Emergency Medicine

Claims Data Snapshot

2025

MedPro Group

MLMIC
MLMIC Insurance Company
CELEBRATING 50 FIFTY YEARS

Introduction

This publication begins with insight into frequency and financial severity profiles by specialty. Then follows an analysis of aggregated data from clinically coded cases opened between 2014-2023 in which Emergency Medicine is identified as the primary responsible service.

Keep in mind…

A clinically coded malpractice case can have more than one responsible service, but the “primary responsible service” is the specialty that is deemed to be most responsible for the resulting patient outcome.

Our data system, and analysis, rolls all claims/suits related to an individual patient event into one case for coding purposes. Therefore, a case may be made up of one or more individual claims/suits and multiple defendant types such as hospital, physician, and other healthcare professionals.

Cases that involve attorney representations at depositions, State Board actions, and general liability cases are not included.

This analysis is designed to provide insured doctors, healthcare professionals, hospitals, health systems, and associated risk management staff with detailed case data to assist them in purposefully focusing their risk management and patient safety efforts.

Specialty benchmarking

Specialties have different frequency and financial severity profiles which combine to produce differing risk levels.

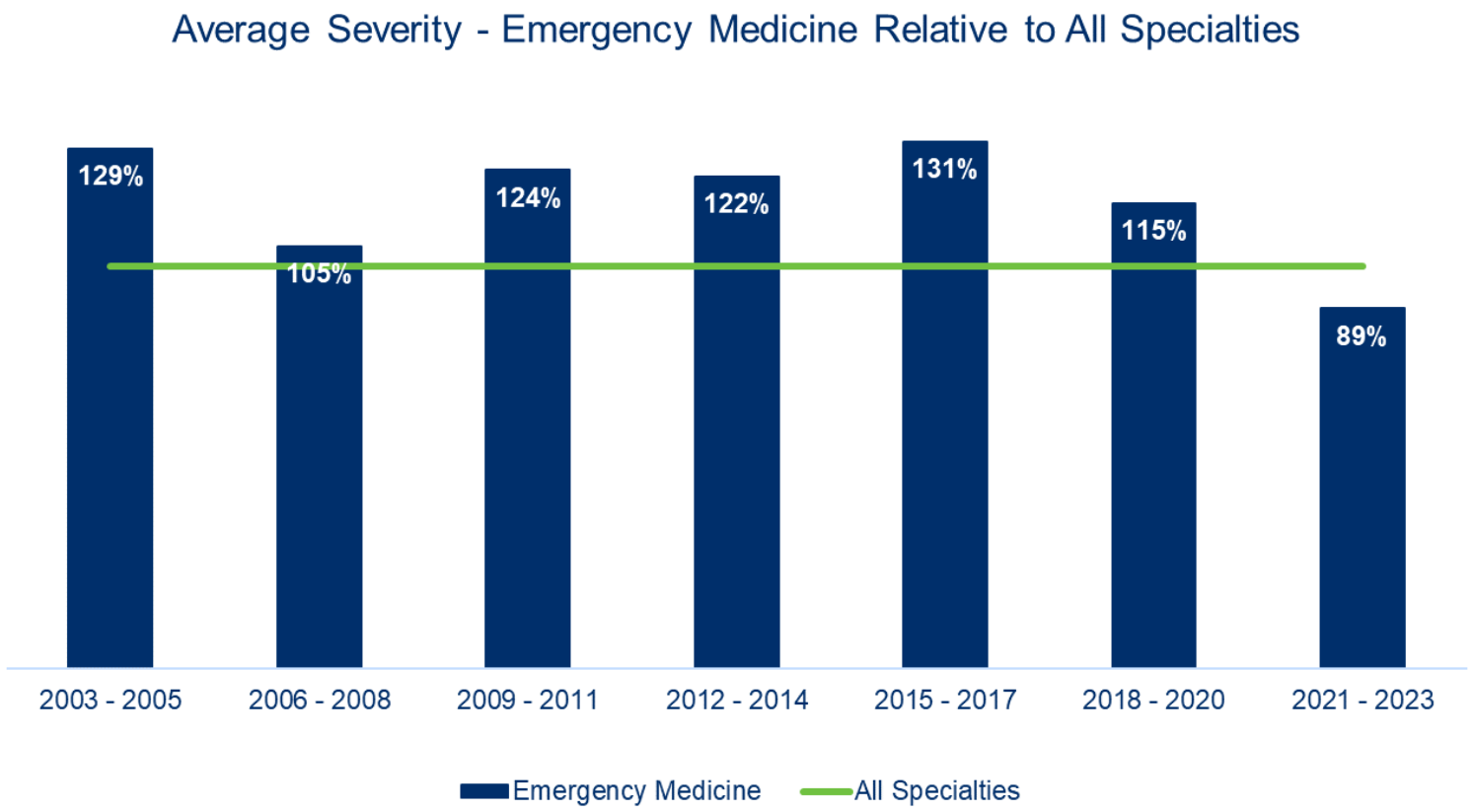
Severity Tier	Low Frequency	Medium Frequency	High Frequency
High	Hematology/Oncology, Pathology, Pediatrics	Anesthesiology, Neurology	Emergency Medicine, Neurosurgery, OB/GYN
Medium	Family Medicine, Nephrology, Physiatry, Urgent Care	Cardiology, ENT, Gastroenterology, Internal Medicine	Cardiovascular Surgery, General Surgery, Orthopedic Surgery, Radiology, Urology
Low	Allergy, Dermatology, Occupational Medicine, Psychiatry, Rheumatology	Ophthalmology, Plastic Surgery, Pulmonology	Hospitalists

