Psychiatry

Claims Data Snapshot

2025

MedPro Group

MLMIC Insurance Company

CELEBRATING 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 Psychiatry 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.
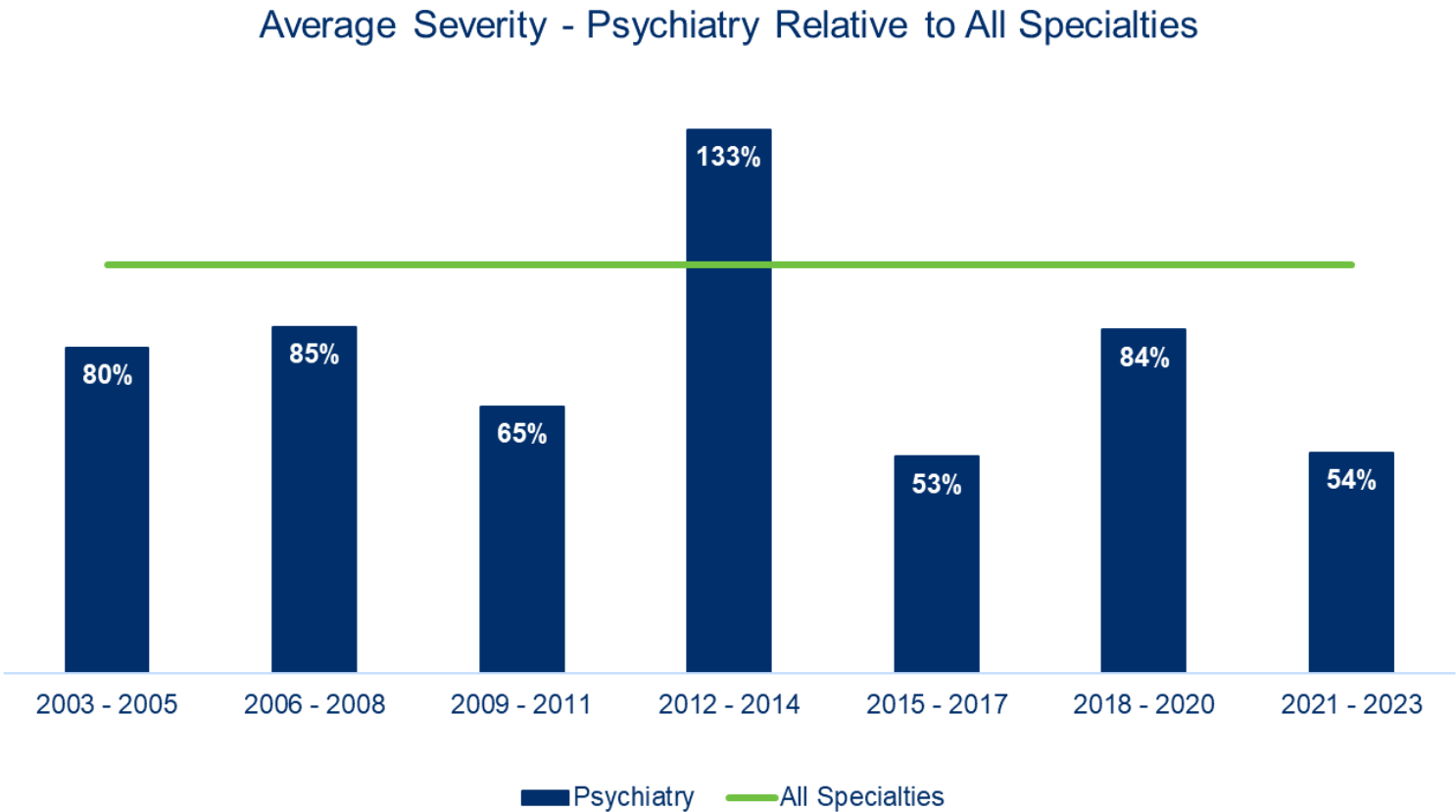
Specialty benchmarking

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

Severity Tier		Low	Medium	High
	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
		Low	**Medium**	**High**
		Frequency Tier		

Source: MedPro Group Physician & Surgeon Claim Experience & Analysis

3

Specialty trends – Psychiatry

Psychiatry has a lower financial severity per case and a lower claim frequency compared to all specialties.

