



OREGON
HEALTH
AUTHORITY

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Emergency Department Boarding

Presentation to the Senate Health Care Committee

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Emergency Departments in Oregon

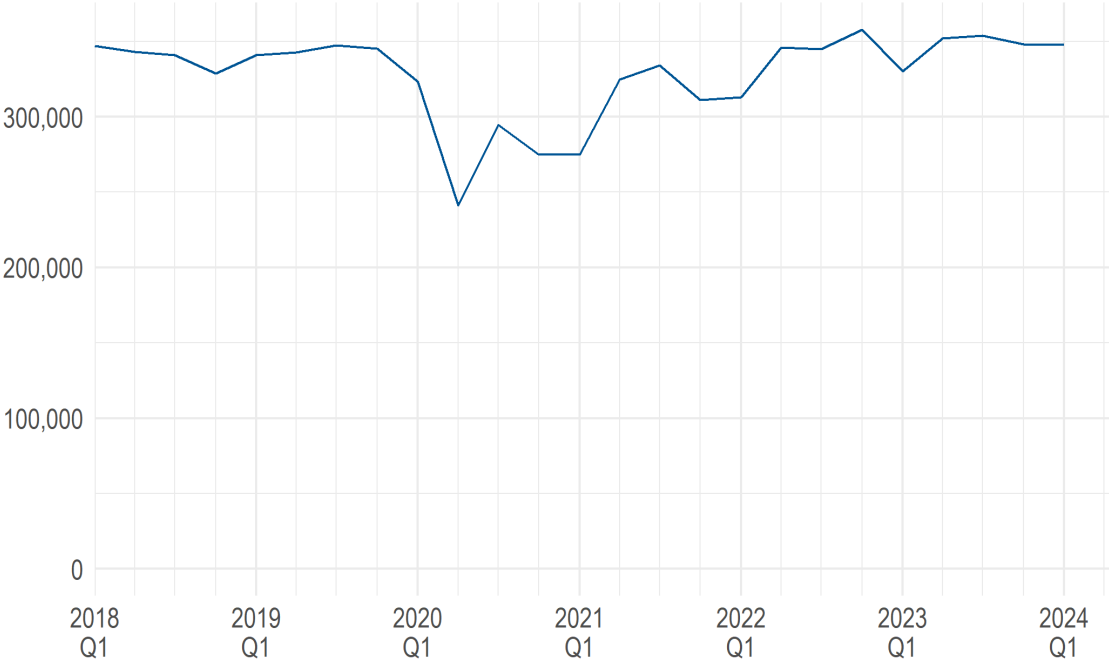
- There are **59 emergency departments** in Oregon, including Unity Behavioral Health, a dedicated psychiatric emergency department.
- Emergency department volume varies widely across the state.
 - **Salem Hospital** has the most emergency department visits annually - over 80,000, or an average of **225 visits per day**.
 - **Pioneer Memorial Hospital** in Heppner has the fewest emergency department visits annually - 939, or an average of **2 visits per day**.

