When patients unnecessarily visit the emergency department, they’re receiving more costly care and frequently missing the opportunity to establish a relationship and continuity of care with a primary care physician (PCP). In fact, 35 percent of ER users have not seen a primary care physician within the past year, and 35 percent were unaware that they had alternatives for care.

Our Emergency Department Redirection Services program connects patients with primary care physicians or appropriate community resources. We target:

- Hospitals with high rates of patient ER visits
- Non-emergent diagnoses
- Patients with >12 ER visits per year
- The time of day when the largest volume of inappropriate ER visits occur

And, we work with them to ensure when the next health need arises they seek the right care at the right place at the right time.

**Connect, Educate, Redirect and Refer**

We begin engagement with a social worker placed onsite at your emergency department. When the ER staff identifies a patient with a non-emergent reason for seeking care, the social worker will visit with the patient after the care is completed. The social worker will:

- Complete an introductory assessment of the patient’s reason for using the ER, such as convenience, after-hours availability, transportation issues, no PCP
- Identify barriers to accessing a more appropriate level of care
- Secure a follow-up phone number for the patient and follow up within 24 hours to provide resources and information that address the patient’s reason for seeking care in the ER

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**Did You Know?**

- In 2009, there were 136 million ER visits—a 10 percent increase over the previous year.
- In 2010, we engaged more than 64,000 patients with urgent medical concerns and ER intent. Of those, 70% with ER intent chose an alternate option and 15% transferred to a PCP office.
Addressing Chronic Conditions

Because 44 percent of individuals visiting the ER three to four times per year have a chronic condition, the Emergency Department Redirection Services program refers 30 percent of patients to the Complex and Chronic Patient Management program when the program is available and when necessary.

Sources:

Of patients who experienced our Emergency Department Redirection program:

- 15% scheduled an initial appointment with a primary care physician
- 41% say they will choose a lower intensity care setting in the future

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