### Average Severity - Psychiatry Relative to All Specialties

Year	Psychiatry
2003 - 2005	80%
2006 - 2008	85%
2009 - 2011	65%
2012 - 2014	133%
2015 - 2017	53%
2018 - 2020	84%
2021 - 2023	54%

■ Psychiatry — All Specialties

Frequency Tier

High

Medium

Low

Source: MedPro Group Physician & Surgeon Claim Experience & Analysis

4

Key Points - Clinically Coded Data

- Medical treatment allegations account for 36% of case volume, and commonly reflect issues with selection of the most appropriate course of treatment for the patient, and appreciating and reconciling symptoms and test results.

- The monitoring and management of patients' medication regimens account for 33% of all Psychiatry case volume, and almost half of total dollars paid.* Inadequate monitoring of the effects of medication regimens, decision-making as to the most appropriate medication for the patient's condition, and suboptimal patient/family education about the risks of the medication are commonly identified risk issues.

- Diagnosis-related allegations account for 14% of Psychiatry case volume. These most commonly reflect missed/delayed diagnoses of behavioral disorders, and warning signs of patient tendency toward suicide or other self-inflicted injury These cases commonly reflect breaks in the diagnostic process of care, most often in the initial diagnostic phase, including inadequate assessment and evaluation of patient symptoms, a narrow diagnostic focus, and delays or failures in ordering diagnostic testing.

- 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, specifically inadequate patient assessment processes and selection/monitoring of medication regimens, are key drivers of clinical Psychiatry case severity.

MedPro Group + MLMIC cases opened 2014-2023, Psychiatry as responsible service (N=299); *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.
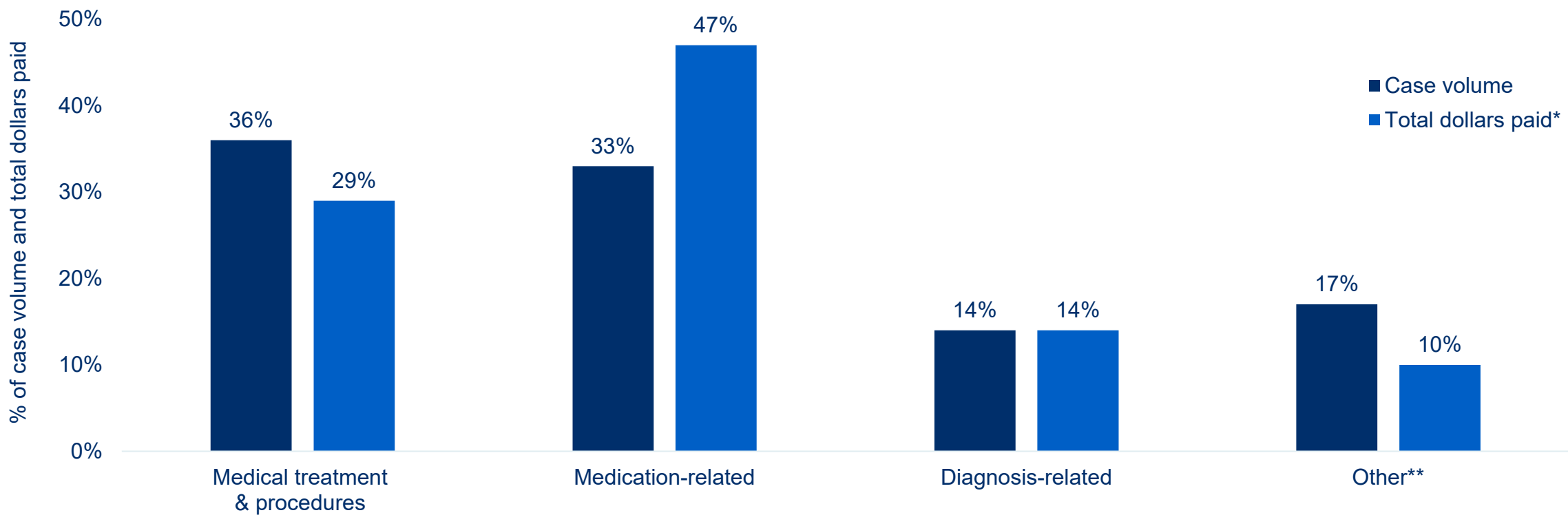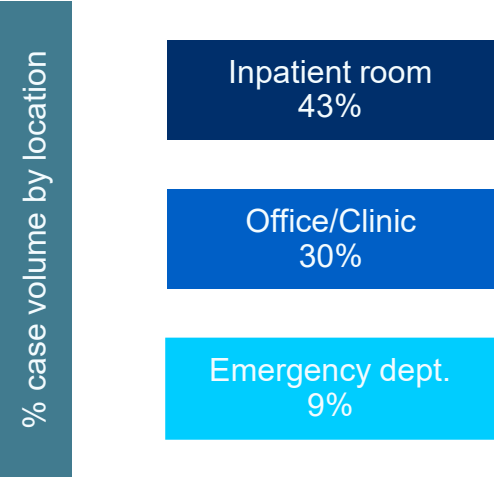

