

Freestanding ERs more likely in areas with higher incomes

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(HealthDay)—Freestanding emergency departments (EDs) tend to be

located in areas with significantly higher household incomes, according to a study published in the October issue of *Health Affairs*.

Noting that freestanding EDs are a relatively novel phenomenon, Cedric Dark, M.D., M.P.H., from the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, and colleagues examined whether freestanding EDs in 2016 were more likely to be in areas of high demand or in those that could yield high profits.

The researchers compared Public Use Microdata Areas and found that those with freestanding EDs had significantly higher household incomes than those without freestanding EDs. This finding was applicable to independent freestanding emergency centers but not satellite emergency centers affiliated with hospitals.

"The business decisions involved in determining where to place such an ED appear similar to decisions of retail clinics and [urgent care centers](#): All of these facilities are concentrated in urban areas with high incomes and insured patients," the authors write. "These decisions warrant further scrutiny by policy makers to prevent the exacerbation of disparities involving the medically underserved."

One of the authors disclosed ties to Adeptus Health Inc.

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