

March 2022

# Improving the ED Experience during the Pandemic



## Our Amazing Team Children's Hospital Colorado

**7,923**  
Employees

**2,582**  
Medical staff

**est. 1908**  
Serving kids for more  
than 100 years

**15**  
Locations

**120,016**  
ED/UC visits

**623**  
Total licensed beds



## We see kids from all 50 states

And more than 35 countries



**We see more, treat more,  
and heal more kids than  
any other hospital in our  
seven-state region**

- Colorado
- Kansas
- Montana
- Nebraska
- New Mexico
- South Dakota
- Wyoming

# Our families complete our care team

We include patients and their families in every care decision — and we do our best to make sure they don't have to worry about anything else while they're here. We know kids need to play, learn and connect, even when they're sick, and we offer dozens of amenities to help them do just that.

## For kids:



**Child Life specialists** help children to cope and feel comfortable in the hospital.



**Philips Ambient Experience MRI** puts kids in a jungle or deep sea adventure to make testing less stressful.  
*Available at Anschutz Medical Campus and South Campus*



**Creative arts therapists** promote physical and emotional health through yoga, art, dance and music.



**Seacrest Studios** connects kids in the hospital with an in-house radio and TV broadcast studio.



**Playrooms on every floor** offer antsy kids an outlet, wherever they are.



**Teen Zone** offers adolescents a 3,000 square-foot hangout with tons of amenities.  
*Available at Anschutz Medical Campus*

## For families:



Private rooms with full-size pullout beds and ample storage



A Family Resource Center, where parents can recharge while kids are in the hospital



A chapel and Spiritual Care for people of any faith



Daycare for siblings at our Creative Play Center



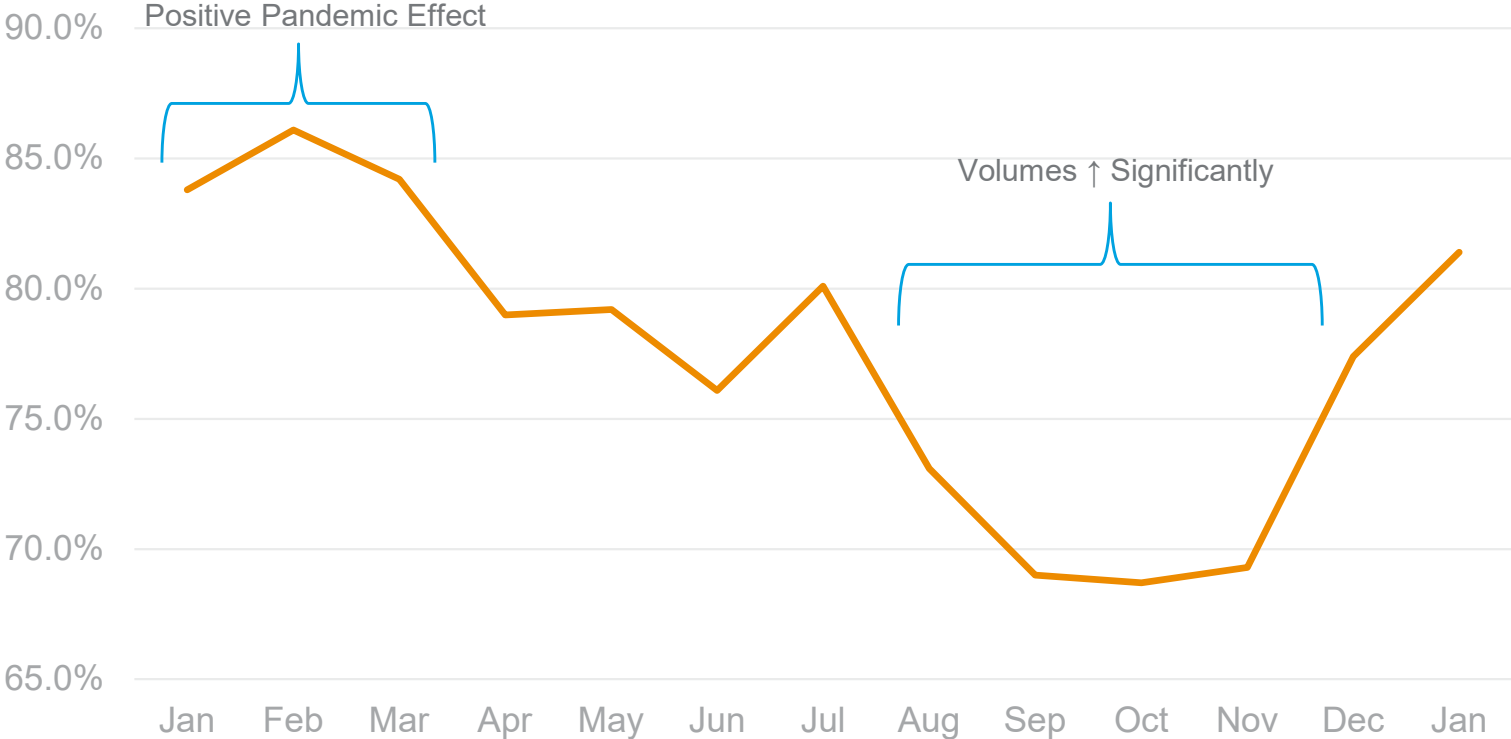
Outside areas and gardens where families can relax and get some fresh air