Frequency Tier

Source: MedPro Group Physician & Surgeon Claim Experience & Analysis

Specialty trends – Emergency Medicine

Emergency Medicine has a higher financial severity per case and a higher claim frequency compared to all specialties.



Frequency Tier
High
Medium
Low

Source: MedPro Group Physician & Surgeon Claim Experience & Analysis

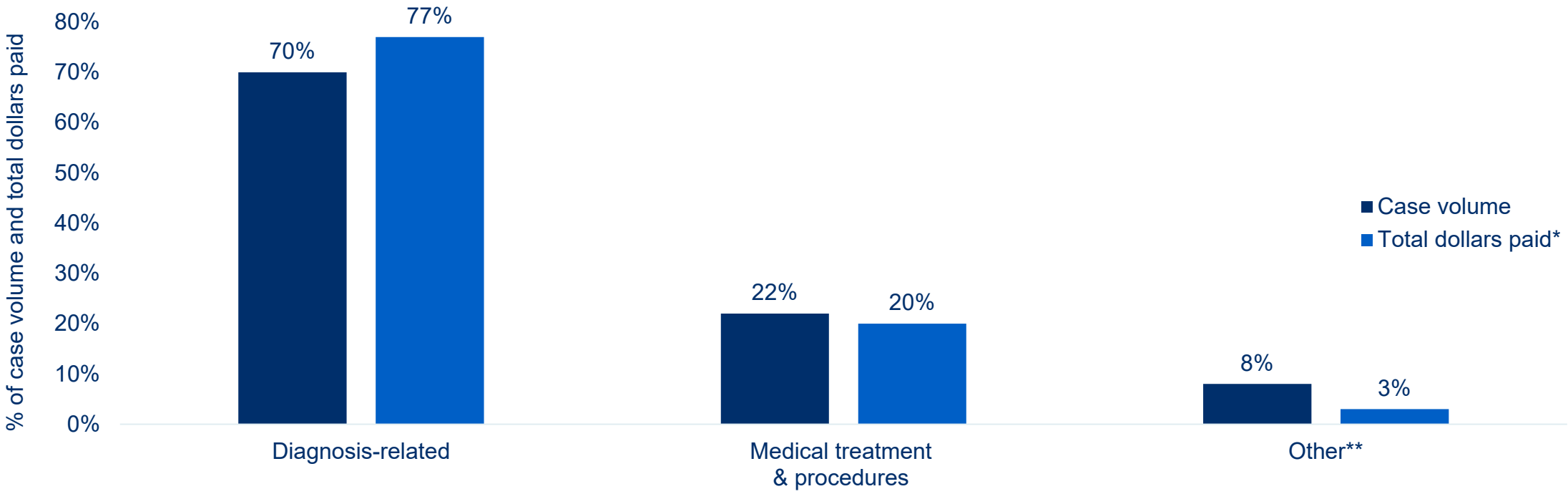
Key Points - Clinically Coded Data

- Diagnosis-related allegations account for 70% of Emergency Medicine case volume and more than three-fourths of total dollars paid*. Diagnoses most commonly noted include myocardial infarctions, strokes, and fractures, along with spinal cord injuries, infections and gastrointestinal disorders. These cases commonly reflect breaks all along the diagnostic process of care continuum, but most often during the initial diagnostic process phase of patient assessments, establishment of differential diagnoses and ordering of diagnostic testing.
- Medical treatment cases reflect triage processes issues and inadequate re-assessment/monitoring of patients admitted but not yet transferred to inpatient units. Procedural performance cases, including intubations, setting of fractures, and wound care, often are the result of poor procedural technique, and can be impacted by delayed recognition of complications.
- A focus on the emergency process of care is also included, reflecting breaks along the continuum of care, most often during the initial assessment and follow-up/coordination of care phases.
- Contributing factors, which are multi-layered issues or failures in the process of care that appear to have contributed to the patient's outcome, and/or to the initiation of the case, provide valuable insight into risk mitigation opportunities. Clinical judgment factors are key drivers of clinical Emergency Medicine case severity. Events arising during night/weekend/holiday shifts and suboptimal communication among providers are the next two most commonly noted drivers of clinical severity.

MedPro Group + MLMIC cases opened 2014-2023, Emergency Medicine as responsible service (N=1769); *Total dollars paid = expense + indemnity

Major Allegations & Financial Severity

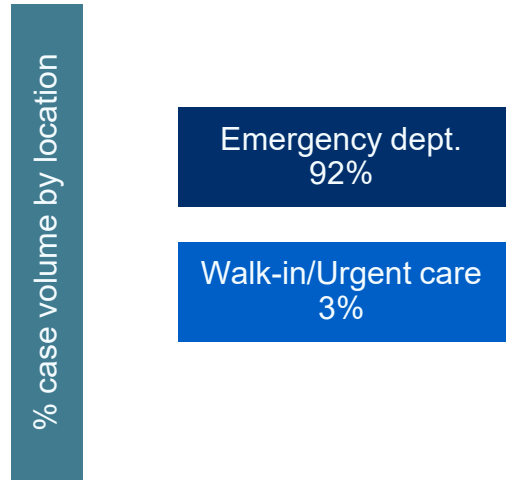
Each case reflects one major allegation category. Categories are designed to enable the grouping and analysis of similar cases and to drive focused risk mitigation efforts. The coding taxonomy includes detailed allegation sub-categories; insight into these is noted later in this report.



