

**Does scheduling a new PCP visit at the end of an ED visit increase the establishment of primary care? Evaluating the effectiveness of a program providing PCP appointments at a nearby FQHC prior to discharge from a community hospital ED**

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**Abstract:**

As the healthcare system continues to face many challenges, physicians and others who work in healthcare are seeking ways to improve health outcomes while additionally cutting costs to the system at large. Many patients in the United States do not have a Primary Care Provider (PCP), due to lack of financial resources, lack of insurance, or simply not having established one for a number of reasons. Frequently as a result, patients present to the Emergency Department (ED) and end up with a diagnosis that does not require hospitalization but should be followed in the outpatient setting. Even those with a benign diagnosis are recommended to establish care with a PCP in order to attend to preventative care needs and any health issues that arise. To help facilitate the process of establishing care with a PCP after an ED visit, the Swedish Covenant Hospital (SCH) ED now can arrange follow up appointments for patients at Erie Family Health Centers just across the street. This study will analyze the effectiveness of this strategy and if eliminating logistical barriers by arranging appointments for patients results in increased compliance for PCP follow up. This retrospective chart review study reviewed patient data from August 1, 2018 through November 30, 2018 comparing follow up rates for patients who were given a referral for the Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) across the street versus those of patients given appointments at the same clinic on ED-discharge. This study shows that having an appointment prior to ED discharge significantly increases the likelihood of post-ED follow up.