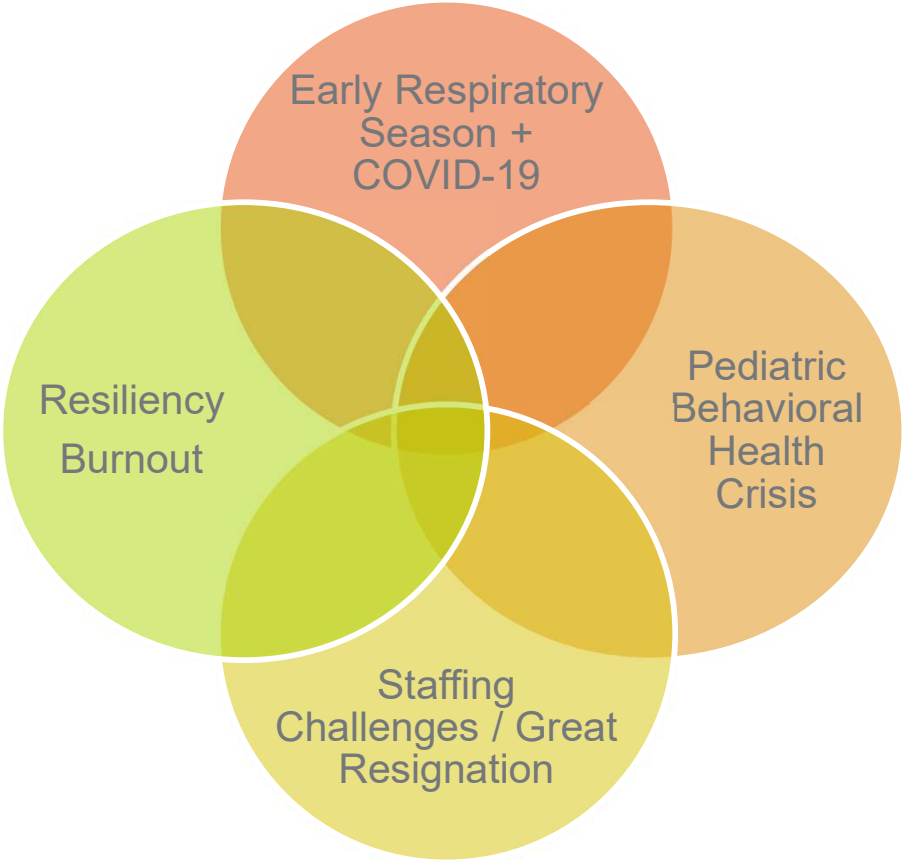
Flat-screen TVs, internet access and on-demand video in every room

