

News Release

Embargoed for release:
Thursday, October 12 at 10 a.m.
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Utah Department of Health Issues Emergency Room Encounter Report

(Salt Lake City, UT) - The Utah Department of Health (UDOH) has released its Utah Emergency Department Encounter Data 1997 Annual Report (EDAR)*. The report shows utilization and charge profiles for hospitals statewide. It serves as an evaluation tool that helps to monitor emergency department utilization trends. This is the second report of its kind; the first report was released in 1999 and included 1996 data.

In 1997, 562,943 emergency room encounters occurred in Utah resulting in \$690 million in associated charges. The 1997 EDAR report contains additional information submitted to the UDOH by licensed hospital emergency departments in Utah. Utah is one of only a handful of states that collects data and does so with the support of Utah law.

Below is a summary of some of the report's findings:

Inpatients:

- Of the 562,943 emergency room (ER) patients, 58,237 were admitted for inpatient treatment. The total charges for those inpatient hospitalizations were \$538,650,397.
- The most common reasons for ER visits that resulted in inpatient hospitalization were diseases of the circulatory system (19%), injury or poisoning (17%), and diseases of the digestive (15%) and respiratory systems (14%).
- Of the 13,472 visits for injury or poisoning resulting in inpatient hospitalization, 8,661 were for unintentional injuries with a total charge of \$86,815,718.
- The most frequent cause of unintentional injury visits were falls or motor vehicle crashes; the average charge for inpatient treatment was \$8,286 for falls and \$13,808 for motor vehicle crashes.
- 26% of all visits for injury and poisoning involved adverse effects of medical treatment. The reported total charge for those hospitalizations was \$38,151,258.
- Urban area emergency rooms saw 79.2% of the total emergency room patients.

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Outpatients:

- Of the 562,943 emergency room patients, 504,706 were treated and released (outpatient). Total charges for those visits were \$151,801,002.
- The most frequent reason for outpatient emergency room encounters (40%) was injury or poisoning. Of that total, 92% of those were unintentional.
- The 176,840 ER visits resulting in outpatient treatment for injury or poisoning resulted in total charges of \$49,052,286.
- 39% of all outpatient ER visits for unintentional injury were due to falls or motor vehicle accidents; the average cost for outpatient ER treatment was \$283 for falls and \$350 for motor vehicle accidents
- Urban area emergency rooms saw 75.4% of emergency room patients treated as ER outpatients.

To request a copy of the EDAR report, call the Utah Department of Health Bureau of Emergency Medical Services at 801-538-6028. All reporters are encouraged to request their copies through the Office of Public Information at 801-538-6339.

**The EDAR report is based on 1997 data, the most current data available to complete full analysis.*

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