MedPro Group + MLMIC cases opened 2014-2023, Psychiatry as responsible service (N=299); *Total dollars paid = expense + indemnity; **Other includes allegations for which no significant case volume exists

6

Clinical Severity* & Most Common Locations

Clinical severity* categories	Sub-categories	% of case volume	Definitions
LOW	Emotional Injury Only	**33%**	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	**25%**	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	**42%**	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
		35%	**% of cases resulting in patient death**

% case volume by location

Inpatient room
43%

Office/Clinic
30%

Emergency dept.
9%

MedPro Group + MLMIC cases opened 2014-2023, Psychiatry as responsible service (N=299); *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 |

8

Contributing Factor Category Definitions

| Category	Definition
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
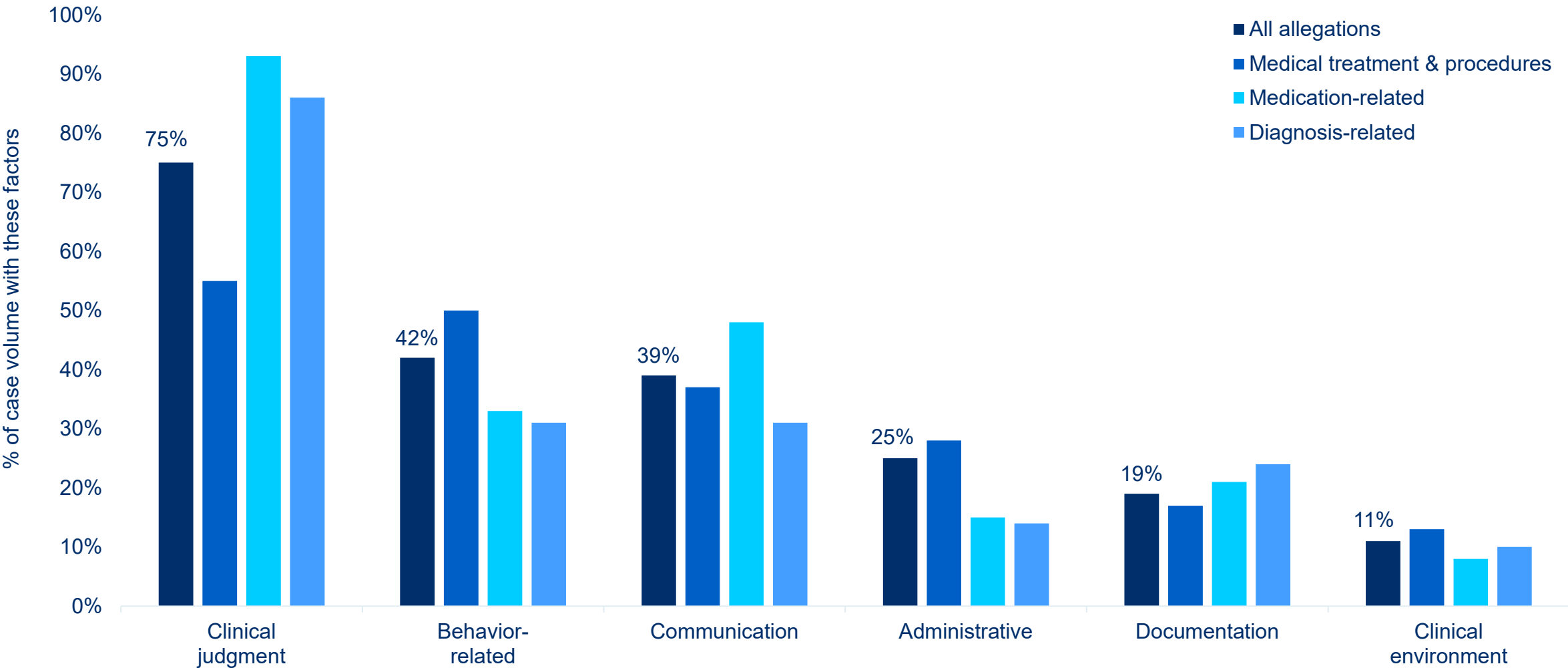