# Impact of COVID-19 on the ED

# ED Would Recommend



# Quadfecta Impacts Pediatric Emergency Departments



# Qualitative Analysis



# Comment Analysis

- **July 2021:** Deep-dive into comment themes with the ED/UC Patient-Family Experience team
- **Goal:** Better understand what was driving overall experience and identify modifiable factors



# Positive Themes

# What's Was Going Well

Clean/Safe  
Child-Friendly  
Took Concerns Seriously  
Good Communication  
Compassionate  
Eased Worries  
Offered Comfort

“I felt like everyone cared about my child and making him feel better. **I liked the way they spoke to my child and to me. They made me feel better about his condition and made sure I didn't have any unanswered questions before leaving.**”

“The hospital was very organized. The staff was **knowledgeable and friendly. Clean and organized. Made me feel welcomed and treated us with respect.**”

“The staff took excellent care of my kid, making sure she had **food and water** (given we came in at dinner). The **doctor and nurse listened closely and respected our concerns** and were very thorough.”

# Opportunities for Improvement

# What Needed Improvement



“I sat patiently my son on the other hand kept **crying out in pain** because of all the pain he had. **I watched as people was seen before my son** even people we came in before.”

“Nurses were **short with communication** and gave me the impression that my child shouldn't be at the ER.”

“It was **cold** and I **had to ask for water and a blanket.**”

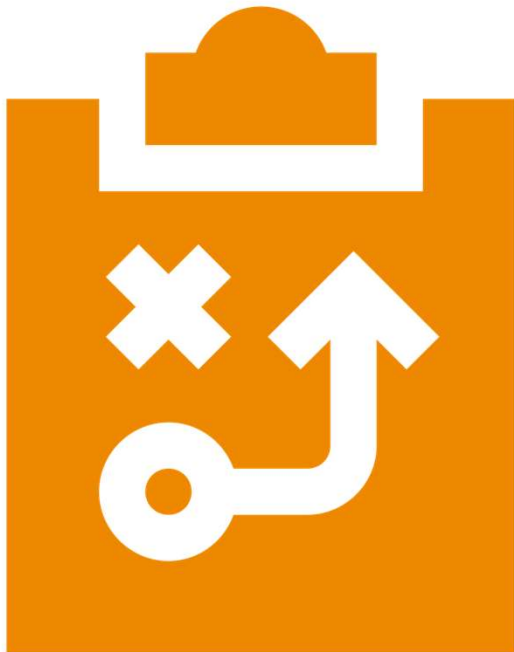
# Developing a Plan to Support Patients, Families, and Team Members

# Wrapping our Arms Around the ED Team



→ Quadfecta meant that our typical response would not work . . . we needed a new plan.

# Putting Together the Plan



- Needed additional resources—ED staff couldn't do this on their own
- Focused on the waiting room experience and providing child-friendly experience



# Putting Together the Plan





# Helping Families Understand Triage

## What to Expect Emergency Department

- 1 Talk to a nurse**  
We'll ask you some simple questions and check your child. This helps us understand how sick or hurt your child is.
- 2 Registration**  
We'll get information from you, put it in our computer system and print out a badge.
- 3 Care is on the way**  
Your wait time depends on how sick or hurt your child is and the number of other patients we get who are also sick or hurt. We must help patients in the order of those who need us most urgently, even if they arrived after you did.
- 4 Care is here**  
We'll move you to a treatment room for care.

### Have a question? Ask!

You matter to us. Ask us anything, anytime. If you feel your child's health has changed, let us know right away.



Children's Hospital Colorado

## What is triage?

### How does it work in an Emergency Department?

Most of us are used to being seen on a first come, first served basis when we visit a business. Things work differently when visiting an Emergency Department. Our nurses use a method called triage to decide the order in which we see patients. Your wait time depends on how busy the Emergency Department is and how sick or injured your child is. We see patients in the order of those who need us most urgently, even if they arrived after you.

#### You Matter to Us

We know that it can be frustrating and difficult to wait. Our priority is to provide the best care and to see your child as quickly as possible. If you have any questions while you wait, just ask. We want to make your wait as comfortable as possible. And if you think something has changed with your child's health, let us know right away.

