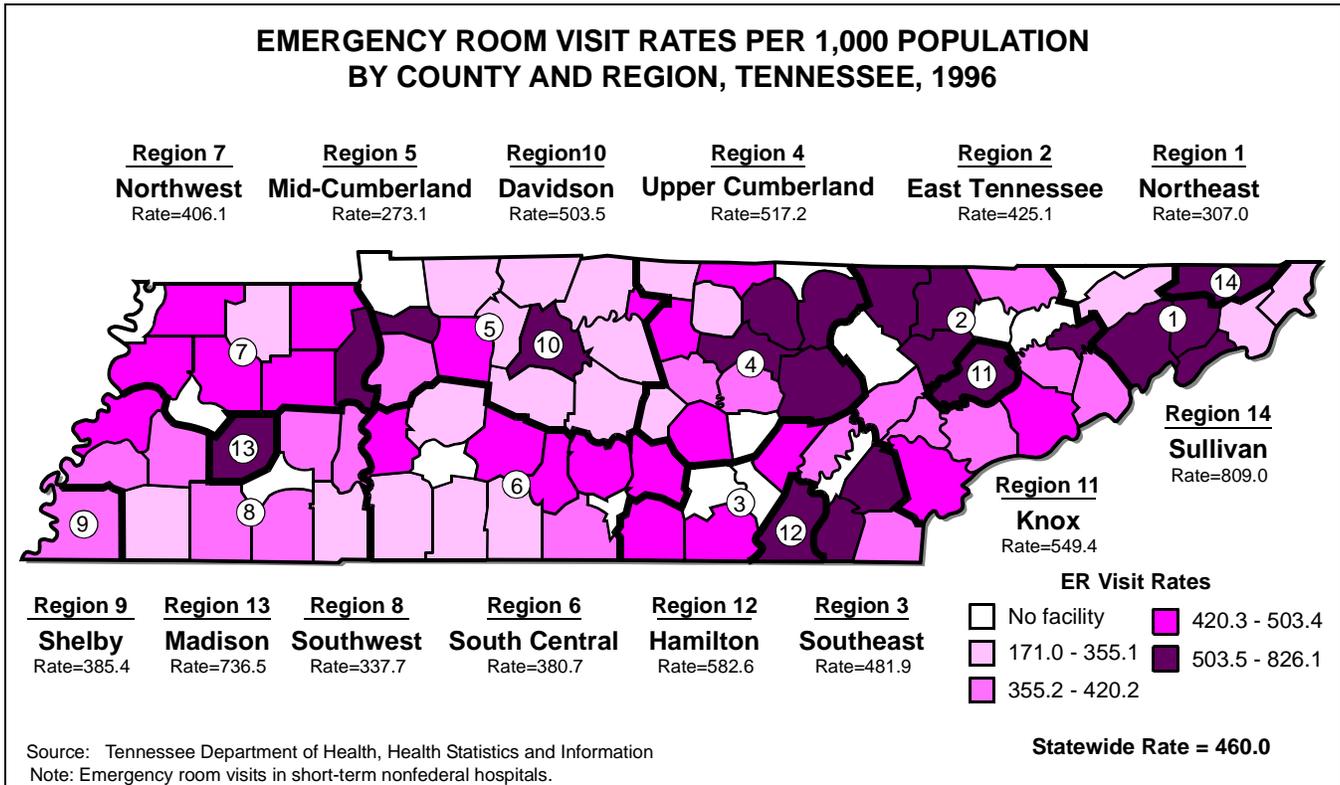


Utilization - Emergency Care

- In 1996, emergency room visit rates in short-term, non-federal hospitals ranged from a low of 171 visits per 1,000 population in Hickman County to a high of 826 visits in Fentress County. Four of the six metropolitan regions (Knox, Hamilton, Madison, and Sullivan) and one nonmetropolitan region (Upper Cumberland) had rates in the top 25 percent, indicating rates of at least 503 visits per 1,000 population. As with 1995,³⁶ Shelby was the lowest ranking metropolitan region with 385 visits per 1,000 population. As in 1995, there was relatively heavy usage of ERs in the Eastern part of the State in addition to portions of the Upper Cumberland Region. Of the 15 counties lacking ERs (a decrease from 17 in 1995 due to the addition of new hospitals), most were located adjacent to counties with high ER utilization rates, suggesting cross-county service utilization.
- The statewide ER visit rate decreased in 1996 from 475.6 visits per 100,000 in 1995 to 459.9 in 1996. With the exception of Hamilton County, all metropolitan regions had lower ER rates in 1996.

Source: Joint Annual Report of Hospitals, 1995 and 1996, TDH, Health Statistics and Information. Thanks to George Plumlee, M.S., M.B.A., Health Statistics and Information, TDH.



³⁶It should be noted that exact comparisons to earlier reports are not possible due to the use of revised population estimates prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau. Whenever possible, 1995 and earlier rates have been re-calculated based on these revised estimates.