

Pedi-Flite improves outcomes and reduces costs for pediatric diabetic patients

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Providing families with diabetic children access via pager to a transport team improves outcomes and efficiency, according to a recent study performed at Le Bonheur Children's Hospital and The University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC). The study, "Real-time Support of Pediatric Diabetes Self-care by a Transport Team," was reported online ahead of print in *Diabetes Care*, the world's leading journal for clinical diabetes research and published by the American Diabetes Association.

Brandi E. Franklin, PhD, assistant professor in the UTHSC College of Pharmacy, retrospectively analyzed pager use in pediatric diabetic patients who used the service from August 2009 to December 2012. Pedi-Flite—Le Bonheur's air and ground transport team—answered calls from families with diabetic patients in this new model akin to modern enhanced 911 services. Calls from families were routed to Pedi-Flite Transfer Center dispatchers, who are seasoned emergency medicine technicians trained in diabetes care by the Pediatric Endocrine Center of UT Le Bonheur Pediatric Specialists (ULPS).

These investigators reported that although pager users were 2.75 times more likely to visit the emergency department (ED) for [diabetic ketoacidosis](#) or related illness, ED visits by pager users were less likely to lead to inpatient admissions. Moreover, those eventually admitted required a significantly shorter length of stay. More than half of all pages were resolved by Pedi-Flite dispatch without need for further referral to a physician. Researchers estimated that 439 ED visits and 115

admissions were avoided because of this novel system, saving over \$760,000.

"This innovative, cost-effective approach reduces disparities in [diabetes care](#) and improves access for our patients," said Franklin. The study was conceived and led by Robert Ferry, Jr., MD, who holds the Le Bonheur Chair of Excellence in Endocrinology as chief of UTHSC's Division of Pediatric Endocrinology, in collaboration with Crile Crisler, Jr., MHA, administrative director of Patient Transport at Le Bonheur, and Meri Armour, MBA, president and CEO of Le Bonheur Children's Hospital.

Provided by Le Bonheur Children's Hospital

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