

Emergency Department Utilization (EDU)

By working together, we can improve health outcomes for your patients, our members. The Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS) helps us measure many aspects of performance. This tip sheet provides key details of the HEDIS measure for Emergency Department Utilization.

What is the measure?

This measure is a calculated percentage of episodes for members 18 and older; the risk adjusted measure of observed to expected emergency department visits during the measurement year.

Why is this measure important?

Observation of this measure, helps us make the most efficient use of our resources. Arkansas, has a number of healthcare deserts including urgent care facilities in rural areas. A healthcare desert is defined as a geographical area where access to healthcare is limited or nonexistent. Adhering to some common sense guidelines for the emergency department, helps ensure those facilities are ready and able to deal with true emergencies.

How to Improve the Quality Score

Each patient's evaluation and treatment are unique, and your clinical evaluation will determine if an emergency room visit is the best option. While we do not want to discourage a needed visit to the emergency room, there are times when other facilities may be more appropriate. Educate your patients on the proper times to reach out for assistance.

- Encourage patients to engage with their PCP for annual wellness visits, screenings and care coordination.
- Engage with patients who are diagnosed with chronic conditions to help prevent and minimize exacerbations and complications.
- Educate patients about proper emergency room use and other options available such as same day appointments, urgent care, nurse lines, and telehealth.
- Consider extended clinic and telehealth hours and an addition of a nurse-line.
- Coordinate support services for patients who are experiencing an exacerbation of a chronic condition.
- Make patients aware of existing phone numbers, after-hours care services and who they should contact for assistance if needed.