



Health Analytics and Vital Records

Division of Public Health

Department of Health and Social Services

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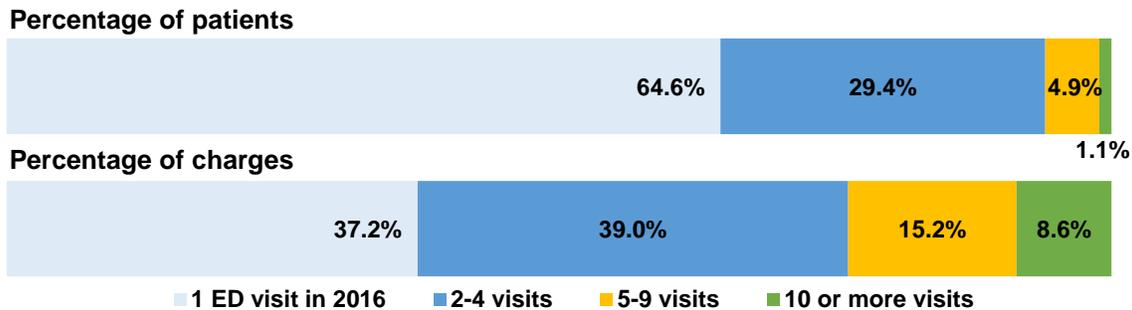
Alaska Facts and Figures

2016 Emergency Department Super-utilizer Facts

At least 110,942 unique patients visited the Emergency Department (ED) in 2016, or about one in seven Alaskans.¹ This accounts for a total of 204,880 visits and total billed charges of \$621,576,853. Hospitals report data on emergency department and other hospitalizations to the Division of Public Health through the Health Facilities Data Reporting program.²

Most patients (64.6%) only visited the ED one time during the year, and 94% of patients visited four or fewer times. Patients who visited the ED five or more times in a calendar year, sometimes referred to as “super-utilizers,” made up 6% (6,651) of patients. The top 1.1% (1,216) most frequent ED users each visited the ED at least 10 times in 2016. Eight individual patients each had over 50 visits during the year, and 95 patients had at least 25 visits.

Individuals who use the ED frequently contribute disproportionately to total charges. The top 1.1% of users account for 8.6% of charges (\$53 million), and the top 6% of users account for 23.8% of charges (\$148 million).



Mean charges per visit were \$3,225 for patients who went to the ED only one time in the year. For patients with two or more ED visits in the year, mean charges per visit were \$2,931.

The most common principal diagnoses among the top 1.1% of patients were alcohol-related disorders, abdominal and pelvic pain, pain in throat and chest, dorsalgia (back pain), pain not elsewhere classified, other joint disorder, nausea and vomiting, and anxiety disorders.

The following comparisons are between the general ED population (all patients, all visits) and the 1,216 patients who each visited the ED 10 or more times during the year.

The overall ED patient population was 54% female and 46% male, while the top 1% of ED patients was 58.1% female and 41.9% male.

In both the overall ED population and the top 1.1% of users, the most common times of day were between 2 p.m. and 9 p.m., with usage peaking at 5-6 p.m. The least frequent times of day among both groups were between 2 a.m. and 7 a.m., dipping to the lowest at 5 a.m. Neither group shows much use variation between days of the week.

¹ Hospitals reported a total of 241,493 ED visits in 2016. Records are given a unique patient identifier in place of SSN. In about 30,000 records (12.6%), SSN was not reported, so we are not able to count repeat visits among those records. Among the 211,073 records with a patient identifier, we can identify 110,942 unique patients.

² 2016 data are provisional. Four hospitals have yet to report data and are not included here: Alaska Native Medical Center, PeaceHealth Ketchikan, Norton Sound, and Mt. Edgecumbe.

