

Health and Long-term Utilization Patterns of Chronically Disabled People in Ohio: Implications for Quality

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Research Summary: Health reform has become a dominant issue for much of the American public, resulting in a national dialogue about the type, quality, and cost of health care in the United States. Although the need to make modifications to the acute care system is clear, a separate and related area, long-term care, also requires attention. With many older Americans experiencing a chronic disability requiring long-term care, or a combination of acute and long-term care, the interface between health and long-term care has become a major policy issue. For example, the per capita medical expenditures for people reporting two or more disabling chronic conditions was five times the amount incurred by those with no such limitations. Despite these high expenditures, particularly those incurred by the population over age 65, the Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement systems provide little incentive for the states and providers to improve the cost-effectiveness or quality of care for those served in these programs.

Conclusions: Evidence from the study reinforces the importance in studying the dually eligible population. With high rates of mortality, hospital use, nursing home use, and high health and long-term care expenditures these individuals are key participants in the system. With annual expenditures of over \$30,000, understanding the utilization patterns for these individuals, with an eye toward more efficient allocation of resources has clear implications for state and federal policy makers.

Second Paper: NURSING HOME ACQUIRED INFECTIONS: ASSESSING QUALITY OF CARE

Research Summary: Each year more than 25% of nursing home (NH) patients are transferred to the emergency department or hospitalized for the evaluation and treatment of infections. These transfers may have an adverse impact on the quality and the cost of patient care. The study examined the frequency of these transfers and physician involvement in the care of NH acquired infections.

Conclusions: The study documented that nursing home acquired infections are common, and that physician management of these infections is largely directed over the telephone.

Status: [Complete. Click here for final report.](#)