

KNOW WHAT TO ASK

Accessing Emergency Medicaid



Unfortunately, people can find themselves faced with large and unexpected bills after a visit to an emergency room. There are a few programs and resources available to assist individuals who are undocumented, or legal permanent residents less than 5 years, who face this situation. This fact sheet was created to help you KNOW WHAT TO ASK.

DURING EMERGENCY ROOM VISITS

If you are undocumented and without insurance -

- If you have a life-threatening emergency and are treated at an emergency room, you may be eligible for Emergency Medicaid. **Ask about this.**
Note: This applies to emergency rooms within a hospital or free-standing.
- If you are eligible for Emergency Medicaid, it is important that you complete the application paperwork while you are still in the hospital or emergency room.
- If you are treated in the emergency room, make sure you get a form that states your treatment was an emergency before you leave the hospital. This form needs to be signed by a doctor. **If you don't have this form – ask for it.**
- **Ask if the hospital has someone who can assist you** through this process. These individuals are sometimes called a care navigator, patients' rights advocate, community health advocate, or financial counselor.
- If you are not eligible for Emergency Medicaid, **ask about the hospital's policy for charitable or indigent care.** Explain that you do not have insurance, are paying out-of-pocket, and want to apply for their charity rate or financial assistance.

Emergency Medicaid covers treatment for emergency medical life-or limb-threatening conditions (including labor and delivery), which could:

- Place the patient's health in serious jeopardy;
- Lead to impairment of bodily function; or
- Lead to dysfunction of a body part or organ.

AFTER AN EMERGENCY ROOM VISIT

If you don't start the application process for Emergency Medicaid while you are still in the emergency room visit, it can be challenging to secure the paperwork you need to apply. If you receive a bill for an emergency room visit that you cannot afford to pay, here are some steps you can take or resources that might help.

Contact the hospital and ask to speak to their financial services office or billing office.

- **Ask if the hospital has someone who can assist you** through this process sometimes called a care navigator, patients' rights advocate, community health advocate, or financial counselor. Ask them about Emergency Medicaid and whether you qualify.
- **Ask about the hospital's policy for charitable or indigent care.** Explain that you do not have health insurance, are paying out-of-pocket, and want to apply for their charity rate or financial assistance.

If you believe you might qualify for Emergency Medicaid (undocumented, or legal permanent residents less than 5 years, and had a life-or limb-threatening condition when you went to the emergency room), you can try and apply after the visit. These sites might be able to help.

Adams County Human Services (for Children's Hospital, University Hospital)
Phone Number: 720-523-2000 (*The wait times are shorter early in the morning.*)

Arapahoe County Human Services (for The Medical Center of Aurora)
Phone: 303-636-1170

Aurora Community Connection - 9801 E. Colfax Ave, Ste. 200, Aurora, CO 80010
Phone: 720-975-0147

Here are links to billing policies for the hospitals in Aurora, and their phone numbers.

- University of Colorado Hospital** www.UCHealth.org go to online bill paying, then information resources, then payment options.
Phone number: 720-848-1025
- The Medical Center of Aurora (Health One)** www.auroramed.com scroll to bottom of page, click on patients and visitor's resources, then patient information, then financial information.
Phone Number: 804-267-5963
- Children's Hospital** www.childrenscolorado.org go to "after your visit", then Financial Assistance/charity care/payment plan information.
Phone Number: 720-777-7001

Other hospitals should have the same kind of information on their websites.

This fact sheet was prepared by Aurora Health Alliance, a community-based health alliance whose mission is to collaboratively improve access to care and create a healthier Aurora, with a focus on those who are vulnerable and underserved. If this information needs to be updated or changed, please let us know.

You can reach us through our website at aurorahealthalliance.org.