Emergency Department Boarding and Length of Stay

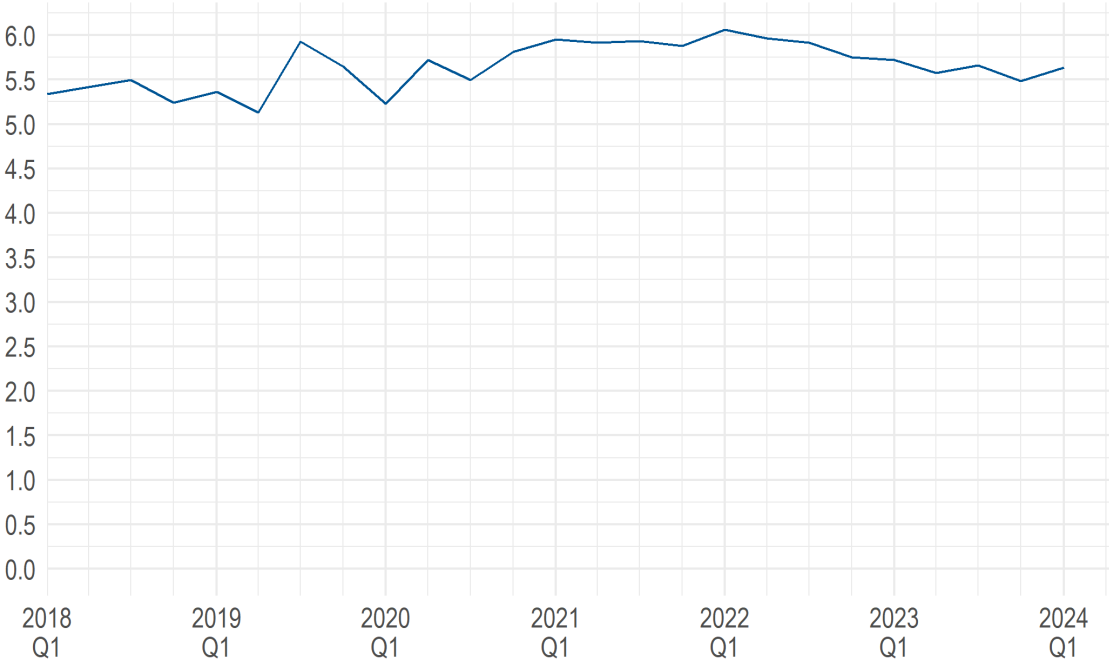
- This presentation uses **Length of Stay (LOS)** as a proxy to evaluate **Boarding**
 - **Boarding** is when a patient is medically able to be discharged but is held in the emergency department while an appropriate discharge location is arranged.
 - However, **our hospital discharge data does not tell us when boarding begins** or how long a patient has remained in the emergency department after they are able to be discharged.
 - Because there is no standard definition of **boarding** (e.g., 8 hours vs. 12 vs. 24), **we will focus on factors that influence length of stay** in general.
 - **Length of stay** is measured in hours from the time of admission to the time of discharge of the patient.

Emergency Department Discharges and Length of Stay

Since the second quarter of 2022, the number of emergency department discharges has returned to pre-pandemic levels
Statewide emergency department discharges by quarter, 2018-2024Q1



The statewide average emergency department length of stay in hours has remained in the 5 to 6 hour range since 2018
Statewide average emergency department length of stay in hours by quarter, 2018-2024Q1

