

# Emergency Physicians Leading the Care Team



## Emergency physicians — Expert care for anyone, anywhere, any time

Access to emergency care is critical and more people rely on emergency physicians than ever before. One in three people in the U.S. come to the emergency department, for a total 150 million visits to the emergency department each year. Emergency physicians are uniquely trained with the expertise to lead skilled care teams in thousands of emergency departments across the country. They are experts prepared to evaluate and manage any life-threatening injury or mystery ailment. Emergency physicians work 24/7, 365 and will treat anyone who visits an emergency department, regardless of their insurance status or ability to pay.

**When it matters most, there is no substitute for a licensed, trained, and board-certified emergency physician.**

## Fast facts about emergency medicine

- **Nearly half** of all medical care in the United States is delivered in an emergency department.
- **Nearly 70%** of emergency care goes uncompensated or undercompensated.
- **Nine in ten** say it is essential to have 24/7 access to the ER, the highest of any utility or service that communities provide.
- **Only 2.5%** of the patients seen in 2020 came to the emergency department for a non-urgent medical condition.
- **More than half** of adults who sought immediate medical care chose to go to an emergency department because urgent care was unavailable, or they were referred by a medical provider.

## American College of Emergency Physicians

ACEP is the national society representing emergency medicine. As the unified voice of the nation's 40,000 emergency physicians on medicine's frontlines, ACEP supports medical education, research, public education, and advocacy to advance emergency care on behalf of its members and more than 150 million people who they treat annually.

# Emergency Physicians' 2023 Legislative Priorities

ACEP is an active force on Capitol Hill and throughout the country focused on ensuring life-saving emergency care is there when it's needed.

- ✓ Stabilize the health care safety net by addressing conditions and factors that lead to “boarding” and crowding, a crisis overwhelming emergency departments across the country, straining the physician and nursing workforce, and threatening patient care.
- ✓ Increase access to mental health resources for patients in need of psychiatric care and ensure they don't need to board in the emergency department for an excessive time waiting for an available inpatient bed.
- ✓ Improve safety measures to protect emergency physicians and staff from violence committed against them in the emergency department.
- ✓ Ensure fairness and stability in Medicare physician payments through necessary reforms, including eliminating the annual threat of significant cuts that pit specialty vs. specialty, implementation of an inflationary update, and providing emergency physicians with pathways into value-based payment systems.
- ✓ Ensure patients are protected from insurer practices that discourage safe and necessary use of the emergency department or delay necessary access to care.
- ✓ Expand prevention and treatment options in the emergency department for patients with substance use disorders and reduce barriers to providing treatment.
- ✓ Promote research in emergency medicine and foster injury prevention activities.

*84% of emergency physicians report that psychiatric patients are being held – “boarded” – in their emergency department.*



*8 in 10 emergency physicians believe violence in emergency departments has increased over the past five years, with 45% indicating it has greatly increased.*



*Physician compensation has **decreased by 4%** in the last five years, while hospital payments have **grown by 12%**.*