MedPro Group + MLMIC cases opened 2014-2023, Emergency Medicine as responsible (N=1769); *Total dollars paid = expense + indemnity; **Other includes allegations for which no significant case volume exists

Clinical Severity* & Most Common Locations

Clinical severity* categories	Sub-categories	% of case volume	Definitions
LOW	Emotional Injury Only	5%	Mental distress or suffering that is generally temporary; includes HIPAA violations, discrimination, involuntary stay
	Temporary Insignificant Injury		Lacerations, contusions, minor scars, rash; no delay in recovery
MEDIUM	Temporary Minor Injury	30%	Infection, fracture set improperly or a fall in the facility, where recovery is complete but delayed
	Temporary Major Injury		Burns, drug side effect; recovery delayed
	Permanent Minor Injury		Loss of fingers or loss or damage to organs; includes non-disabling injuries
HIGH	Significant Permanent Injury	65%	Deafness, loss of limb, loss of eye or loss of one kidney or lung
	Major Permanent Injury		Paraplegia, blindness, loss of two limbs or brain damage
	Grave Injury		Quadriplegia, severe brain damage, life-long care or fatal prognosis
	Death		Death
		36%	**% of cases resulting in patient death**



MedPro Group + MLMIC cases opened 2014-2023, Emergency Medicine as responsible service (N=1769); *Severity codes reflect National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) injury severity scale

Contributing Factors

Despite best intentions, processes designed for safe patient outcomes can, and do, fail.

Contributing factors are multi-layered issues or failures in the process of care that appear to have contributed to the patient's outcome, and/or to the initiation of the case, or had a significant impact on case resolution.

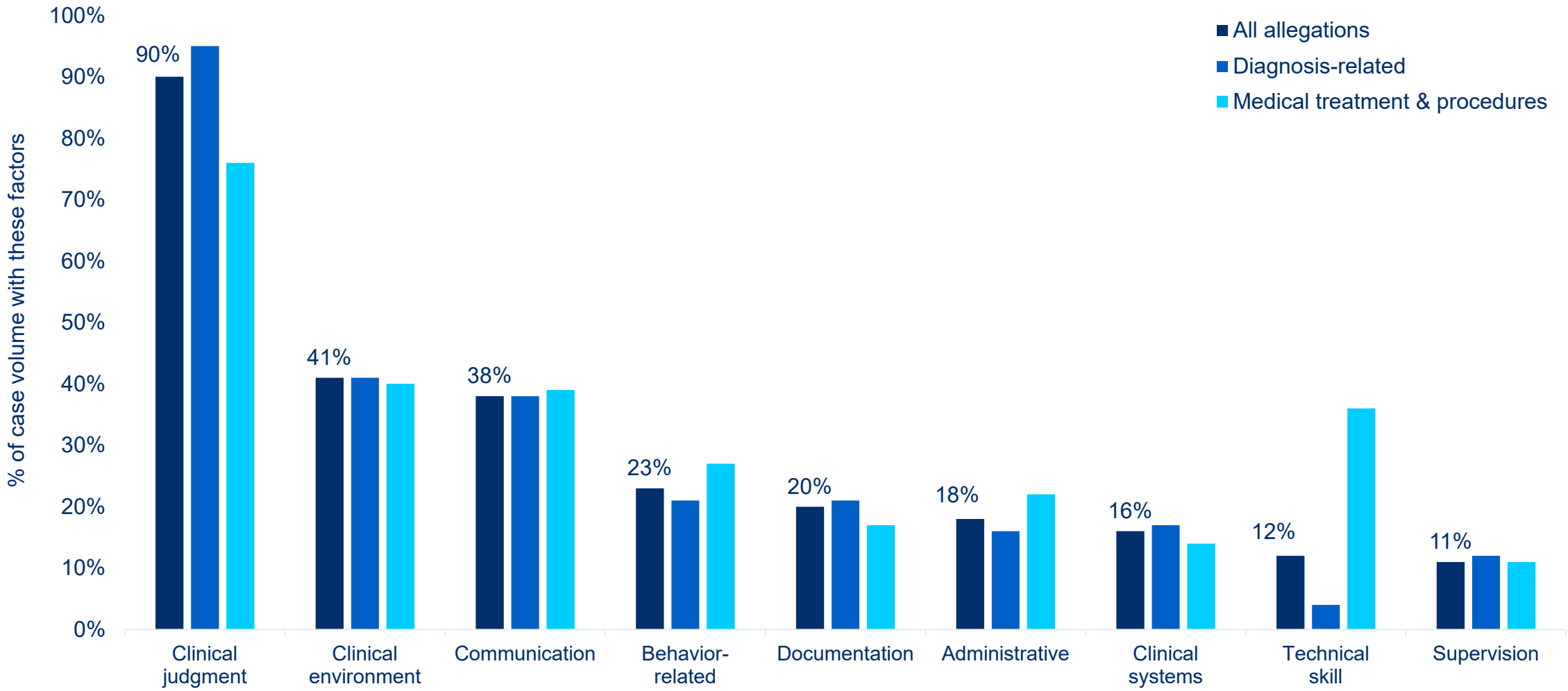
Multiple factors are identified in each case because generally, there is not just one issue that leads to these cases, but rather a combination of issues.