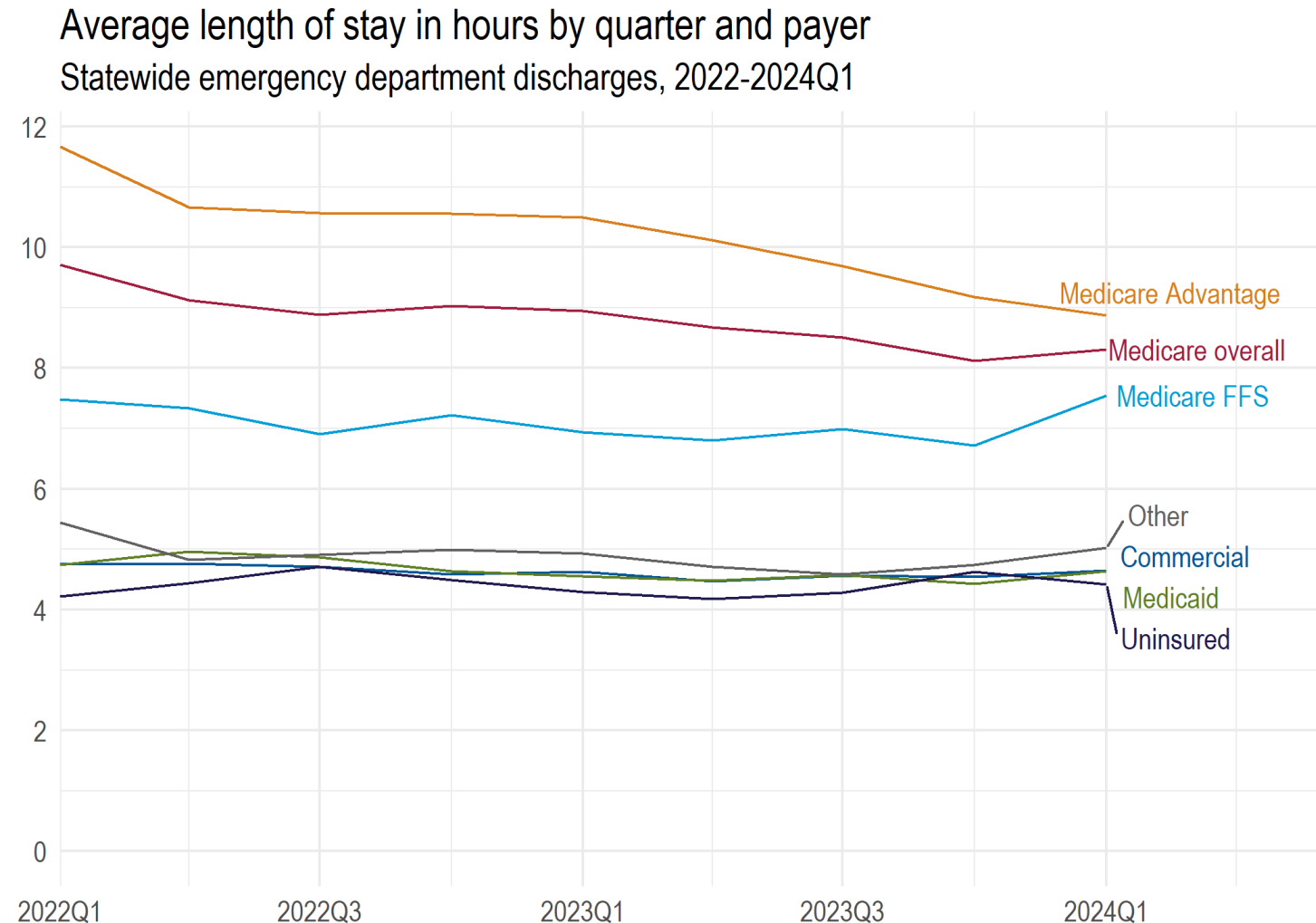


Factors Affecting Emergency Department Length of Stay

- Payer type
- Age
- Mental health and substance use diagnoses
- Type of discharge the patient needs (e.g., self-care/routine vs. skilled nursing facility)

Length of Stay by Payer Type

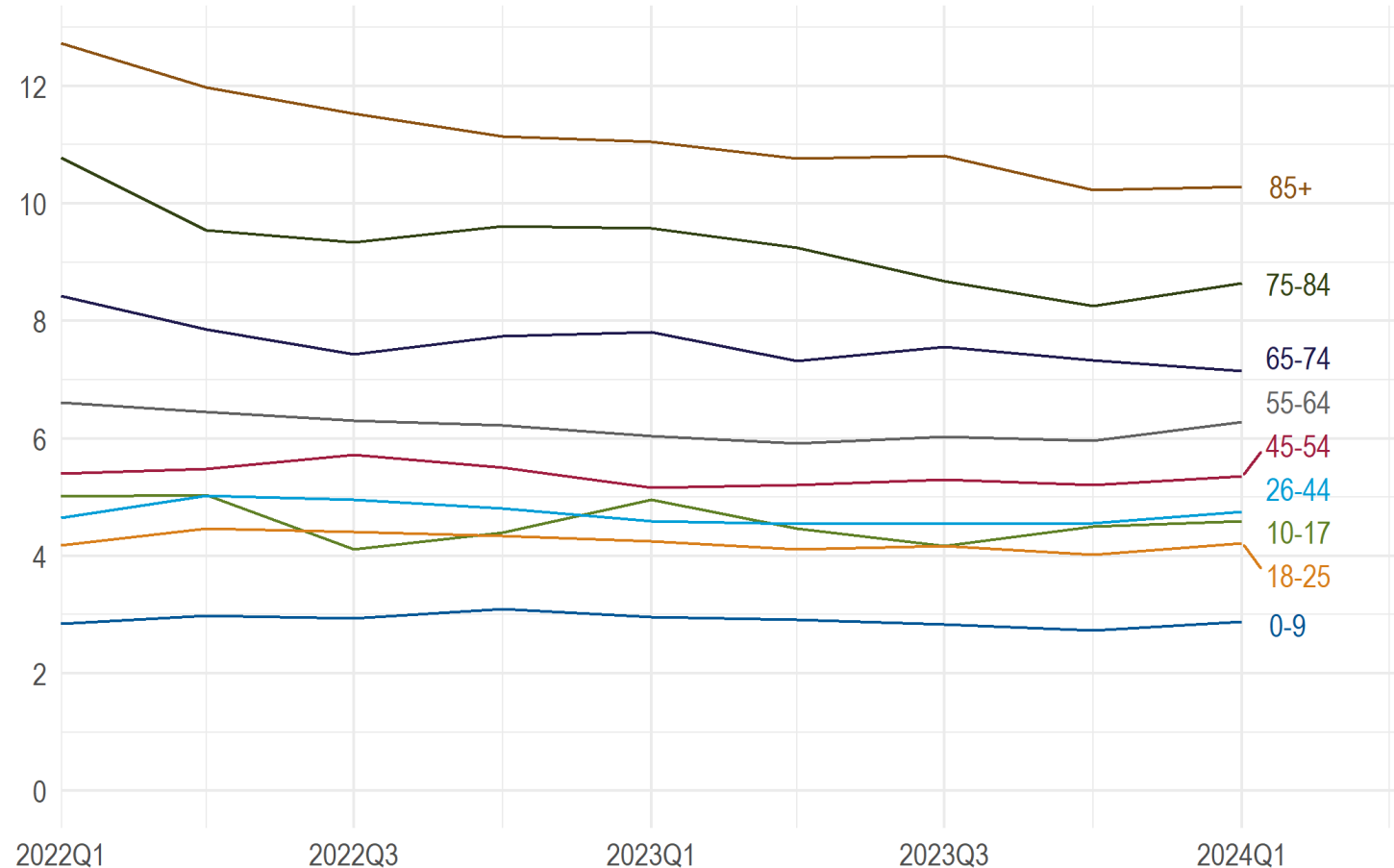
- **Medicare** has the longest average length of stay at about 8.5 hours overall.
- **Commercial, Medicaid, and other payers** have average lengths of stay of about 4.5 to 5 hours.



