

Don't Forget to Mind Your Mental Health

Lest we forget to include mental and behavioral health in our quest to improve the health care system, here's a reminder about how much it costs when we don't prevent or take care of our mental health challenges.

Mental health and substance abuse disorders (which often go hand-in-hand) are the sixth reason for hospitalizations admitted through the emergency department (excluding pregnancy-related admissions). Behind injuries, 5.8 percent of all people are admitted due to these disorders.

Of all the possible conditions diagnosed and admitted, mood disorders come in at no. 10 (for a total of 2.4 percent of all hospital admissions from the emergency room). As noted in this issue's feature article, "Breaking the Spiral Downwards," 70 percent of us report one or more stress-related symptoms a week; in addition, depression is closely tied to chronic diseases.

Reason for Hospitalizations Admitted Through the Emergency Department

	Percent
Genitourinary disorders	4.9%
Endocrine disorders	4.9%
Mental health and substance abuse disorders	5.8%
Injuries	11.4%
Digestive disorders	14.1%
Respiratory disorders	15.1%
All other disorders	17.5%
Circulatory disorders	26.3%

Note: All other conditions include nervous system disorders, infections, neoplasms, musculoskeletal disorders, skin disorders and blood disorders.

Source: AHRQ, Center for Delivery, Organization, and Markets, Healthcare Cost and Utilization Project, Nationwide Inpatient Sample, 2003. Published in MCOL's Daily Factoid from MCOL, volumes March 30 and April 4, 2007. For more information, visit www.mcol.com or call 209.577.4888.

Projects Indicate that Employers Will be Hit with Highest HMO Premium Increases in Four Years

Hewitt Health Resource analyzed information for nearly 160 large companies representing more than 1 million employees and annual premiums of nearly \$3 billion. Based on this, it projects that initial 2008 HMO rate increases are averaging 14.1 percent, compared with 11.7 percent in 2007 and 12.4 percent for 2006, the highest increase in four years.

