

Prevent unnecessary ER visits with these proactive strategies

 pages.azblue.com/Help-reduce-LANE-visits-to-the-emergency-room---SEPT-2021.html

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Perhaps you're familiar with the use of the acronym LANE in referring to “low-acuity non-emergent” visits to the emergency room. No doubt you would agree that this type of visit should be prevented whenever possible—they're expensive for patients, and they drive up the overall cost of healthcare. In addition, they often interfere with a hospital's capacity to care for those experiencing a true emergency.

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September is Suicide Prevention Month: Mobilize AZSM offers patients and families [mental health and support resources](#)

Patients will appreciate you helping them save money

Blue Cross[®] Blue Shield[®] of Arizona (BCBSAZ) has expanded in-network options for members to access convenient, after-hours care for non-emergency conditions. In addition to retail health clinics and urgent-care centers, most BCBSAZ members also have unlimited access to 24/7 care through Nurse On Call and BlueCare AnywhereSM virtual visits.

As you are proactively guiding your patients toward appropriate after-hours care, please feel free to use these [sample scripting](#) ideas and add this type of messaging to your practice's website. Most patients appreciate knowing in advance of an urgent need that they have multiple low- or no-cost options for care after regular office hours.

Access to care helps patients feel safe

Access to and availability of services makes a big difference in how patients experience value in healthcare. They need to know and trust that professional care is there for those unexpected medical events and concerns—at any time, day or night, weekday or weekend. A caring message conveyed through your print materials, website, and after-hours phone recording can reassure patients that you're committed to making sure they receive the care they need, even when the office is closed.

It's also important to have brief in-person conversations with patients about access and availability. Touching on this topic at the end of an office visit reminds patients that they have options, and are protected and supported in receiving appropriate and timely medical attention when needed. This kind of communication contributes to stronger physician-patient relationships and improved patient experience.

Today's patients want holistic care

Thoughtful best practices help reduce LANE visits. Consider which ones might be most helpful for your patients:

- Give patients after-hours phone access to a practice nurse or physician who can answer timely questions about symptoms and care. You may guide BCBSAZ members to our \$0 Nurse On Call service.
- Offer some evening and/or weekend hours in your office. This is especially helpful for patients who work during standard office hours.
- Advise patients to call your practice before heading to the ER (except in dire emergencies) so you can help them make the best choice for the type of care they need.
- Schedule follow-up care visits for patients who have recently been discharged from acute and subacute care settings.
- Follow up with patients who have recently received care in the emergency room (to address any remaining care concerns and educate them on signs and symptoms requiring an ER visit).
- Support patients to select appropriate after-hours care through informative messaging on your website and in your phone system recording ([sample content](#)).
- Mention after-hours care options during office visits.

By incorporating these strategies, you can help your patients get the care they need without LANE visits.

If you have questions about reducing LANE visits, please contact your [provider liaison](#) or call us at 602-864-4231 or 1-800-232-2345, ext. 4231.

BlueCare Anywhere is a service mark of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association, an association of independent Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans.

Our members can take a digital ID card with them wherever they go with the MyBlue AZSM mobile app.