Length of Stay by Age

Length of stay
tends to increase
as **patient age**
increases.

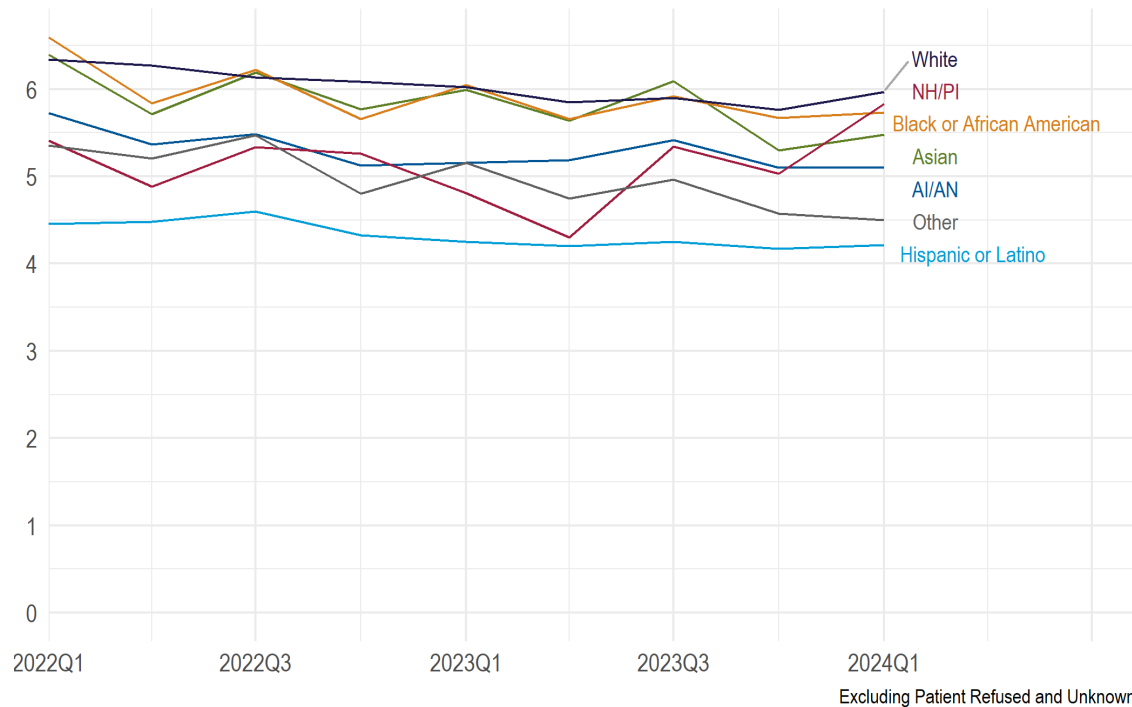
Average length of stay in hours by quarter and age range
Statewide emergency department discharges, 2022-2024Q1



