



Emergency Department Utilization Outreach Initiative

The increasing rate of emergency department (ED) utilization is a problem across the country. Nationwide, the numbers of ED visits are increasing at a steady pace with Medicaid recipients making up the largest portion of utilizers.¹ Even more alarming, according to the Emergency Medicine Network's 2007 National ED Inventory – USA, the State of Delaware's median ED visit volume is the 6th highest in the country.²

Delaware Physicians Care needs your help in getting ED utilization under better control by reinforcing the fact that your patient's health care needs are most effectively treated through their **medical home**. A **medical home** is a team approach to providing comprehensive primary health care services in a high-quality and cost-effective manner. In the **medical home**, the Primary Care Physician (PCP) serves as the anchor for providing care in a highly synthesized and co-coordinated fashion, resulting in less disjointed care and better outcomes.

Delaware Physicians Care members who have been to the ED four (4) or more times within the past year have been sent at least one letter from us, stressing the importance of contacting their PCP prior to going to an ED or urgent care center for guidance on determining the appropriate level of care for their symptoms. In addition, the letter also encouraged the member to always contact their PCP to schedule a follow-up visit after any ED or urgent care center visit. We have found a large portion of ED visits are for low acuity diagnoses that would be better treated by you, their PCP.

Did you know DPCI offers a **FREE** case management program for members? You can refer a member directly to case management by calling Member Services at 1-866-543-2167. A case manager will work with you and your members to aid in establishing their **medical home** and help with coordinating the care and services needed in the right place at the right time.

If you have any questions, please call 1-866-543-2167 to request a Case Manager.

¹ www.cdc.gov/nchs/about/major/ahcd/ercharts.htm

² Emergency Medicine Network. 2007 National Emergency Department Inventory - USA. Available at: <http://www.emnet-usa.org/medi/medi2007statedata.xls>. Accessed 01/05/2010.