



Each day in North Carolina hospital emergency departments, over 1,300 persons are identified with mental illness, an addiction disorder or developmental disabilities.

Over 12% of all emergency department visits in North Carolina hospitals involve persons diagnosed with these disabilities. Research suggests that even this figure does not account for the many people whose disabilities go undiagnosed in emergency departments.<sup>1,2</sup> Ensuring access to non-hospital crisis services and primary health care is critical to addressing these individuals' special needs. The NC Department of Health and Human Services is working with both the specialty care system and the primary health care system to provide people with developmental disabilities, mental illnesses, or addiction disorders alternatives to the use of local hospital emergency departments for non-physical issues.

Read more about emergency department services to persons with these conditions in the [Third Quarter Emergency Department Admissions Report](#) at

[http://www.ncdhhs.gov/mhddsas/statpublications/reports/emergencydeptreport\\_qtr3\\_2009.pdf](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/mhddsas/statpublications/reports/emergencydeptreport_qtr3_2009.pdf)

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.psychiatrictimes.com/display/article/10168/1342681?pageNumber=2>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.rwjf.org/pioneer/product.jsp?id=46148>