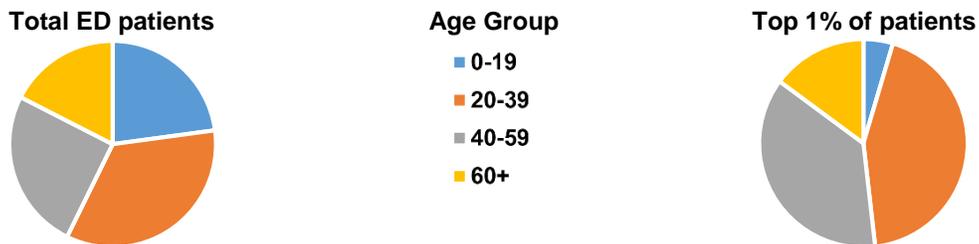
Admission times and days of the week

	Overall ED patient population							Top 1.1% of ED Users						
	Sun.	Mon	Tues.	Weds.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.	Mon	Tues.	Weds.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
Midnight	945	822	863	883	862	858	881	92	89	99	85	96	93	72
1:00 am	743	645	667	652	626	663	744	65	68	86	80	61	65	70
2:00 am	642	564	503	522	549	588	606	64	56	66	56	63	60	70
3:00 am	522	478	433	422	449	460	559	45	52	51	37	47	44	49
4:00 am	533	361	422	385	399	388	474	51	28	40	50	37	39	41
5:00 am	476	427	387	381	366	401	461	46	27	35	33	47	40	40
6:00 am	469	466	459	486	445	468	477	41	37	45	56	46	41	50
7:00 am	606	675	619	647	653	636	625	42	53	43	54	46	54	59
8:00 am	898	1,061	948	853	928	937	849	67	65	58	52	65	67	69
9:00 am	1,125	1,429	1,274	1,177	1,185	1,132	1,154	76	92	85	85	73	72	79
10:00 am	1,418	1,602	1,364	1,316	1,317	1,361	1,378	68	100	98	103	75	76	82
11:00 am	1,660	1,692	1,522	1,458	1,446	1,555	1,612	102	99	106	91	98	85	104
Noon	1,685	1,738	1,526	1,553	1,468	1,590	1,736	108	106	95	104	96	107	110
1:00 pm	1,825	1,705	1,635	1,518	1,510	1,609	1,712	119	97	122	116	107	121	110
2:00 pm	1,849	1,752	1,574	1,616	1,568	1,665	1,711	122	130	102	124	127	108	116
3:00 pm	1,778	1,715	1,601	1,584	1,569	1,660	1,727	132	119	101	113	106	115	123
4:00 pm	1,741	1,745	1,532	1,627	1,583	1,709	1,760	121	133	95	135	116	103	133
5:00 pm	1,782	1,872	1,765	1,672	1,675	1,756	1,787	119	132	135	122	117	130	131
6:00 pm	1,732	1,866	1,798	1,724	1,661	1,792	1,724	146	140	139	124	100	143	121
7:00 pm	1,740	1,692	1,723	1,710	1,707	1,696	1,763	126	107	117	119	114	136	117
8:00 pm	1,624	1,613	1,739	1,696	1,617	1,639	1,726	122	115	123	121	115	121	142
9:00 pm	1,553	1,569	1,592	1,495	1,560	1,503	1,605	129	119	131	108	112	111	127
10:00 pm	1,335	1,306	1,300	1,275	1,321	1,398	1,352	119	97	114	104	114	115	106
11:00 pm	1,088	1,112	1,003	1,046	1,095	1,149	1,194	80	105	95	101	102	97	96

Some differences are observed between payer types. The most common principal payer type in the general patient population was Medicaid (37.2%) followed by commercial insurance (26.7%). In the top 1.1% of users, the most common principal payer type was also Medicaid (53.9%), followed by Medicare (18.4%).



The top 1.1% of users were more likely to be in the 20-59 age group. While 22.9% of the general patient population was aged 19 or under, only 4.6% of the most frequent users were in this age group.



Patient region of residence are similar between the two groups. However, because one major facility in the Mat-Su region did not report a unique patient identifier, repeat visits cannot be identified and super-utilizers from this region are likely undercounted.

