvania holds 5,100 prisoners sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole,¹⁶

Pennsylvania has the second largest population of LWOP sentences in the country,¹⁷

Mumia Abu-Jamal has authored 8 published books,¹⁸

Mumia Abu-Jamal has recorded 2,500 public radio essays¹⁹

Mumia has earned a BA at Goddard College and an MA at Dominguez Hills, and is pursuing a Ph.D.²⁰

Mumia has been recognized by Nelson Mandela and visited by Desmond Tutu.²¹

The 8th amendment to the U.S. constitution prohibits cruel and unusual punishment.²²

On March 30, 2015 Mumia Abu-Jamal, 61 years old, was near death in renal failure and hospitalized from medical neglect, at the Schuylkill Medical Center in Pottsville, PA.²³

¹⁰ http://sentencingproject.org/doc/publications/rd_ICCPR%20Race%20and%20Justice%20Shadow%20Report.pdf

¹¹ <http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424127887324432004578304463789858002>

¹² <http://www.naacp.org/press/entry/naacp-statement-on-supreme-court-ruling-on-life-without-parole-for-juvenile>

¹³ <http://www.frederickuu.org/sermons/NewJimCrow.pdf>

¹⁴ <http://solitarywatch.com/2012/09/16/mumia-abu-jamal-challenges-death-row-solitary-confinement-and-life-without-parole/>

¹⁵ <http://solitarywatch.com/2012/09/16/mumia-abu-jamal-challenges-death-row-solitary-confinement-and-life-without-parole/>

¹⁶ <http://decarceratepa.info/content/factsheet-life-without-parole-pennsylvania>

¹⁷ <http://decarceratepa.info/content/factsheet-life-without-parole-pennsylvania>

¹⁸ <http://www.amazon.com/Mumia-Abu-Jamal/e/B000APLSDS>

¹⁹ <http://mumiapodcast.libsyn.com/>

²⁰ <http://www.truth-out.org/opinion/item/32334-mumia-abu-jamal-on-the-meaning-of-ferguson>

²¹ http://www.democracynow.org/2011/12/8/south_african_archbishop_desmond_tutu_calls

²² <http://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution/amendments/amendment-viii>

²³ Marchiano, A. (2015, March 31). Mumia Abu-Jamal in hospital. Republican Herald pp. 1, 7

Mumia Abu-Jamal is ill with has active Hepatitis C, and the medically indicated care is new anti-viral drugs with a 90%+ cure rate.²⁴

Hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection is a major public health problem for persons of all races, and it has become the most common cause of death associated with liver disease in the United States.²⁵

Liver Disease in the tenth leading cause of death in the United States.²⁶

The Center for Disease Control states that 3.2 million people in the U.S. are infected with Hepatitis C.²⁷

The Annals of Internal Medicine notes that 500,000 incarcerated people have Hepatitis C.²⁸

18% of prisoners, of whom approx. 4,000 are Black, in Pennsylvania are Hepatitis C positive.²⁹

Nationally it is estimated that 180,000 of African Americans in prison are Hepatitis C positive.

The mortality rate of African Americans is 75% higher for this condition than whites.³⁰

1 of 7 Black men have Hepatitis C, 75% who are undiagnosed.³¹

National studies have estimated the prevalence rate of Hepatitis C in state correctional facilities to be about 18% compared to a rate of 1% to 2% in the general population.³²

The Correctional Association of New York states that, ethically, when there is a cure to an infectious disease, there can be no justification for not treating it.³³

The cure drug inventor Michael Sofia of Doylestown PA, notes – “How a company decides to price the drugs is, frankly, something I don't get involved with. I try to solve a problem of high medical need and bring a solution to the table. In this case, this is a cure. How can you deny people access to a cure?”³⁴

The Pennsylvania Department of Corrections is refusing to treat Mumia Abu-Jamal or any PA prisoner for Hepatitis C; which is in and of itself a death sentence and a violation of the 8th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.³⁵

²⁴ <http://cid.oxfordjournals.org/content/42/1/82.full#ref-1>

²⁵ <http://cid.oxfordjournals.org/content/42/1/82.full#ref-1>

²⁶ <http://www.cdc.gov/men/lcod/2011/index.htm>

²⁷ <http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hcv/>

²⁸ <http://annals.org/article.aspx?articleid=1916820>

²⁹ <http://publicsource.org/from-the-source/hepatitis-c-rate-incredibly-high-for-pa-prison-inmates#.Vh1IMcvBzGc>

³⁰ <http://cid.oxfordjournals.org/content/42/1/82.full>

³¹ <http://cid.oxfordjournals.org/content/42/1/82.full>

³² <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2014/03/25/stateline-prisoners-hepatitis-drugs/6871187/>

³³ <http://www.correctionalassociation.org/about-us/strategies-for-change>

³⁴ http://articles.philly.com/2015-06-01/business/62882738_1_sofosbuvir-hepatitis-c-sovaldi

³⁵ <http://www.freemumia.com/2015/08/mumia-abu-jamal-files-suit-over-prisons-refusal-to-provide-medical-care/>

The Federal Bureau of prisons, and New York, and other states have instituted antiviral drug delivery protocols to prisoners.³⁶

Pharmaceutical companies are using monopoly pricing to and lack of restriction on pricing to boost profits and deny treatments that cure.³⁷

We must expose this urgent health care crisis, and we must save the life of Mumia Abu-Jamal. Please ask your friends and family to join in order to increase the power of our voices.

Take Action

Keep The Pressure On

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Call | (717) 728-5309

Write | 1920 Technology Parkway, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050

John Wetzel, *Secretary of the Department of Corrections*

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Dr. Carl Keldie, *Chief Medical Officer Correct Care Solutions*

Call | (800) 592-2974

Write | 1283 Murfreesboro Rd, Suite 500, Nashville, TN 37217

Correct Care Solutions, *PA Regional Office*

Call | (502) 389-5802

Write | 600 N. 12th Street, Suite 1 Lemoyne, PA 17043

John Kerestes, *Superintendent SCI Mahanoy*

Call | (570) 773-2158

Write | 301 Morea Road, Frackville, PA 17932

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www.prisonradio.org | bit.ly/curehimnow

³⁶ https://www.bop.gov/resources/health_care_mngmt.jsp

³⁷ <http://levine.sscnet.ucla.edu/papers/ip.ch.9.m1004.pdf>