#### What factors may affect my wait time?

Many factors can impact how long the wait is in the Emergency Department.

- Patients may be arriving by ambulance or helicopter who need life-saving care. You may not see these patients enter the Emergency Department.
- Patients who are having a mental health crisis are seen in our Psychiatric Emergency Department. Our goal is to move these patients to a room as quickly as possible.
- Your wait depends on what type of care your child needs and which treatment rooms and providers are available. Our nurses assess each patient based on their health concern(s) and medical history. The nurses determine which patients need to be seen emergently, urgently or are stable and can wait when there are no available exam rooms.

#### Commitment to Equity

Children's Hospital Colorado is committed to embracing diversity, equity, and inclusion in all that we do. We treat all patients in a manner that does not discriminate against any person based on their identity or other protected class. If you feel that you have discriminated against, please contact our Patient Relations department by calling 720-777-1010.



## Wait Time Updates

- Needed Support from Compliance/EMTALA Team
- Challenging when Staffing is Stretched

***Script: Good morning/afternoon/evening. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am the charge nurse, and this is Dr. \_\_\_\_\_. Right now, we are experiencing longer than average wait times because there are many children who need our care, and we are sorry that you are having to wait. We want you to be as comfortable as possible while you are with us. If there is something we can do for you, or if you feel that your child is getting sicker, please let one of our team members know. Again, our apologies for the wait, thank you for trusting us to care for your child.***



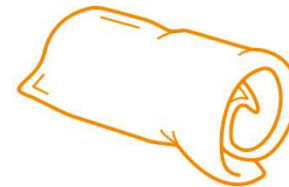
# People Resources



Volunteer Rounding



Child Life Assistant FTE  
added to ED Waiting Rom



Handed out Activity Bags and Fleece Blankets



## People Resources: Child Life Assistants

“I haven't been able to give them a lot of specific information about why the wait is so long, and I often do not know answers about welfare since I am not a medical professional. But families often just need someone to empathize with them and listen to help them feel seen. **I have seen a lot of relief on caregiver's faces just because I have taken a moment to really listen to them and empathize with what they are going through.**”

“A mom and her 5 young children were in the waiting room, and I could tell she was overwhelmed. **I grabbed a board game and coloring to play with the kids and sat with them for about 10-15 minutes while the mom took a phone call. This is something small and somewhat insignificant, however, when the mom finished her phone call she seemed in much better spirits and better able to cope with her situation.**”

“I personally want to reiterate that I loved my time in the ED and I know several other child life assistants feel the same! **It has been a fun change of pace. The staff is so kind and appreciative of what we do in the waiting room, and it feels great to be appreciated!**”



