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Specialty Hospitals

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The American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) believes that quality patient care can be supported within the existing health care system only if access to timely specialty services is assured through appropriate public policy initiatives and health care reimbursement system reform.

The development of specialty hospitals, defined as those that are primarily or exclusively engaged in the care and treatment of: 1) patients with a cardiac condition, 2) patients with an orthopedic condition, or 3) patients receiving a surgical procedure,¹ may lead to adverse health system consequences, such as loss of specialty physician coverage for emergency patients and loss of hospital revenue from insured patients.

ACEP supports mitigating such adverse consequences with continued application and enforcement of the Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act, and with additional measures to preserve patient care and safety in full-service hospitals. Specialty hospitals must not be a detriment to emergency department availability of on-call specialists, hospital sustainability, or access to care.

Reference

1. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Specialty Hospital Issues. Notification issued March 2004. Available at: https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Fraud-and-Abuse/PhysicianSelfReferral/specialty_hospital_issues.html. Last accessed May 20, 2017.