

Non-Emergent Medical Transportation and Community Health Workers

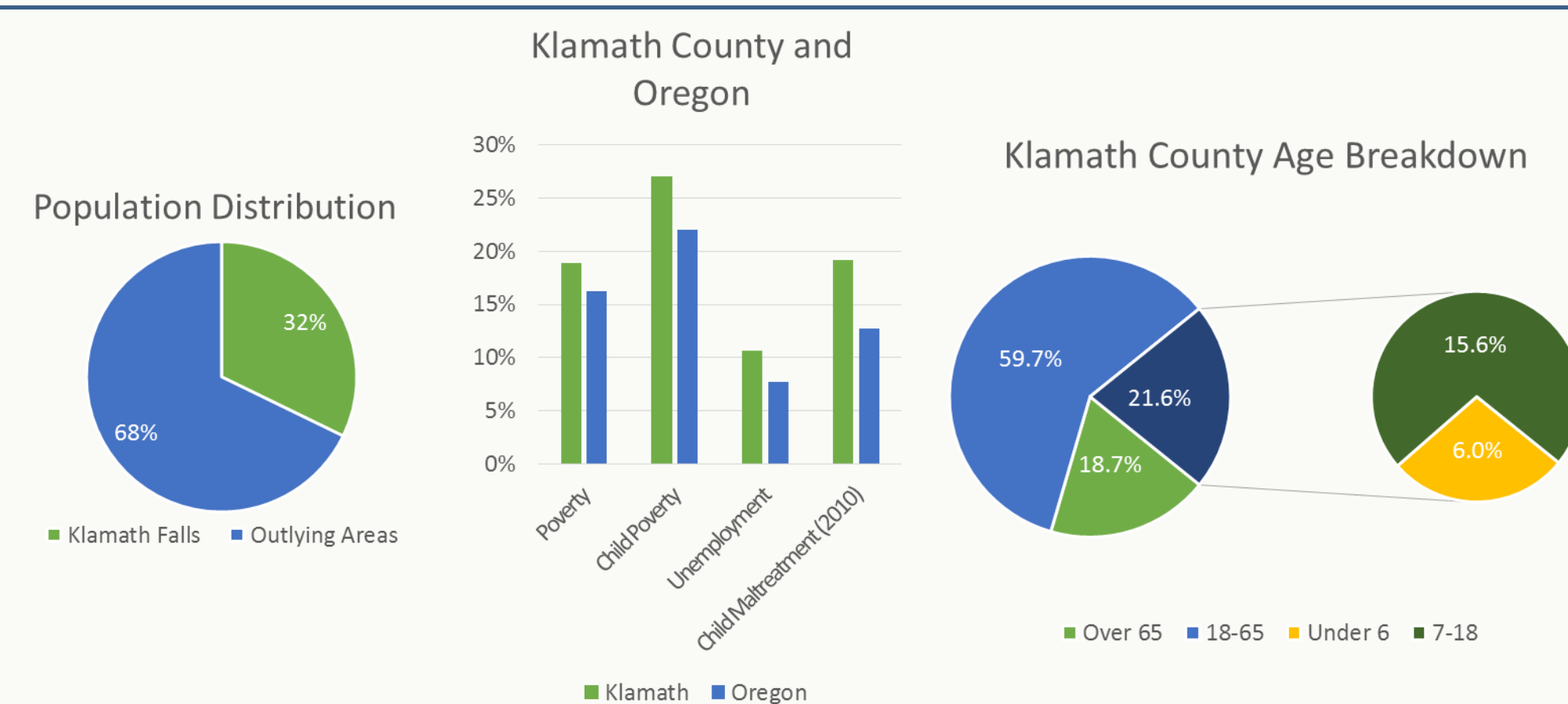
Cascade Health Alliance

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Background

In a county as large and geographically isolated as Klamath, transportation and in-home support for an already vulnerable population is a significant barrier to health.

With well over half the county's population in outlying rural areas, lack of transportation means lack of access.



Project description

This program provides in-home support and transportation to members of our rural community for whom access to care is an issue. Community health workers coordinate with RN case managers to assist members implement health improvement strategies, navigate the healthcare system, and accomplish treatment goals. They advocate for members at appointments, escort them to the pharmacy, and help with shopping for special dietary needs.

