

case study: reducing non-emergent ED utilization

Objective: The program aims to redirect non-urgent and non-emergent patients from the emergency department to more appropriate sites of care, which include primary care facilities as well as urgent care facilities.

Challenge: Studies show that many patients who choose to visit the emergency department for treatment could have been seen in an ambulatory care setting. Emergency departments are acting as primary care for far too many patients, which is why many ACOs are struggling with cost containment. Many patients are unaware of their physician's after-hours on call service and even more don't know about urgent care centers in their area. This lack of knowledge leads patients to seek care at the ED for any complaint outside of normal office hours.

Solution: Citra Health Solutions uses their analytics technology to identify the patients who have visited the emergency department frequently and for non-emergent issues. Care coordinators reach out to these patients to provide education around their primary care provider's availability of after-hours on call services and weekend care when applicable. Patients are also informed of partner urgent care facilities in the area that can provide primary care services outside of normal business hours. Finally, as part of a multi-channel strategy, patients are sent refrigerator magnets reinforcing this message.

Results: Citra was able to reduce non-emergent use of the ED by nearly 25 percent for the frequent flyers in the program. Utilization of urgent care centers outside of normal primary care office hours saw a dramatic increase as well. Claims information was used to gather the utilization information of patients six months prior to program implementation and six months after program implementation.



citra health solutions

client profile

This program focused on Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs) in the Medicare Shared Savings Program located in northeast and central Florida. These ACOs successfully achieved shared savings in the performance year that the program took place.

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