

Extreme heat events cost the U.S. healthcare system \$1 billion every summer. Based on insurance claims data from Virginia’s all-payer claims database, we estimate that each summer, heat events resulted in:

- Almost 400 additional ambulatory (or outpatient) care visits for heat-related illness.
- Almost 7,000 additional emergency department visits, including more than 4,600 visits for heat-related or heat-adjacent illness.
- Almost 2,000 additional heat-related hospital admissions, mostly for heat-adjacent illness.

Extrapolated nationally, heat event days would be responsible for almost 235,000 emergency department visits and more than 56,000 hospital admissions for heat-related or heat-adjacent illness, adding approximately \$1 billion in health care costs each summer. [Read the report from the Center for American Progress](#) and [see news coverage by CNN](#).



Congratulations to Dr. Alicia Richards!

For the last four years Alicia has served as a graduate research assistant on our research group’s biostatistical team. In July she received her PhD in biostatistics and last month she joined the Moffitt Cancer Center in Tampa, FL as a research scientist. While we will miss her, we are incredibly proud of her and excited for her. Thank you for everything, Alicia!

Pediatric mental health-related emergency room visits spiked during the pandemic.

While ER visits overall dropped in 2020 at the start of the pandemic, pediatric mental health ER visits increased from 5.4% of every ER visit in 2018 to 8.0% in 2020. Pediatric ER visits for suicidality have more than doubled over the last five years. Almost 12% of ER visits for patients age 13-21 were for mental health and rural ERs had a higher proportion of pediatric mental health visits than urban and suburban ERs. [Read the full brief.](#)



Since 2019 we have been working with patients around Virginia to help them manage their chronic conditions with support from a patient navigator and a community health worker. [Preliminary findings](#)

show that care planning has a significant impact for patients, care planning is not time-intensive, and primary care needs additional resources to make care planning feasible. We appreciate all the patients, clinicians, and practice teams who have taken part in this study!