AHRQ Quality Indicators

Prevention Quality Indicators in Emergency Department Settings (PQE) Benchmark Data Tables, v2026

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Introduction

The data presented in this document are nationwide comparative rates for Version 2026 of Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) Quality Indicators (QI) Prevention Quality Indicators in Emergency Department Settings (PQE[1]) software. The numerators, denominators, and observed rates shown in this document are based on an analysis of discharge data from the 2023 AHRQ Healthcare Cost and Utilization Project (HCUP) State Emergency Department Databases (SEDD) and State Inpatient Databases (SID).[2]

HCUP is a family of healthcare databases and related software tools and products developed through a Federal-State-Industry partnership. HCUP includes the largest collection of longitudinal hospital care data in the United States, with all-payer, encounter-level information beginning in 1988. The SEDD and SID contains all-payer, encounter-level information on emergency department visits and inpatient discharges, including clinical and resource information typically found on a billing record, such as patient demographics, up to 30 International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision, Clinical Modification/Procedural Classification System (ICD-10-CM/PCS) diagnoses and procedures, length of stay, expected payer, admission and discharge dates, and discharge disposition. In 2023, the HCUP databases represented more than 97 percent of all annual discharges in the United States.[3]

The analytic dataset used to generate the tables in this document consists of the same emergency department records that comprise the reference population for Version 2026 of the AHRQ PQE software. This reference population file is limited to community hospitals and excludes rehabilitation and long-term acute care (LTAC) hospitals. Information on the type of hospital was obtained by the American Hospital Association (AHA) Annual Survey of Hospitals. AHA defines community hospitals as "all non-Federal, short-term, general, and other specialty hospitals, excluding hospital units of institutions." Included among community hospitals are specialty hospitals such as obstetrics-gynecology, ear-nose-throat, orthopedic, and pediatric institutions. Also included are public hospitals and academic medical centers.

The 2023 HCUP SEDD includes information on all emergency department visits not resulting in inpatient stays from hospitals in participating states. The 2023 HCUP SID includes information on all inpatient stays from hospitals in participating states, including stays beginning in the emergency department. Emergency department visits from 40 states and District of Columbia (CA is replicated from 2022) participating in both SID and SEDD are used to develop PQE.[4]

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[1] When referencing the Prevention Quality Indicators in Emergency Department Settings, the abbreviation PQE is used for the module, set of indicators, and individual indicators.

[2] Healthcare Cost and Utilization Project (HCUP) 2023 State Emergency Department Databases (SEDD) and State Inpatient Databases (SID). Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Rockville, MD

[3] Introduction to the HCUP State Inpatient Databases (SID). Healthcare Cost and Utilization Project (HCUP). January 2026. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Rockville, MD. https://hcup-us.ahrq.gov/db/state/siddist/Introduction_to_SID.pdf.

[4] States with data from both the 2023 SID and SEDD included in the area- level reference populations include: AK, AR, AZ, CA, CO, CT, DC, FL, GA, HI, IA, IL, IN, KS, KY, MA, MD, ME, MI, MN, MO, MS, MT, NC, ND, NE, NH, NJ, NM, NY, OH, OK, OR, RI, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, WI, and WY . These states were included in the reference populations for PQE 01–PQE 04. A subset of 22 states provided the data elements needed to link records to determine when an individual incurred more than one encounter in a year: AK, AR, CA, CO, FL, GA, HI, IA, IN, MD, ME, MO, MS, NE, NY, OR, SC, SD, TN, UT, WI, and WY. These states were included in the reference population for PQE 05. For v2026, 2023 HCUP data were not available for California at the time of analysis. To preserve comparability across years and reduce the potential bias associated with excluding California entirely, we substituted California's 2022 HCUP data for the missing 2023 data in the v2026 reference population.

For details on covariates that are considered as potential risk adjusters, the feature selection and risk adjustment process, and composite indicators, please refer to Quality Indicator Empirical Methods, available on the AHRQ QI website (https://qualityindicators.ahrq.gov/measures/qi_resources).

