WellNow Newsroom

Limited Healthcare Access Leaves Families Paying the Price

New data from WellNow Urgent Care reveals more than seven in 10 mothers surveyed have skipped essentials like rent or food to pay for medical needs

CHICAGO, Sept. 03, 2025 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- As economic pressures reshape how Americans access healthcare, a new survey by WellNow Urgent Care reveals a concerning trend: families are increasingly forced to delay or skip medical treatment due to cost and availability. With primary care often unavailable and emergency rooms prohibitively expensive, parents are left with few affordable options. Nearly two-thirds (65%) of mothers surveyed say cost is the main factor in whether they seek care, and a staggering 71% report having skipped household bills - like rent, food, or utilities - to afford urgent medical treatment.

Families Struggle to Get Care After Hours:

The lack of available care outside standard business hours is creating pressure on working families, as 74% of surveyed mothers say they were forced to use vacation days for medical appointments.

The scheduling crisis stems from limited primary care availability:

- A third (33%) of mothers aren't likely to get a same-day appointment when sick or injured
- 57% report their primary care provider is unavailable outside of standard business hours
- 64% have no access to their child's pediatrician on Sundays

"What we're seeing is a healthcare system designed for a different era," said Robert Biernbaum, DO, chief medical officer at WellNow Urgent Care. "Most primary care operates Monday through Friday, 9 to 5, but injuries and illnesses don't follow business hours, so something has to give."

The Financial Strain Affects Vital Household Expenses:

Knowing that after-hours appointments are often limited, families are forced to turn to other less affordable options like the emergency room. As a result, the study revealed:

- 25% of mothers have skipped utility payments to afford urgent medical care
- 19% have delayed rent or mortgage payments
- 14% have missed car payments
- 39% have eliminated entertainment spending

“Risking utility shutoffs and potential eviction isn't something that families should have to experience in this day and age to receive medical care,” said Biernbaum.

Urgent Care: The affordable and convenient solution

Access to urgent care is reshaping how families seek medical care. When primary care providers are unavailable, 70% of mothers turn to urgent care centers as their first choice.

Urgent care adoption is widespread: 90% of adults are likely to consider going to an urgent care for minor medical emergencies or illnesses, and 85% of adults who are parents reported visiting an urgent care at least once a year for their children's illnesses or injuries. The adoption was particularly strong among mothers surveyed, with 96% reporting they were likely to consider visiting urgent care and 80% reporting they use urgent care at least once a year when their children need care.

For common conditions including minor injuries, viral infections, strep throat, UTI and STI testing and treatment, urgent care offers shorter wait times and lower costs than emergency rooms while providing extended hours unavailable through traditional primary care.

“Parents and patients are often shocked about how quick and convenient urgent care centers are compared to the emergency department, where you might wait for hours to be seen,” said Biernbaum. “The overall cost is also significantly less expensive and at WellNow, we don't charge facility fees like some of the healthcare options and accept a wide variety of insurance to help avoid financial difficulties.”

Consistent Patterns Across Multiple Markets

The survey, conducted across Chicago, Illinois; South Bend, Indiana; Indianapolis, Indiana; Rochester, New York; and Pennsylvania, reveals consistent patterns regardless of geography, suggesting a fundamental mismatch between how healthcare is delivered and when families need it most.

“When your child spikes a fever on Saturday night or gets injured during the holidays, you can't wait until Monday for care,” said Sam Meites, president of WellNow Urgent Care. “WellNow provides families access to quality medical care evenings,

weekends, and holidays when their regular doctor isn't available. We're here when families need us most."

For more information about WellNow's urgent care services and locations, visitwww.WellNow.com.

About WellNow Urgent Care:

WellNow Urgent Care is a leading provider of urgent medical care, virtual care, and occupational health services. Opened in 2012, WellNow has grown to more than 150 centers across New York, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and Pennsylvania. More information about WellNow Urgent Care's services, hours and locations can be found at WellNow.com.

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Survey Methodology:
The survey was conducted by Atomik Research between June 20-30, 2025, among 1,005 adults (18-54) and 255 mothers (32-45) across five markets. Margins of error: plus or minus 3 percentage points (general population), plus or minus 6 percentage points (mothers), 95% confidence level.

An infographic accompanying this announcement is available at http://ml.globenewswire.com/Resource/Download/794ee2f7-7b04-40d4-a9a6-536b7b91b973

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