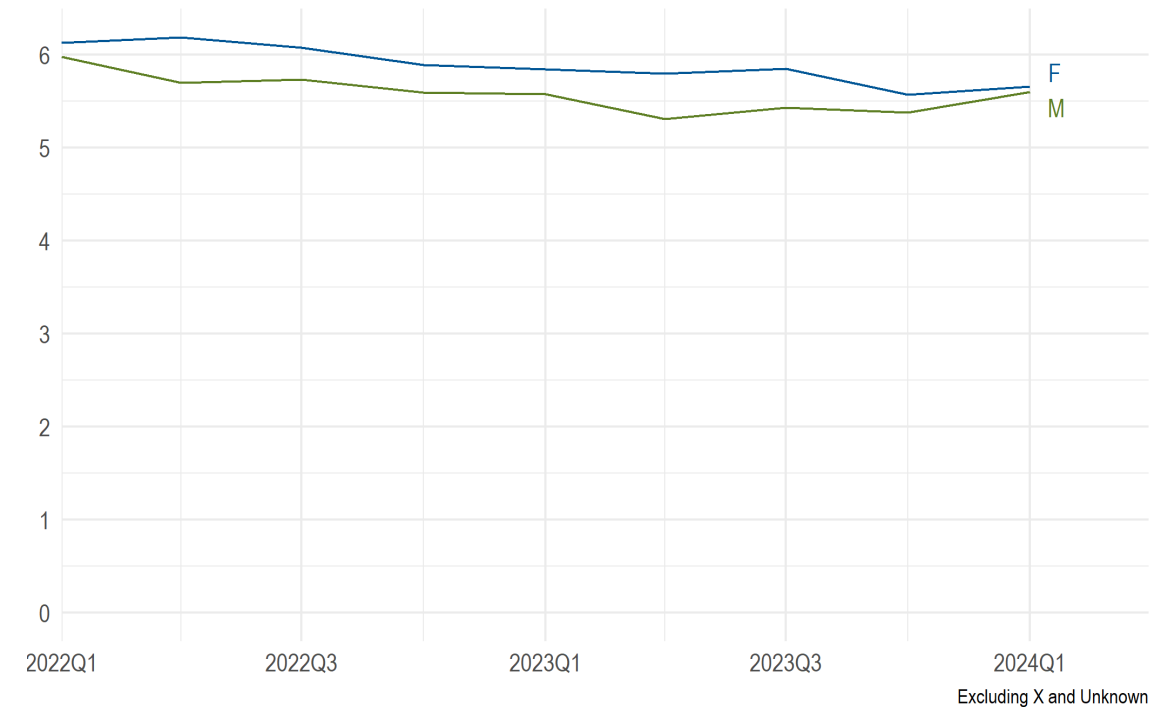
Length of Stay by Race/Ethnicity and Gender

Differences in average length of stay by race, ethnicity and gender **are small** compared to other factors

Average length of stay in hours by quarter and race/ethnicity
Statewide emergency department discharges, 2022-2024Q1