The QI observed rates for area-level indicators are presented per 100,000 population. Cell sizes less than 11 are suppressed due to confidentiality; and are designated by an asterisk (*). When only one data point in a series must be suppressed due to cell sizes, another data point is provided as a range to disallow calculation of the masked variable. In some cases, numerators, denominators, or rates are not applicable for the category due to the exclusion criteria in the specification of the indicator and are designated by dashes (--).

Acknowledgments

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Table 1. Prevention Quality Indicators in Emergency Department Settings (PQE) For Overall Population: Area-Level Indicators

INDICATOR	LABEL	NUMERATOR	DENOMINATOR	OBSERVED RATE PER 100,000 POPULATION
PQE 01	Visits for Non-Traumatic Dental Conditions in ED	1,012,523	272,819,742	371.13
PQE 02	Visits for Chronic Ambulatory Care Sensitive Conditions in ED	3,403,099	140,639,866	2,419.73
PQE 03	Visits for Acute Ambulatory Care Sensitive Conditions in ED	6,623,276	236,105,619	2,805.22
PQE 04	Visits for Asthma in ED	582,756	132,179,876	440.88
PQE 05	Visits for Back Pain in ED	113,554	126,423,208	89.82

Table 2. PQE 01 - Visits for Non-Traumatic Dental Conditions in ED

GROUP	NUMERATOR	DENOMINATOR	OBSERVED RATE PER 100,000 POPULATION
Overall	1,012,523	272,819,742	371.13
Females	520,520	139,287,975	373.70
Males	492,003	133,531,767	368.45
5 to 9 years	37,457	17,210,030	217.65
10 to 14 years	18,600	17,871,187	104.08
15 to 17 years	18,141	11,425,385	158.78
18 to 24 years	126,301	27,403,792	460.89
25 to 29 years	147,306	19,153,968	769.06
30 to 34 years	164,708	19,920,253	826.84
35 to 39 years	132,162	19,195,261	688.51
40 to 44 years	104,055	18,544,880	561.10
45 to 49 years	72,263	16,818,793	429.66
50 to 54 years	58,563	17,563,230	333.44
55 to 59 years	45,834	17,591,315	260.55
60 to 64 years	33,905	18,202,180	186.27
65 to 69 years	21,180	16,569,549	127.82
70 to 74 years	13,181	13,532,551	97.40
75 to 79 years	8,637	9,965,144	86.67
80 to 84 years	5,404	6,206,828	87.07
85+ years	4,826	5,645,396	85.49
Poverty category 1: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty less than or equal to 7.4	55,365	27,747,041	199.53
Poverty category 2: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 7.4% and less than or equal to 8.7%	61,185	23,662,977	258.57
Poverty category 3: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 8.7% and less than or equal to 10.1%	80,898	27,784,266	291.16
Poverty category 4: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 10.1% and less than or equal to 10.9%	97,138	29,623,024	327.91
Poverty category 5: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 10.9% and less than or equal to 12.2%	93,306	26,265,532	355.24
Poverty category 6: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 12.2% and less than or equal to 13.5%	126,038	31,485,027	400.31
Poverty category 7: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 13.5% and less than or equal to 14.2%	101,697	27,160,541	374.43
Poverty category 8: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 14.2% and less than or equal to 15.9%	136,001	28,904,179	470.52
Poverty category 9: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 15.9% and less than or equal to 18.4%	130,502	26,907,393	485.00
Poverty category 10: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 18.4% and less than or equal to 42.4%	130,393	23,279,762	560.11

