

St. Charles Health System is committed to the health and well-being of all patients who come to our emergency department with a behavioral health crisis. We use evidence-based practices in all aspects of care.

While in the emergency department, you will receive:

- A medical exam by a qualified medical provider.
- A behavioral health assessment by a mental health professional. This may include determining your risk for suicide and long-term needs that may affect the outcome of your visit.

In some cases, your visit to the emergency department may result in a hospital stay. More often, a plan can be put in place so you can safely return home.

During your visit, we will ask you to identify someone with whom we can share information about your diagnosis, treatment, and post-emergency department care planning. This person is often called a “lay caregiver” and can be a family member or a trusted friend. He or she will work with our staff to develop a safe care plan for your transition home, inpatient admission or lower level of care. We will ask you to sign releases of information for this person, when necessary. Lay Caregivers are critical for positive outcomes and involvement benefits both safety and discharge planning.

Once it is determined that you can safely return home, we will arrange for any needed follow-up care. In most cases, this is a follow-up appointment within 7 days to address the reason for your emergency department visit.

Your follow-up may include an appointment with:

- Your primary care provider.
- A mental health provider.
- A walk-in crisis care clinic.

In addition, you may receive a phone call from a trained representative from Caring Contacts. Caring Contacts is a program that provides support after you leave the emergency department.

The benefits of a lay caregiver have been explained to me and I understand that only the minimum information necessary will be shared in support of safety and discharge planning.

If you would like a copy of our full policy on the discharge of patients in behavioral health crisis it is available at: <https://www.stcharleshealthcare.org/about-us/patient-rights>