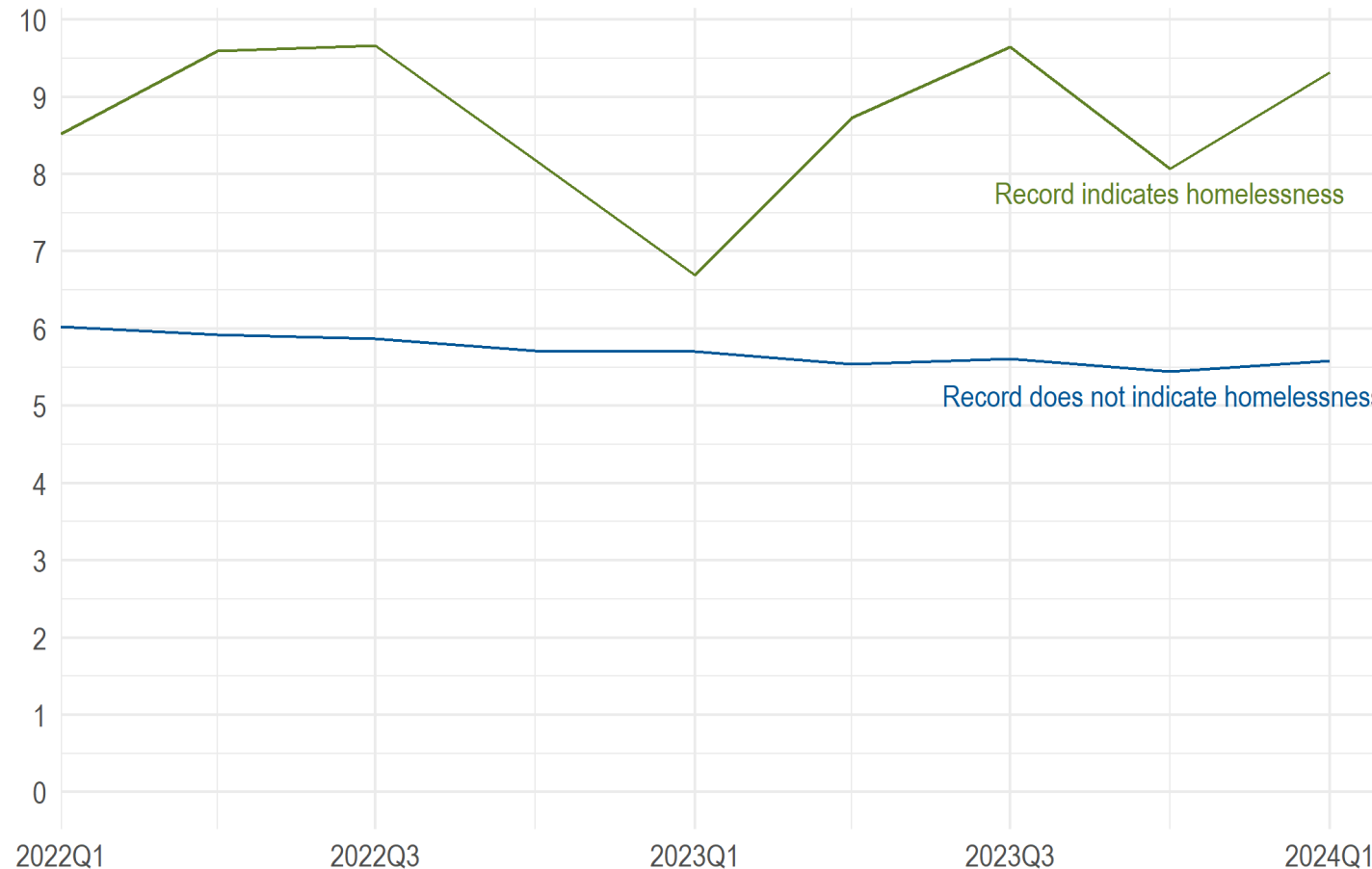
Average length of stay in hours by quarter and gender
Statewide emergency department discharges, 2022-2024Q1



Length of Stay by Homelessness Status

Average length of stay in hours by quarter and homelessness status

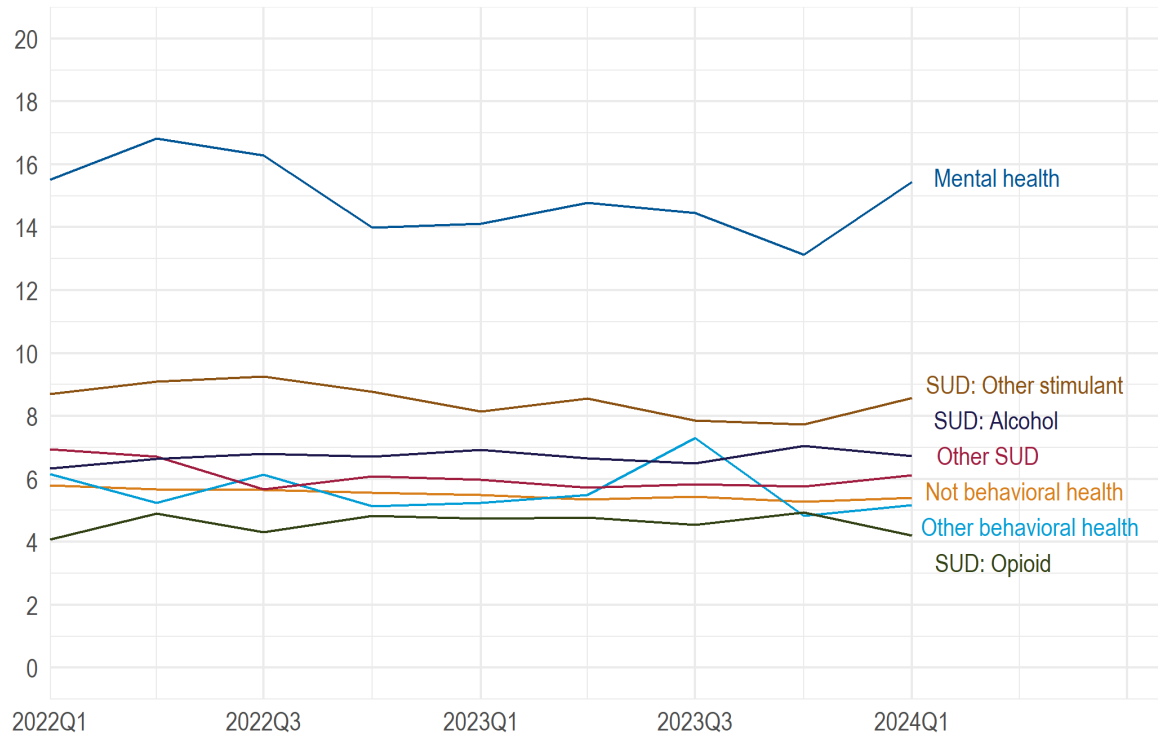
Statewide emergency department discharges, 2022-2024Q1