MedPro Group + MLMIC cases opened 2014-2023, Psychiatry as responsible service (N=299); More than one factor per case, therefore totals >100%
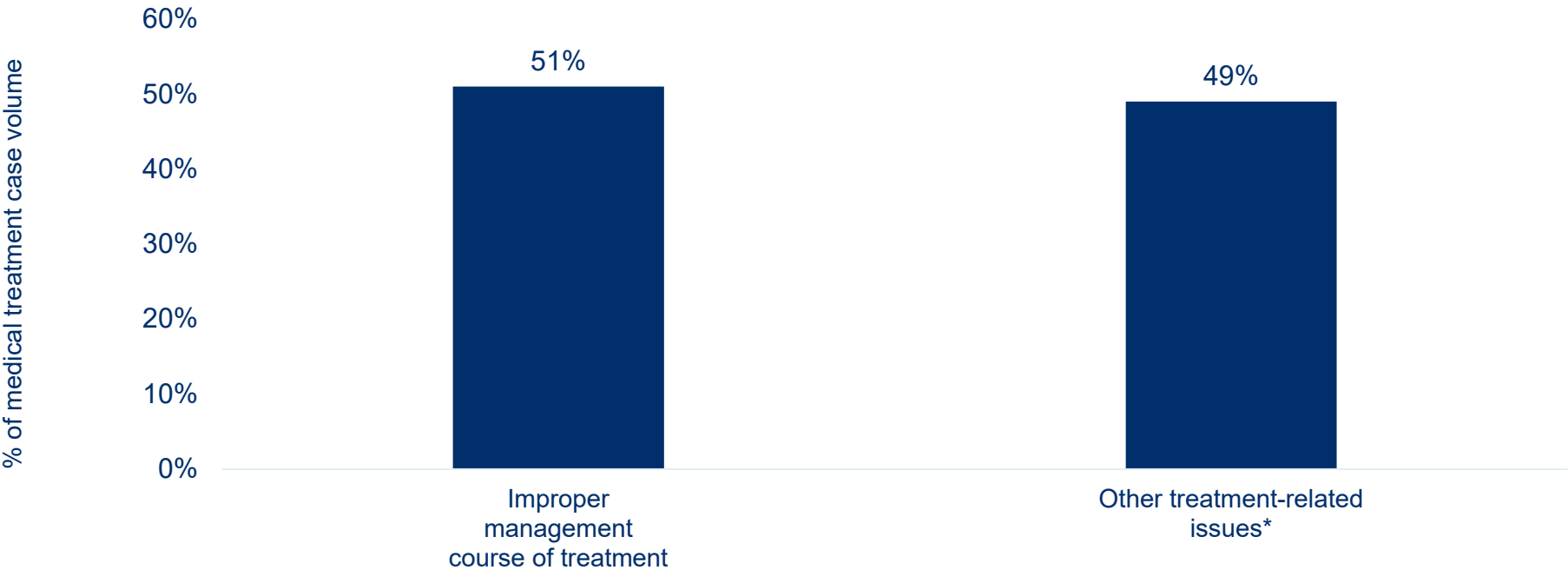
Focus on Most Common Drivers of Clinical Severity

% of high severity case volume

40% — • **Clinical judgment**: failure to appreciate/reconcile relevant sign/symptom/test result

28% — • **Clinical judgment**: inadequate monitoring of physiological status

26% — • **Clinical judgment:** issues specific to the medication decision-making process (other than ordering, dispensing, administering), including appropriateness of the patient for the medication, managing medication recalls, etc

22% — • **Clinical judgment**: inadequate monitoring of medication regimen

22% — • **Clinical judgment**: inadequate assessment resulting in premature discharge from care

Clinical judgment factors, specifically inadequate patient assessment processes and selection/monitoring of medication regimens, are key drivers of clinical Psychiatry case severity.