Administrative | Behavior-related | Clinical environment | Clinical judgment | Clinical systems | Communication | Documentation | Supervision | Technical skill

Contributing Factor Category Definitions

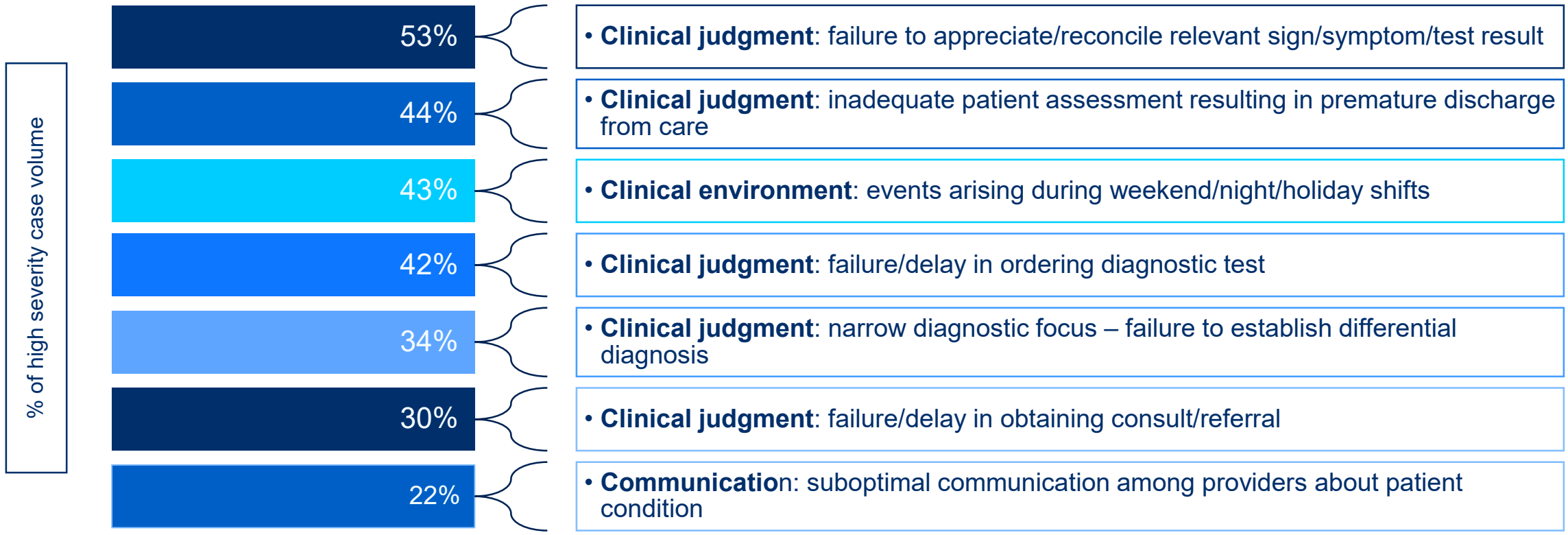
Administrative	Factors related to reporting of adverse events, adequacy of staffing, staff education/training, ethics, failure to follow and/or need for policy/protocols
Behavior-related	Factors related to patient nonadherence to treatment or behavior that offsets care; also, provider behavior including breach of confidentiality or sexual misconduct
Clinical environment	Factors related to workflow, physical conditions and “off-hours” conditions (weekends/holidays/nights)
Clinical judgment	Factors related to patient assessment, diagnostic decision-making, selection and management of therapy, patient monitoring, failure/delay in obtaining a consult, failure to ensure patient safety (falls, burns, etc.), choice of practice setting, failure to question/follow an order, practice beyond scope
Clinical systems	Factors related to coordination of care, failure/delay in ordering test, reporting findings, follow-up systems, patient identification, specimen handling, nosocomial infections
Communication	Factors related to communication among providers, between patient/family and providers, via electronic communication (texting, email, etc.), and telehealth/tele-radiology
Documentation	Factors related to mechanics, insufficiency, content
Supervision	Factors related to supervision of nursing, house staff, advanced practice clinicians
Technical skill	Factors related to improper use of equipment, medication errors, retained foreign bodies, technical performance of procedures