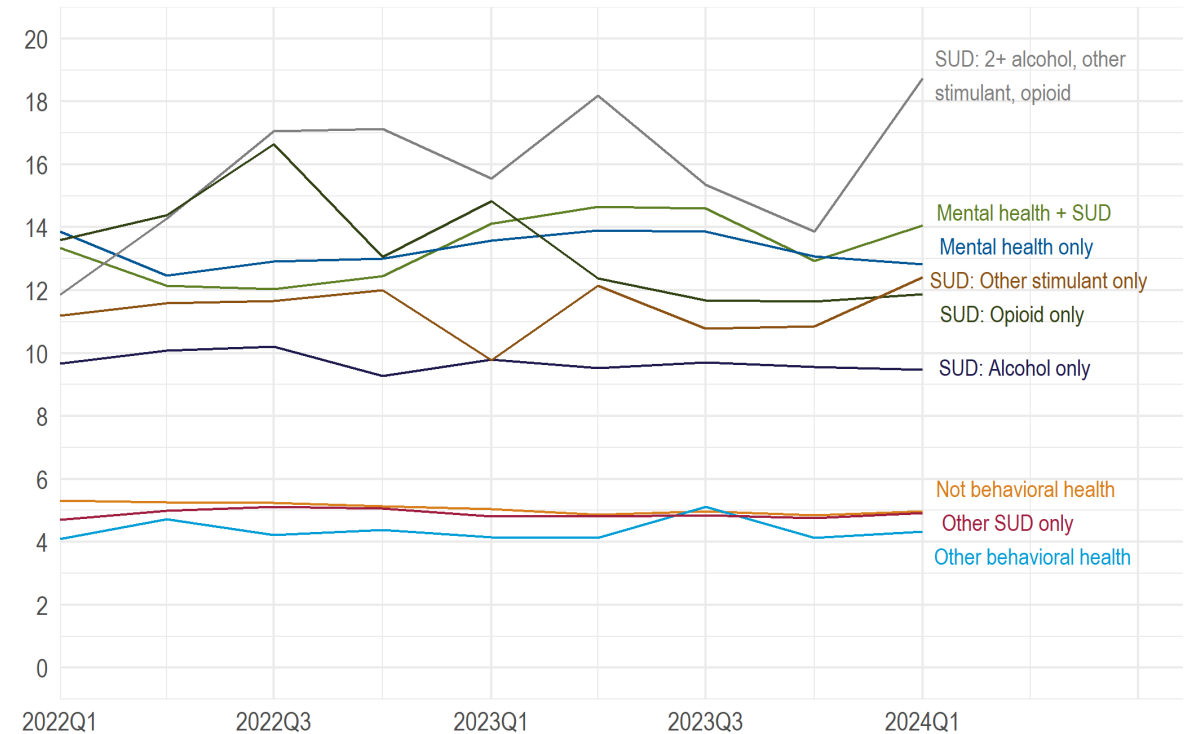
Length of Stay by Diagnosis Type

Patients with **behavioral health diagnoses** tend to have longer lengths of stay. In particular, patients with **multiple substance use disorder diagnoses** have the longest lengths of stay, averaging over 18 hours in early 2024.