Objectives

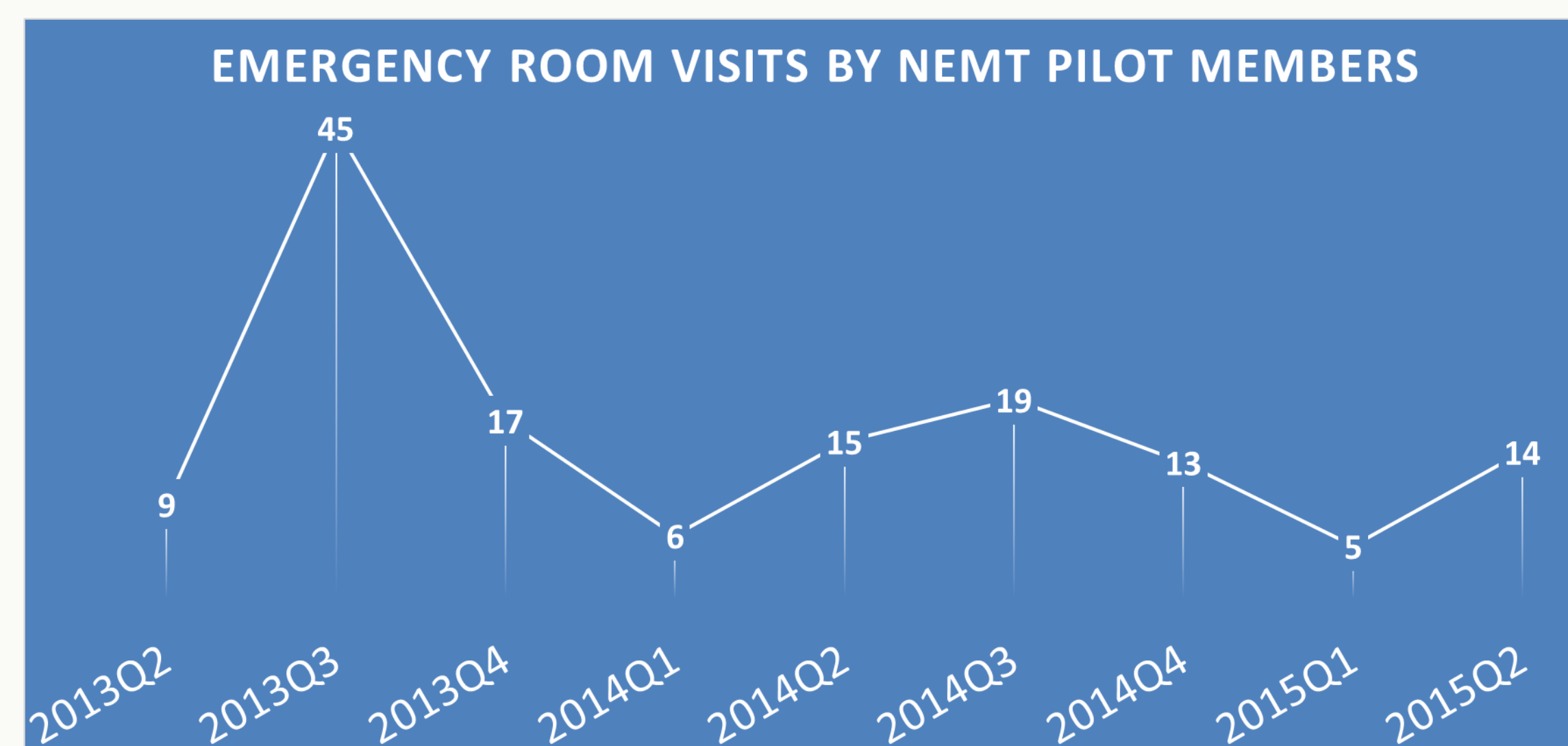
For each member living more than 25 miles away from Sky Lakes Medical Center utilizing non-emergent medical transportation and community health worker services, our goals are to:

- **Increase healthcare appointment attendance**
- **Improve medication compliance**
- **Reduce emergency department utilization**

Outcomes

This program launched in Sept. 2014 with 30 pilot members, 3 vans, and 3 community health workers.

Our results are nothing short of inspiring. Of the pilot 30, nearly half remain on the service a year later.



Emergency room visits have diminished, including the annual third quarter spike, with similarly positive results in medication compliance and no-shows.

Lessons learned

As a result of the pilot group's success, we have expanded the program and now serve over 150 members. As of August 1, 2015, the program has 145 active cases with more than 200 members served in the past year. The program now includes 4 vans, 4 community health workers, a scheduling coordinator, and an RN case manager.

Klamath County's challenges with our rural population are not unique. Social support and access to care are issues throughout Oregon.

Our unique combination of reliable non-emergent medical transportation and community health workers alleviates those barriers and fills a void in our community as we strive to meet our population's healthcare needs. We eagerly anticipate further success.

References

- Claims data
- US Census
<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/41/41035.html>
- County Health Rankings
<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/>
- Child Abuse & Neglect in Klamath County, OR
http://ruralstudies.oregonstate.edu/sites/default/files/pub/pdf/RSP_11_2.pdf



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