Most Common Contributing Factor Categories by Allegation



MedPro Group + MLMIC cases opened 2014-2023, Emergency Medicine as responsible service (N=1769); More than one factor per case, therefore totals >100%

Focus on Most Common Drivers of Clinical Severity



Clinical judgment factors are key drivers of clinical Emergency Medicine case severity, as are events arising during night/weekend/holiday shifts and suboptimal communication among providers.

MedPro Group + MLMIC cases opened 2014-2023, Emergency Medicine as responsible service (N=1769); More than one factor per case, therefore totals >100%

Focus on Diagnosis-Related Allegations

Diagnosis-related allegations encompass wrong diagnoses, failures/delays, and misdiagnoses. See below for the top diagnoses* noted in these cases.

Circulatory system (32%)

Primarily myocardial infarctions and strokes; also myo/endocarditis, pulmonary emboli, aneurysms

Injuries (19%)

Primarily fractures, head injuries, open wounds, spinal cord injuries

Digestive system (10%)

Lower and upper GI disorders

Central nervous system (9%)

Primarily infections

MedPro Group + MLMIC cases opened 2014-2023, Emergency Medicine as responsible service (N=1769); *as a percentage of all diagnosis-related allegations

Focus on Diagnosis-Related Allegations

Diagnosis-related allegations encompass wrong diagnoses, failures/delays, and misdiagnoses. Note the key opportunities to reduce diagnostic errors along the diagnostic process of care* below.

Phase 1

Initial diagnostic assessment

91%
of cases

- Patient notes problem & seeks care
- History & physical
- Patient assessed, symptoms evaluated
- Differential diagnosis established
- Diagnostic testing ordered

Phase 2

Testing and results processing

22%
of cases

- Performance of diagnostic tests
- Interpretation of diagnostic test results
- Test results transmitted to/received by ordering provider

