

# The ACH Connection: Front-Loading Visits

**Front-loading visits:** A strategy whereby the agency increases the visit frequency or services at the beginning of care in order to reduce the potential for unplanned hospitalizations (Briggs, 2006).

## How can front-loading visits help reduce hospitalizations?

- Providing more intensive visits in the first few weeks of home care, especially when paired with telehealth, allows clinicians to more closely observe patients when they are sickest.
- Patients are known to be more at risk for hospitalization during the first few weeks of home care; therefore, planning higher visit frequencies during the initial period can help prevent avoidable hospitalizations.

## What can my agency do?

- Use the Hospitalization and Emergent Care Risk Assessment to determine which patients are at risk and include **front-loading visits** as one of the interventions for high-risk patients.
- Provide guidelines and procedures for front-loading visits.
- Educate staff that scheduling of visits needs to be patient-specific and included in the plan of care. Clinicians must understand to vary frequencies of visits by increasing visits when the patient is the most vulnerable and decreasing visits when patients are more stable.
- Consider pairing telehealth with front-loading visits as an intervention for high-risk patients.

## Best practices: (modify to meet the needs of your patient population)

- Patients who are identified as high risk for hospitalization will be seen at higher frequency by the home care team (discipline-specific frequencies on plan of care).
- The home care team members will coordinate their visits so the patient is seen daily but does not have more than one visit on the same day.
- The patient will receive either a clinician visit or a phone monitoring encounter daily for the first two weeks of service.

## Resources for front-loading visits:

Resource	On the Web
Impact of Front-Loading Visits on Patient Rehospitalization	<a href="http://www.medqic.org">www.medqic.org</a>

