

Majority of families in urban areas have access to Internet, show willingness to receive health info electronically

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In a study of mostly minority and socioeconomically disadvantaged families, 99 percent of participants reported having access to the Internet. More than half of the families were interested in receiving health information electronically, an important finding in the quest to improve access to health information. The study, conducted in the Emergency Department at Children's National Medical Center, is published in the June issue of *Pediatric Emergency Care*.

Of the 509 families in the study, 503 reported access to the Internet, either at home, work, or via their mobile device. More than half expressed an interest in receiving [electronic health](#) information from the emergency department, with email being the preferred method of delivery. This represents a novel opportunity to engage a larger proportion of urban families in efforts to help improve their health through better education.

"This study demonstrates the high prevalence of Internet access in socioeconomically disadvantaged areas, a change from previous studies," said Mohsen Saidinejad, MD, the study author and an emergency medicine physician at Children's National. "It's an important first step as we try to improve health education and [patient communication](#). Our ultimate goal is to improve compliance and [health outcomes](#)."

In the study, nearly one quarter of participants reported accessing the

Internet through a mobile device. The researchers anticipate that Internet access on mobile devices will continue to increase as more people own smart phones.

Dr. Saidinejad and his colleagues at Children's National are currently conducting further research to evaluate patient engagement by measuring the open rates of emails sent to caretakers from the emergency department, as well as the length of time spent on websites containing relevant health information.

Provided by Children's National Medical Center

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