Phase 3

Follow-up and coordination

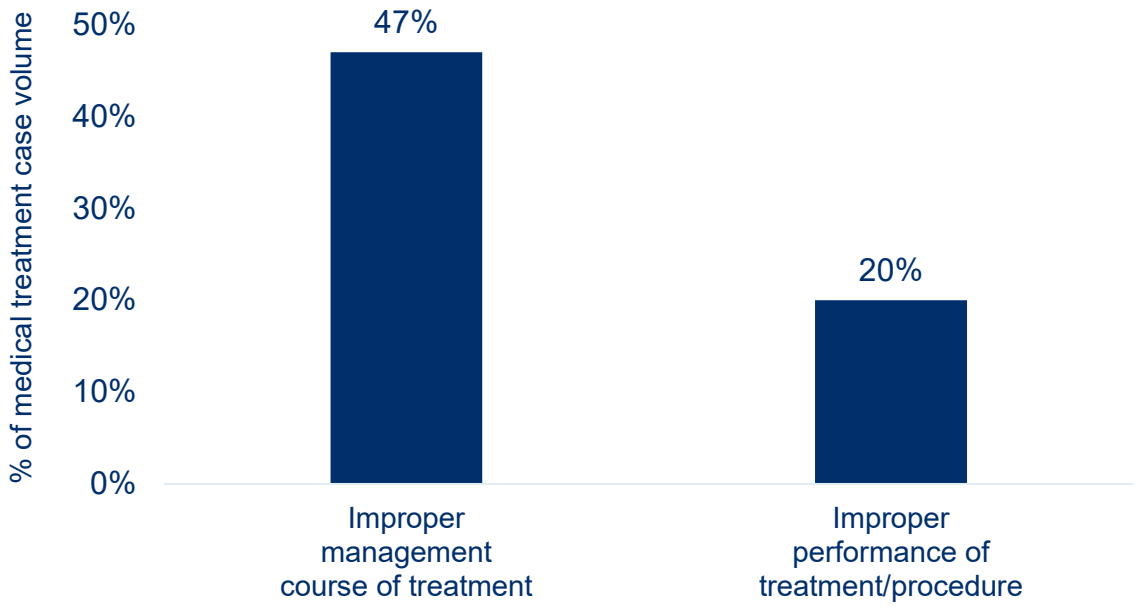
56%
of cases

- Physician follows-up with patient
- Referrals/Consults
- Patient information communicated among care team
- Patient compliance with follow-up plan

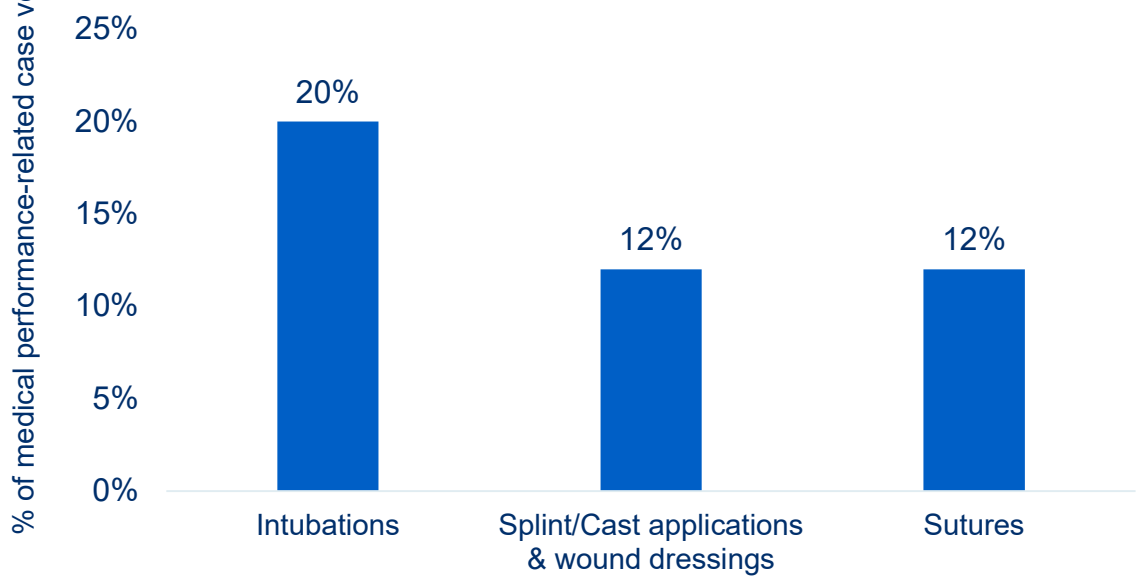
MedPro Group + MLMIC cases opened 2014-2023, Emergency Medicine as responsible service (N=1769); *each step reflects a combination of contributing factors; diagnostic process of care algorithm courtesy of Candello, a division of CRICO Strategies

Focus on Medical Treatment Allegations

Top allegation details



Top procedures involved



Medical treatment cases reflect triage processes issues and inadequate re-assessment/monitoring of patients admitted but not yet transferred to inpatient units. Procedural performance cases often are the result of poor procedural technique, and can be impacted by delayed recognition of complications.