MedPro Group + MLMIC cases opened 2014-2023, Psychiatry as responsible service (N=299); More than one factor per case, therefore totals >100%

11
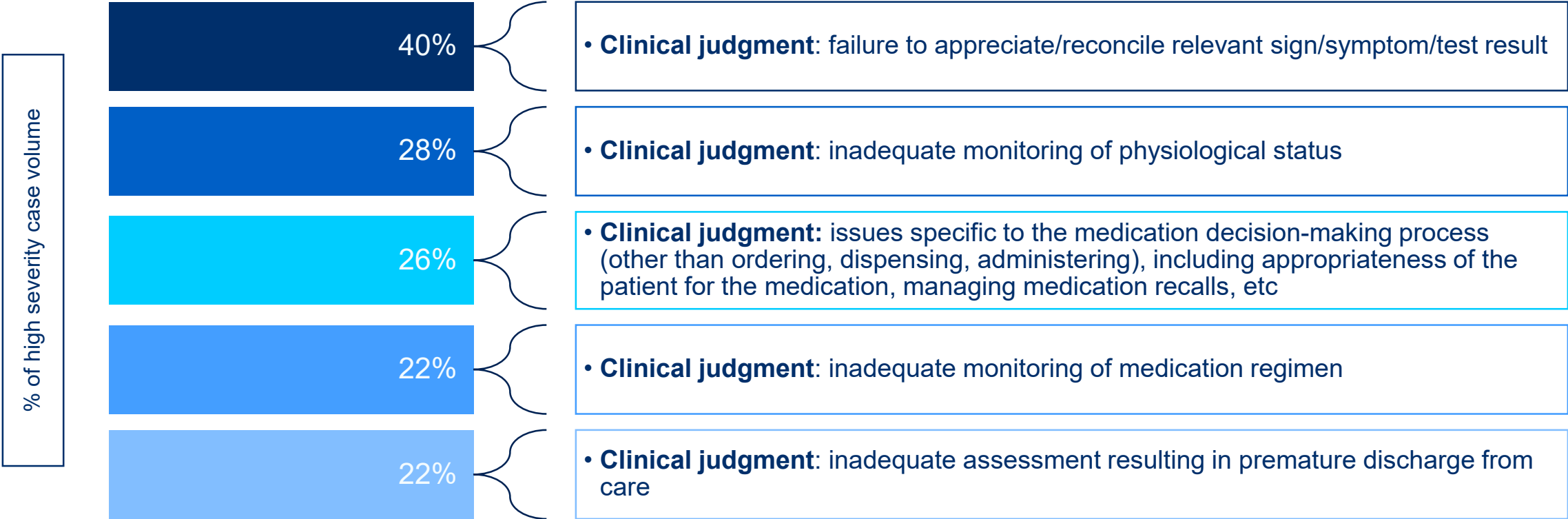
Focus on Medical Treatment Allegations

Allegation details

Chart: % of medical treatment case volume

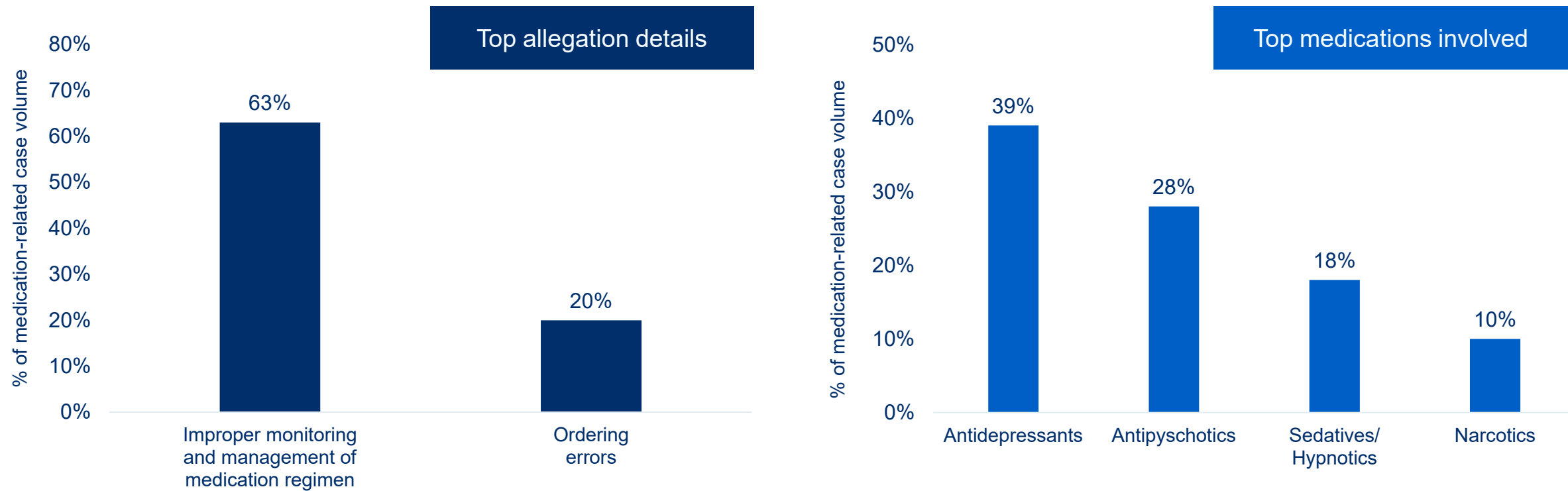- Improper management course of treatment: 51%
- Other treatment-related issues*: 49%