Table 3. PQE 02 - Visits for Chronic Ambulatory Care Sensitive Conditions in ED

GROUP	NUMERATOR	DENOMINATOR	OBSERVED RATE PER 100,000 POPULATION
Overall	3,403,099	140,639,866	2,419.73
Females	1,750,754	74,064,564	2,363.82
Males	1,652,345	66,575,302	2,481.92
40 to 44 years	202,421	18,544,880	1,091.52
45 to 49 years	225,355	16,818,793	1,339.90
50 to 54 years	289,358	17,563,230	1,647.52
55 to 59 years	363,912	17,591,315	2,068.70
60 to 64 years	441,549	18,202,180	2,425.80
65 to 69 years	434,780	16,569,549	2,623.97
70 to 74 years	397,739	13,532,551	2,939.13
75 to 79 years	369,377	9,965,144	3,706.69
80 to 84 years	305,546	6,206,828	4,922.74
85+ years	373,062	5,645,396	6,608.25
Poverty category 1: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty less than or equal to 7.4	224,757	14,686,429	1,530.37
Poverty category 2: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 7.4% and less than or equal to 8.7%	233,305	12,518,037	1,863.75
Poverty category 3: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 8.7% and less than or equal to 10.1%	288,053	14,586,759	1,974.76
Poverty category 4: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 10.1% and less than or equal to 10.9%	344,393	15,353,315	2,243.12
Poverty category 5: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 10.9% and less than or equal to 12.2%	321,794	13,731,928	2,343.40
Poverty category 6: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 12.2% and less than or equal to 13.5%	424,129	16,174,835	2,622.15
Poverty category 7: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 13.5% and less than or equal to 14.2%	322,983	13,859,703	2,330.37
Poverty category 8: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 14.2% and less than or equal to 15.9%	426,863	14,689,807	2,905.84
Poverty category 9: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 15.9% and less than or equal to 18.4%	414,992	13,409,774	3,094.70
Poverty category 10: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 18.4% and less than or equal to 42.4%	401,830	11,629,279	3,455.33

PQE 02 includes asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), heart failure, acute diabetic hyper- and hypoglycemic complications, and chronic kidney disease.

Table 4. PQE 03 - Visits for Acute Ambulatory Care Sensitive Conditions in ED

GROUP	NUMERATOR	DENOMINATOR	OBSERVED RATE PER 100,000 POPULATION
Overall	6,623,276	236,105,619	2,805.22
Females	3,737,009	118,092,466	3,164.48
Males	2,886,267	118,013,153	2,445.72
0 to 4 years	1,476,530	15,205,345	9,710.60
5 to 9 years	828,276	17,210,030	4,812.75
10 to 14 years	433,714	17,871,187	2,426.89
15 to 17 years	242,641	11,425,385	2,123.70
18 to 24 years	873,321	27,403,792	3,186.86
25 to 29 years	569,096	19,153,968	2,971.17
30 to 34 years	585,067	19,920,253	2,937.05
35 to 39 years	394,964	19,195,261	2,057.61
40 to 44 years	335,686	18,544,880	1,810.13
45 to 49 years	259,280	16,818,793	1,541.61
50 to 54 years	234,160	17,563,230	1,333.24
55 to 59 years	208,303	17,591,315	1,184.12
60 to 64 years	182,238	18,202,180	1,001.19
Poverty category 1: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty less than or equal to 7.4	379,490	24,188,329	1,568.90
Poverty category 2: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 7.4% and less than or equal to 8.7%	426,627	20,413,106	2,089.97
Poverty category 3: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 8.7% and less than or equal to 10.1%	567,058	23,791,531	2,383.44
Poverty category 4: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 10.1% and less than or equal to 10.9%	673,138	25,493,157	2,640.47
Poverty category 5: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 10.9% and less than or equal to 12.2%	607,882	22,465,425	2,705.86
Poverty category 6: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 12.2% and less than or equal to 13.5%	820,008	27,235,522	3,010.80
Poverty category 7: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 13.5% and less than or equal to 14.2%	689,548	23,638,607	2,917.04
Poverty category 8: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 14.2% and less than or equal to 15.9%	885,300	25,040,506	3,535.47
Poverty category 9: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 15.9% and less than or equal to 18.4%	757,656	23,495,534	3,224.68
Poverty category 10: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 18.4% and less than or equal to 42.4%	816,569	20,343,902	4,013.83

PQE 03 includes uncomplicated cystitis, upper respiratory infection, chronic and acute otitis media, allergic rhinitis, viral syndrome, influenza without pneumonia, cellulitis, pyoderma, and local skin infection.