MedPro Group + MLMIC cases opened 2014-2023, Emergency Medicine as responsible service (N=1769)

Focus on Cases Arising in the Emergency Department

Note the key opportunities to reduce errors along the emergency department process of care* when Emergency Medicine is the primary responsible service.

Phase 1

Initial diagnostic assessment

81%
of cases

- Patient notes problem & seeks care
- Initial assessment: history & physical
- Ongoing assessment: monitoring of clinical status
- Ordering of diagnostic tests

Phase 2

Testing and results processing

20%
of cases

- Performance of diagnostic tests
- Interpretation of diagnostic test results
- Test results transmitted to/received by ordering provider

Phase 3

Follow-up and coordination

59%
of cases

- Consultation management
- Development of discharge plan
- Post discharge follow-up (includes pending test results)

Phase 4

Patient adherence

9%
of cases

- Patient adherence to post discharge follow-up plan

MedPro Group + MLMIC cases opened 2014-2023, Emergency Medicine as responsible service (N=1769); *each step reflects a combination of contributing factors; emergency department process of care algorithm courtesy of Candello, a division of CRICO Strategies

Risk Mitigation Strategies

- **Clinical judgment:**
  - Implement comprehensive test tracking and referral tracking procedures that include protocols for complete review of imaging studies, patient follow-up, and documentation.
  - Thoroughly screen patients for risk factors, atypical presentations, and associated symptoms to avoid a narrow diagnostic focus.
  - Utilize evidence-based guidelines for myocardial infarctions, strokes, etc. Consider the use of clinical decision support aids and group decision-making to support clinical reasoning.
- **Communication:**
  - Define and implement a detailed process for patient handoffs, including expectations for verbal and written communication. Audit for compliance with the policy.
  - Provide patients/caregivers with written and verbal instructions related to their treatment plans and follow-up care. Make sure written instructions are at an appropriate reading level.
- **Clinical environment:**
  - Be aware of how staffing levels/patterns during the overnight, weekend and holiday shifts can impact patient care.
- **Clinical systems:**
  - Focus on ‘closing the loop’ with regards to receiving, reporting and acting on test results, including incidental findings and test results received after discharge.
  - Use team drills and situational simulations to improve teamwork between all providers in the ED.
- **Documentation:**
  - Verify that documentation supports the clinical rationale for the diagnosis and treatment plan, including the inclusion/exclusion of differential diagnoses.
  - Adhere to processes for following up on radiology discrepancies and communicating and documenting test results received after discharge.

MedPro Group & MLMIC Data

MedPro and MLMIC are partnered with Candello, a national medical malpractice data collaborative and division of CRICO, the medical malpractice insurer for the Harvard-affiliated medical institutions.

Derived from the essence of the word candela, a unit of luminous intensity that emits a clear direction, Candello's best-in-class taxonomy, data, and tools provide unique insights into the clinical and financial risks that lead to harm and loss.

Using Candello's sophisticated coding taxonomy to code claims data, MedPro and MLMIC are better able to highlight the critical intersection between quality and patient safety and provide insights into minimizing losses and improving outcomes.

Leveraging our extensive claims data, we help our insureds stay aware of risk trends by specialty and across a variety of practice settings. Data analyses examine allegations and contributing factors, including human factors and healthcare system flaws that result in patient harm. Insight gained from claims data analyses also allows us to develop targeted programs and tools to help our insureds minimize risk.