Average length of stay in hours by quarter and primary diagnosis type
Statewide emergency department discharges, 2022-2024Q1



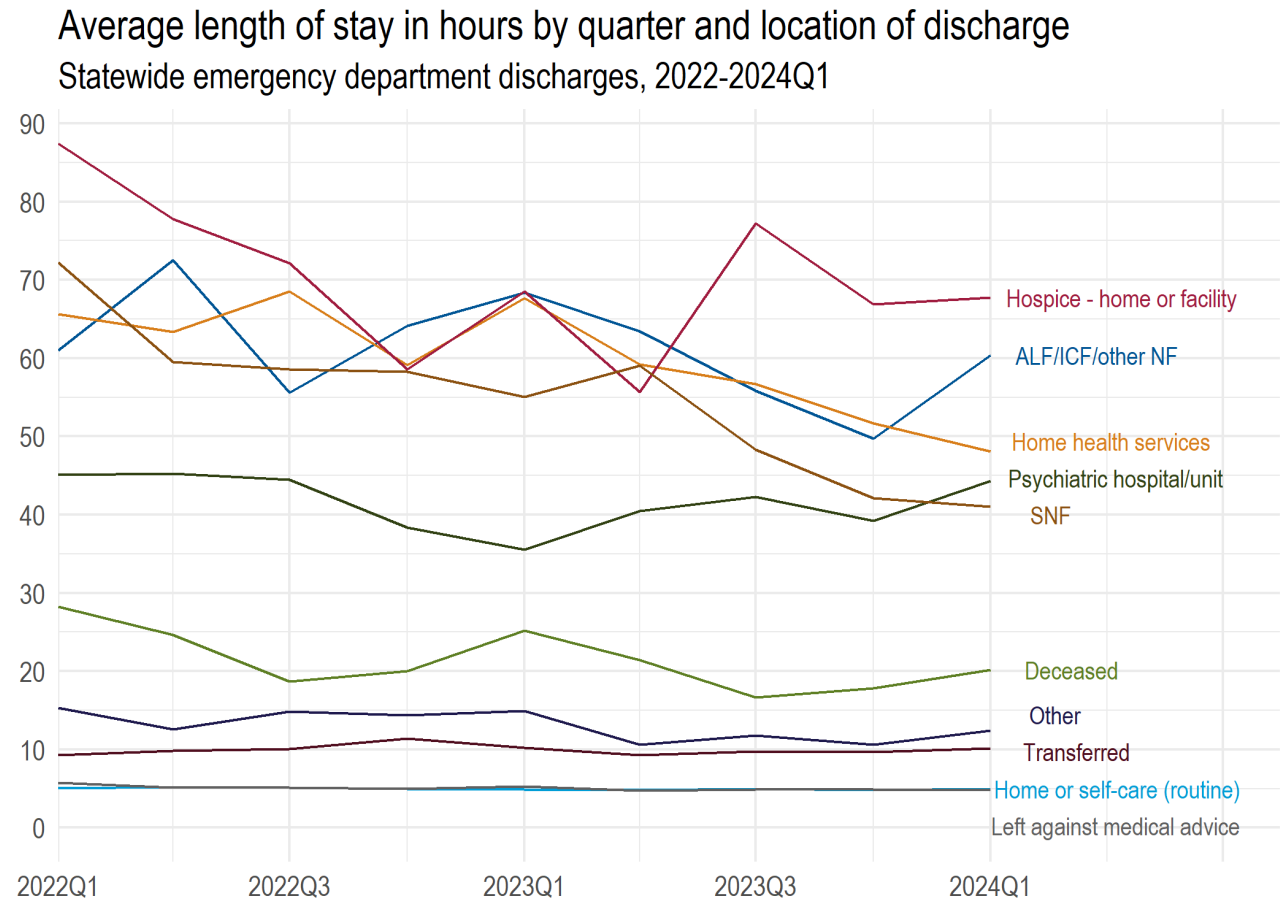
Average length of stay in hours by quarter and additional diagnosis type
Statewide emergency department discharges, 2022-2024Q1



Length of Stay by Location of Discharge

The location to be discharged to is the factor **with the largest differences in length of stay**. Patients who require a higher level of care remain in the ED longer until a facility placement or home health services can be arranged.

Location of discharge	Average length of stay in 2024 Q1
Hospice care (home or facility)	68 hours
Assisted living or intermediate care	60 hours
Home health services required	48 hours
Psychiatric hospital or unit	44 hours
Skilled nursing facility	41 hours
Another general hospital	10 hours
Home or self-care (routine)	5 hours



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