

Epidemiologic Profile of Presentations to Albania's Summer Primary Care Points: A National Monitoring Analysis

Skender Brataj^{1*}

¹ National Emergency Medical Center, Tirana, Albania

Abstract

Background: Tourism-related seasonality can shift primary care demand and amplify pressure on downstream emergency and hospital services.

Aim: To describe the volume and epidemiologic profile of summer primary care demand across Albania's seasonal service points and to quantify key system-relevant outputs (referrals and EMS 127 calls) to inform primary care, EMS, and hospital preparedness.

Methods: Routine monitoring data from summer primary care units/points (health centers/seasonal points) were analyzed descriptively for the summer season (June–September 2025). Outcomes included presentations by nationality (Albanian vs foreign), geography, diagnostic groups, rapid tests performed/positive, referrals

to specialist/hospital care, and emergency calls to EMS (127).

Results: Across 36 service points, 83,800 presentations were recorded; 25,332 were foreigners (30.2%). The highest volumes were observed in coastal tourist destinations (e.g., Shëngjin 7,763 and Velipojë 7,291). Overall referral rate was 2.45% and EMS-call rate 2.46%. Viral syndromes (10.3%) and gastroenteritis (14.5%) dominated the diagnostic mix. Rapid test positivity was 12.9%.

Conclusions: Summer primary care units handled substantial seasonal demand, including a sizeable share among foreigners, and managed most presentations locally with low referral and EMS-call rates, supporting their role as a

pragmatic public-health and health-system buffer
in high-tourism settings.

Keywords: seasonal health services; primary
care; tourism; emergency department; Albania;
health system resilience.