

What's Happening

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina (BCBSNC) is making a strategic investment in the company that manages FastMed Urgent Care. This will enable FastMed Urgent Care to expand its network of physician-owned urgent care clinics across North Carolina. This collaboration will increase access to convenient, high quality medical care for all North Carolinians.

More Details

- The largest urgent care company in North Carolina is joining forces with BCBSNC to benefit patients across the state by providing convenient, affordable emergency room (ER) alternatives.
- Access to more urgent care clinics across North Carolina can help reduce ER visits, saving customers time and money while reducing overall health care costs.
- FastMed and its clinics are well positioned to meet the growing health care demand in North Carolina by providing a care model that bridges the gap between primary care and hospital emergency departments. Existing FastMed clinics across the state already serve thousands of North Carolinians.

Urgent Care in North Carolina

- Patients across North Carolina can spend more than four hours waiting for an ER visit, at an average total cost of nearly \$1,500 per visit. A visit to the ER typically costs 10 times more than visiting an urgent care centerⁱ.
- Emergency department use has consistently increased over the past decade, significantly increasing the overall cost of health care.ⁱⁱ Each year, thousands of patients visit crowded ERs for conditions that can be treated at urgent care centers.
- A 5-percent shift from ER to urgent care use could save nearly \$8 million annually in medical costs.ⁱⁱⁱ BCBSNC data shows that approximately 20 percent of ER visits are non-emergencies and represent nearly 14 percent of all BCBSNC ER claims.

ⁱ BCBSNC Internal Data, 2012.

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