



# High Emergency Department Users: Older Adults with Diabetes and Multiple Chronic Conditions | Alberta

## What is the Issue?

There are approximately 580,000 people aged 65 and older living in Alberta and more than 17% of them are living with diabetes. Often older adults with diabetes have at least one other health condition, and 44% of them have 2 or more conditions.

## Key Features of this Study:

Using health data from Alberta, two groups of community-living older adults with diabetes were identified:

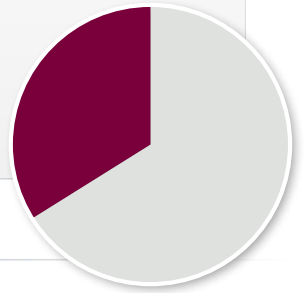
- 1) High-Emergency Department User Group:** All community-living older adults with diabetes with the highest number of emergency department visits over one year.
- 2) Population-Based Group:** A random sample of community-dwelling older adults living with diabetes.



## Did you know?

**34%**

of the Population-Based Group visit the emergency department at least once each year?



The **High-Emergency Department User Group** and the **Population-Based Group** were compared on how often they also experienced other common health conditions. Shown below is the prevalence of selected conditions for each group.

High-Emergency Department User Group		Population-Based Group
28%	MENTAL HEALTH	18%
31%	CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE (COPD)	13%
27%	CONGESTIVE HEART FAILURE	11%
84%	HYPERTENSION	71%
65%	ARTHRITIS	46%

People identified in the High-Emergency Department User Group were more likely to:



Be Male



Live in a Rural Area



Have More Visits with Physicians



Have a higher chance of death within one year

## Key Messages: Implications for Clinical Practice and Policy Considerations

- The high frequency of multiple chronic conditions suggests clinicians need to address diabetes in the context of all health challenges faced by patients.
- Frequent emergency department use is related to both socio-demographic factors and health conditions.

**A comprehensive long-term strategy needs to be developed that focuses on all of these factors.**

This infographic was developed on behalf of the ACHRU-CPP Research Team in collaboration with Lynne Mansell (patient/caregiver public partner) and Paige Blainey (ACHRU trainee). References available upon request. | [achru.mcmaster.ca](http://achru.mcmaster.ca)