# Importance of the Pediatric Care Coordinator Role

It is estimated that roughly 80% of children seeking emergency care are seen in general EDs. The Institute of Medicine (IOM) identified that these children are often seen in EDs that are not well prepared to care for them, both in terms of presence of equipment and supplies, as well as readiness of ED staff.1

An analysis of a survey done in 2003 on the readiness of ED staff to care for pediatric patients found that those emergency departments that had people accountable for coordinating the care of pediatric patients (Care Coordinators) were more ‘ready’ than those EDs who did not have care coordinators identified.2

The Pediatric Care Coordinators (both a nurse and a physician) need not be people dedicated solely to this role, although they COULD be, if your ED sees a high pediatric volume. Indeed, many EDs have identified a nurse and physician already in place with a special interest in children to assume this role as a part of their existing duties.

In this section, you’ll find documents outlining Role Responsibilities for both physician and nurse care coordinators. These responsibilities were taken from the 2009 Joint Policy Statement – Guidelines for Care of Children in the Emergency Department.3 The role responsibility documents can be crafted into simple role responsibility guidelines or formal job descriptions, depending on the needs of your ED.

1. Institute of Medicine, Committee of the Future of Emergency Care in the US Health System. *Emergency Care for Children: Growing Pains.* Washington, DC: National Academies Press; 2006
2. Gausche-Hill M, Schmitz C, Lewis RJ. Pediatric preparedness of United States emergency departments: a 2003 survey. *Pediatrics.* 2007; 120(6): 1229-1237
3. American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Pediatric Emergency Medicine, American College of Emergency Physicians Pediatric Committee, Emergency Nurses Association Pediatric Committee. Joint policy statement – guidelines for care of children in the emergency department. *Pediatrics.* 2009; 124(4): 1233-1243