Emergency Department Use for Mental Health Reasons

Colorado All Payer Claims Database
Commercial, Medicaid, Medicare Advantage, 2016-2018

Coloradans living with mental illness don't always have access to comprehensive services or seek timely care to support their needs. Many efforts are underway in Colorado to improve diagnosis and treatment of mental health conditions, reduce stigma related to seeking care, and expand coverage and access to services for those living with mental illness. Despite these efforts, across the state, the Emergency Departments (ED) remain a source of support for many suffering from potentially preventable mental health crises. This data from the Colorado All Payer Claims Database (CO APCD) provides a snapshot of utilization, cost and trends for visits to the ED with mental health as a primary diagnosis.

Overall

1.5% of all ED visits had a mental health primary diagnosis*

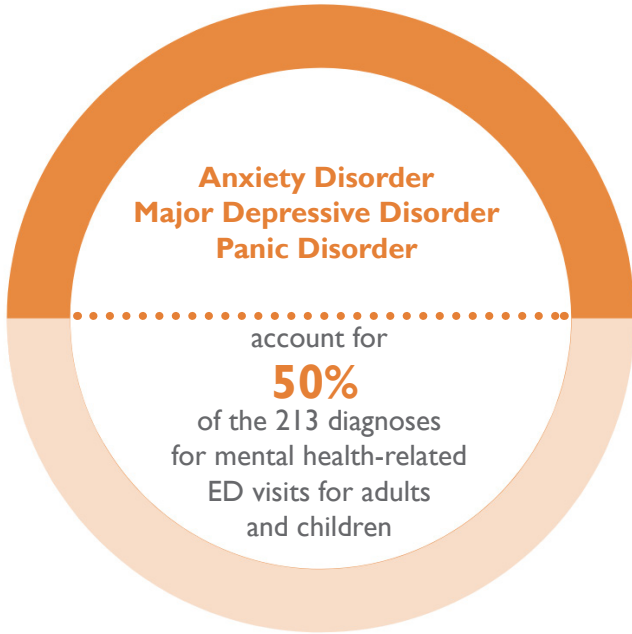**17,000** ED visits in 2018 were mental health-related*

7% of all mental health-related ED visits resulted in a hospital admission*

*This analysis calculates volume of claims related to a primary diagnosis of mental health and may be lower than expected when looking at other data sources that include secondary diagnoses of mental health conditions.

Anxiety Disorder
Major Depressive Disorder
Panic Disorder

account for

50%
of the 213 diagnoses for mental health-related ED visits for adults and children

$25.8M in health care payments were made for mental health-related ED visits in 2018

1 in 4 mental health-related ED visits were children under the age of 18...

...most frequently for:

Major Depressive Disorder

Children

Geography & Payer Type

Across Colorado, ED utilization rates vary up to **three times** between the Division of Insurance (DOI) regions with the lowest and highest rates

From 2016-2018, across all age groups combined, ED utilization rates for...

↗ Medicare Advantage increased

→ Commercial stayed the same

↘ Medicaid decreased

Access to the underlying dataset with information by payer, age group, DOI region and more is available at www.civhc.org.

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