



# Alternative Emergency Room (ER) Treatment



From the American Dental Association's (ADA) Health Policy Institute (HPI) dated 2016, it is noted that dental ER visits in the U.S. cost the health care system \$1.6 billion dollars or \$749 per visit.

- Most patients presenting to the ER are for **non-traumatic** conditions
- Most patients visiting an ER will only receive an injection or prescription for pain or antibiotics
- 79% of dental ER visits would be better served by being seen in a provider office setting

## How the dentist can play an important role:

- Reinforce dental treatment post care instructions
- Provide information on what patients should do in case of dental pain or other dental emergency
- Provide patients with information on how the practice can be contacted after hours
- Encourage all patients, particularly those who come in primarily for emergencies, to engage in comprehensive care emphasizing prevention and early intervention

Together, we can help patients engage in good dental care practices, avoiding unneeded and expensive emergency room treatment.

## Your practice can make a difference by:

- Incorporating and conducting oral health evaluations on all of your patients
- Educating families on the importance of avoiding the ER to help prevent unnecessary medical costs as this will go a long way toward assuring optimal oral health care for a lifetime
- Educating families that hospital emergency rooms are not designed or equipped to treat toothaches and dental abscesses