# People Resources: EVS & Guest Relations



## Partnership with EVS

- EVS Leader Rounding
- Increased Staffing / Hourly Rounding
- Deep Clean 6-7am



## Expanded Guest Relations Role to ED

- Visitor screening/badging
- Rounding
- Offering comfort items
- Cleaning





## Supporting Families in the Psychiatric ED



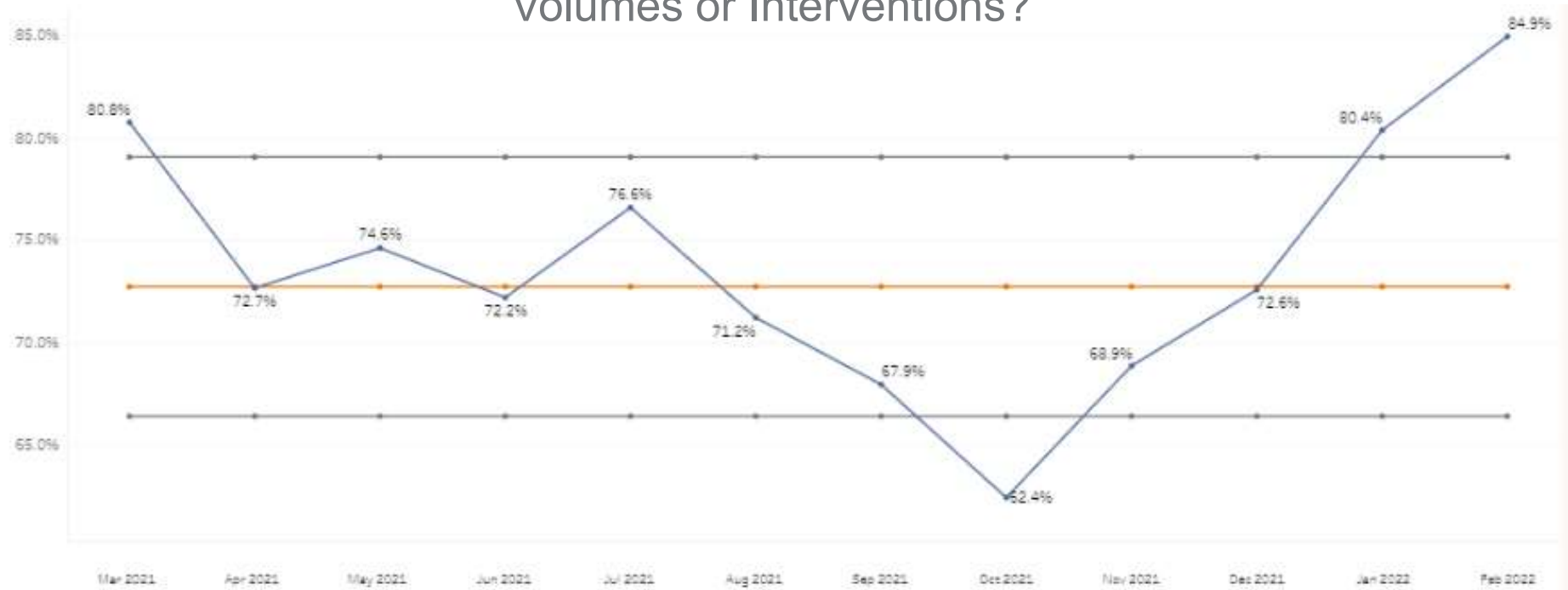
- Limited pediatric psychiatric inpatient beds meant long waits for families in the Psychiatric ED
- Patient Advocates and Patient-Family Experience team began daily rounding
- Developed training in partnership with our Psych ED leaders
- Created a new rounding survey to track follow-up
- Offered families resources and support (coffee, toiletries, etc.)
- Debrief with team every two weeks to offer support

# What was the impact?



# Anschutz ED

## Volumes or Interventions?



# Final Thoughts: Caring for the Caregivers



Thank you for trying to help the ED figure out how we can do better, while understanding our limitations. Thank you for taking the time to get to know us, to listen and guide, the support has been invaluable.

**–Emergency Services Nursing Director**

# Supporting Team Resiliency



Let's talk about perspective for a minute.

Today I spent 3.5 hours in the waiting room at Children's Hospital North Campus. As I sat and watched a half dozen people who came in after us get called back in I was honestly grateful. Sure, waiting that long with a sick 3yo is definitely not fun but I've been on the other side. I've been the one who rushed in with a 4 week old baby. I've been the one who watched as the oxygen monitor started blinking and sounding an alarm. I've been the one rushed through those emergency room doors with a team of nurses and doctors ushering me into a room as quickly as possible. I've been there, so I knew. I knew that waiting that long didn't mean they weren't taking my daughter's illness seriously. I knew waiting that long didn't mean no one cared. I knew waiting that long meant that I should be grateful and that's exactly what I was and still am. 6 hours later, I am at home with my daughter tucked into her bed. I've been the one who didn't get to go home so again, I am just so grateful. Thank you to everyone at Children's Hospital for always being there. Thank you for taking such amazing care of our precious children when we are not able to. Thank you for treating us with compassion and grace even when we may not be showing it to you. Thank you from the bottom of this mama's heart for being you ❤️ **#childrenshospitalcolorado**  
**#justgrateful #mydoulallc #rsv #colorado #thankyouhealthheroes #sickbaby**  
**#perspectiveiseverything**



**Thank You**