Table 5. PQE 04 - Visits for Asthma in ED

GROUP	NUMERATOR	DENOMINATOR	OBSERVED RATE PER 100,000 POPULATION
Overall	582,756	132,179,876	440.88
Females	295,586	65,223,411	453.19
Males	287,170	66,956,465	428.89
5 to 9 years	141,317	17,210,030	821.13
10 to 14 years	79,175	17,871,187	443.03
15 to 17 years	37,550	11,425,385	328.65
18 to 24 years	106,298	27,403,792	387.90
25 to 29 years	75,527	19,153,968	394.32
30 to 34 years	76,172	19,920,253	382.38
35 to 39 years	66,717	19,195,261	347.57
Poverty category 1: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty less than or equal to 7.4	36,964	13,060,612	283.02
Poverty category 2: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 7.4% and less than or equal to 8.7%	36,300	11,144,940	325.71
Poverty category 3: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 8.7% and less than or equal to 10.1%	46,333	13,197,507	351.07
Poverty category 4: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 10.1% and less than or equal to 10.9%	57,231	14,269,709	401.07
Poverty category 5: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 10.9% and less than or equal to 12.2%	51,725	12,533,604	412.69
Poverty category 6: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 12.2% and less than or equal to 13.5%	77,311	15,310,192	504.96
Poverty category 7: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 13.5% and less than or equal to 14.2%	60,897	13,300,838	457.84
Poverty category 8: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 14.2% and less than or equal to 15.9%	72,584	14,214,372	510.64
Poverty category 9: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 15.9% and less than or equal to 18.4%	69,214	13,497,619	512.79
Poverty category 10: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 18.4% and less than or equal to 42.4%	74,197	11,650,483	636.86

Table 6. PQE 05 - Visits for Back Pain in ED

GROUP	NUMERATOR	DENOMINATOR	OBSERVED RATE PER 100,000 POPULATION
Overall	113,554	126,423,208	89.82
Females	63,700	65,183,030	97.72
Males	49,854	61,240,178	81.41
18 to 24 years	4,757	15,069,091	31.57
25 to 29 years	6,369	10,689,026	59.58
30 to 34 years	9,529	11,130,724	85.61
35 to 39 years	10,921	10,699,349	102.07
40 to 44 years	12,019	10,327,706	116.38
45 to 49 years	11,127	9,371,708	118.73
50 to 54 years	11,896	9,795,835	121.44
55 to 59 years	12,029	9,839,637	122.25
60 to 64 years	11,042	10,159,407	108.69
65 to 69 years	8,253	9,263,733	89.09
70 to 74 years	5,860	7,635,556	76.75
75 to 79 years	4,449	5,670,738	78.46
80 to 84 years	2,832	3,539,535	80.01
85+ years	2,471	3,231,163	76.47
Poverty category 1: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty less than or equal to 7.4	6,381	11,627,152	54.88
Poverty category 2: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 7.4% and less than or equal to 8.7%	6,557	8,762,779	74.83
Poverty category 3: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 8.7% and less than or equal to 10.1%	12,576	16,913,026	74.36
Poverty category 4: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 10.1% and less than or equal to 10.9%	11,878	13,839,225	85.83
Poverty category 5: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 10.9% and less than or equal to 12.2%	10,883	12,066,811	90.19
Poverty category 6: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 12.2% and less than or equal to 13.5%	15,568	15,660,455	99.41
Poverty category 7: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 13.5% and less than or equal to 14.2%	11,252	14,936,394	75.33
Poverty category 8: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 14.2% and less than or equal to 15.9%	13,428	12,387,845	108.40
Poverty category 9: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 15.9% and less than or equal to 18.4%	10,608	9,385,385	113.03
Poverty category 10: Estimated percent of people of all ages in poverty larger than 18.4% and less than or equal to 42.4%	14,423	10,844,136	133.00