Medical management cases most often reflect issues with selection of the most appropriate course of treatment for the patient, and appreciating and reconciling symptoms and test results.

Focus on Medication-Related Allegations

Top allegation details

% of medication-related case volume

- Improper monitoring and management of medication regimen — 63%
- Ordering errors — 20%

Top medications involved

% of medication-related case volume

- Antidepressants — 39%
- Antipyschotics — 28%
- Sedatives/ Hypnotics — 18%
- Narcotics — 10%

Inadequate monitoring of the effects of medication regimens, decision-making as to the most appropriate medication for the patient's condition, and suboptimal patient/family education about the risks of the medication are commonly identified risk issues.

MedPro Group + MLMIC cases opened 2014-2023, Psychiatry as responsible service (N=299)

13

Focus on Medication-Related Allegations

Medication-related allegations primarily encompass management of medication regimens and ordering/dispensing/administration errors. Note the key opportunities to reduce medication errors along the process of care* below.

Phase 1

Ordering
10%
of cases

Includes failures to order, and wrong medication/dose/route orders

Phase 2

Dispensing
0%
of cases

Includes pharmacy dispensing of wrong medication/dose/method (route)

Phase 3

Administration
2%
of cases

Includes failures to medicate, administration wrong medication/dose/route

Includes technique involved with medication administration

Phase 4

Monitoring & management
74%
of cases

Includes management of regimen/patient response/reaction

Includes monitoring immediately after medication administration

Phase 5

Other
20%
of cases

Includes other process of care issues not captured in the previous steps, including patients with unknown allergies and cases in which medication shortages, contaminations or recalls impact the delivery of care

Process of care breakdowns within this set of cases are primarily noted within the monitoring & management phase.

MedPro Group + MLMIC cases opened 2014-2023, Psychiatry as responsible service (N=299); *each step reflects a combination of allegations; medication process of care algorithm courtesy of Candello, a division of CRICO Strategies

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.

Mental, behavioral, and neurodevelopmental disorders

43%

Suicide and self-inflicted injuries

26%

MedPro Group + MLMIC cases opened 2014-2023, Psychiatry as responsible service (N=299); *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

79% 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

5% 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

29% of cases

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

Risk Mitigation Strategies

- **Conduct an appropriate and thorough assessment of the patient.**
  - Update and review medical, medication, and family history at every visit to ensure the best decision-making.
  - Maintain problem lists.
- **Communicate with each other.**
  - Focus on care coordination if other specialties are involved, including next steps and determining who is responsible for the patient.
  - Give thorough and clear patient instructions.
- **Engage patients as active participants in their care.**
  - Consider the patient's health literacy and other comprehension barriers.
  - Recognize patterns of patient non-compliance, and focus on documentation of efforts made to encourage compliance and follow up with treatment.
- **Document.**
  - Verify that documentation supports the clinical rationale for the method of treatment.
  - Describe the rationale for inclusion/exclusion of differential diagnoses.
  - Timely document thorough, objective information about the results of patient assessments, education of the patient/family about treatment plans - including medication regimens, and any instances of patient nonadherence.
  - Thorough, consistent documentation in the chart enhances communication between providers and provides a supportive framework for defense of any subsequent malpractice case.

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.