



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on July 16, 2014

## Disease Among Illegals Worries Medical Personnel, Border Patrol

Medical professionals and officers with the Border Patrol union have both expressed concern about the number of illegal immigrants, including the many unaccompanied children housed at federal holding facilities, who have communicable diseases.

One such concerned physician is Dr. Elaina George, a board-certified otolaryngologist (ear, nose, and throat specialist), who was interviewed on Newsmax TV's *The Steve Malzberg Show* on July 14.



"It's absolutely a health threat," said Dr. George. "The [unaccompanied minors] haven't been fed, they're dehydrated, their immune systems have basically taken a major hit, and you have to remember that they're young children, so they don't have a lot of reserve to begin with."

The doctor was even more concerned about the fact that these infected children were not quarantined, but flown around the country where their infections could be spread far and wide.

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"They are putting them on commercial airliners. [The] TSA has been ordered to stand down and allow these children and adults to get on planes without ID. So they're arriving in Georgia, they're arriving in Maryland, they're arriving all over the country," said George.

In an interview on Fox News' *America's Newsroom* on July 14, Chris Cabrea, vice-president of the National Border Patrol Council Local 3307 in the Rio Grande Valley, told host Martha MacCallum: "A lot of our guys" are coming down with diseases. "We had one get bacterial pneumonia a couple days ago. A lot of our guys are coming down with scabies or lice from these people."

Cabrea expressed concern that diseases they have "not seen in decades" will spread throughout the United States, "especially if [the illegal immigrants] are being released and have the disease."

A July 10 report from Communities Digital News cited Jeff Schwilk, identified as a Border and Immigration security analyst with San Diegans for Secure Borders Coalition, who received details from a "senior Border Patrol source in the San Diego Sector" that indicated a severe level of infection existed among the approximately 420 Central American migrants who were on the first three flights used to transport illegal immigrants into San Diego. The immigrants were originally destined for the Border Patrol's processing station in Murrieta, California, until protests caused the buses carrying them from the San Diego airport to be redirected to another station in San Ysidro.

Among the medical conditions reported were more than 100 people diagnosed with scabies, from which five Border Patrol agents were infected, multiple children with fevers, and several children coughing up blood who were suspected of having TB.

Exact conditions of illegal immigrants, including children, housed in holding facilities is difficult to



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ascertain, however, due to the veil of secrecy surrounding those facilities. Fox News reported on July 2 that the BCFS Health and Human Services' Emergency Management Division (a non-profit entity with a contract from the government) security force threatened to arrest doctors and nurses if they divulged any information about the threat of contagious diseases at a camp housing illegal alien children at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas.

"There were several of us who wanted to talk about the camps, but the agents made it clear we would be arrested," a psychiatric counselor told Todd Starnes, who wrote the report for Fox. "We were under orders not to say anything."

Starnes reported that his sources told him that the camp security forces called themselves the "Brown Shirts."

"It was a very submissive atmosphere," a counselor at the facility said. "Once you stepped onto the grounds, you abided by their laws — the Brown Shirt laws.

The woman said the workers were stripped of their cellphones and other communication devices. Anyone caught with a phone was immediately fired.

"Everyone was paranoid," she said. "The children had more rights than the workers."

The woman told Starnes that children in the camp had measles, scabies, chicken pox, and strep throat as well as mental and emotional problems.

"It was not a good atmosphere in terms of health," she said. "I would be talking to children and lice would just be climbing down their hair."

A former nurse at the camp told Starnes she was horrified by what she saw.

"We have so many kids coming in that there was no way to control all of the sickness — all this stuff coming into the country," she said. "We were very concerned at one point about strep going around the base."

Both the counselor and the nurse said their superiors tried to cover up the extent of the illnesses.

"When they found out the kids had scabies, the charge nurse was adamant: 'Don't mention that. Don't say scabies,'" the nurse related to Starnes. "But everybody knew they had scabies. Some of the workers were very concerned about touching things and picking things up. They asked if they should be concerned, but they were told don't worry about it."

The nurse said the lice issue was epidemic — but everything was kept "hush-hush."

Starnes reported that the counselor kept a detailed journal about what happened during her employment at the facility.

"When people read that journal they are going to be astonished," she said. "I don't think they will believe what is going on in America."

Reports such as these prompted Rep. Jim Bridenstine (R-Okla.) to attempt to gain access to an HHS facility at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, on June 30, so that he could see for himself the conditions under which the unaccompanied children were being housed, but he was denied access.

"There is no excuse for denying a Federal Representative from Oklahoma access to a federal facility in Oklahoma where unaccompanied children are being held," Bridenstine said in a press release.

"After my visit today with the base commander, I approached the barracks where the children are



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housed. A new fence has been erected by HHS, completely surrounding the barracks and covered with material to totally obscure the view. Every gate is chained closed.”

The facility’s security staff told Bridenstine he would have to wait three weeks to gain access.

“Any Member of Congress should have the legal authority to visit a federal youth detention facility without waiting three weeks,” said Bridenstine. “What are they trying to hide? Do they not want the children to speak with Members of Congress? As a Navy pilot, I have been involved in operations countering illicit human trafficking. I would like to know to whom these children are being released.”

The federal government’s inability to attend to the basic health needs of illegal immigrant children housed at federal facilities, and then the attempt blatantly to cover up its failures, raise serious questions. The answers, unfortunately, are difficult to find, as Congressman Bridenstine discovered.

*Photo shows detainees sleeping in a holding cell at a U.S. Customs and Border Protection facility in Texas: AP Images*



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