ACEP to Portland Press Herald: Health reform won't solve emergency room crisis

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Portland Press Herald Letter to the Editor

Policy makers are saying that health care reform will increase the demand for medical care. That means a lot more patients will be coming to our emergency departments because the newly insured will have trouble finding other physicians to see them.

I support universal health care for all Americans, but let us be clear: It will not solve all the problems facing emergency departments nationwide.

Emergency visits have been increasing at an average rate of 3 million per year, yet hundreds of emergency departments have closed, leaving fewer facilities to see more patients.

Congress needs to look at the facts and stop perpetuating the myths about emergency care. Real health care reform must address the urgent needs of the 120 million annual emergency patient visits before it is too late.

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