

**Reasons for Hospitalization in Some Other Location**

\* Percentage of hospitalizations in other Montana locations, where reason was cited

\*\* Percentage of total hospitalizations in all other locations, where reason was cited

Reason	Percent *	Percent **
Services aren't available in Ennis	69.2%	49.4%
Referred out by local practitioner	42.7%	30.5%
Quality of hospital is better out of town	10.3%	7.3%
Hospital care is cheaper out of town	2.6%	1.8%
I have more privacy out of town	9.4%	6.7%
My regular doctor is out of town	9.4%	6.7%
Other reason for going out of town	< 1%	< 1%

**Discussion:**

MVH's hospital is currently capturing 32% of all hospitalizations which were reported, including specialty hospitalizations. This indicates general acceptance of MVH's hospital offerings as both appropriate and of good quality.

Further analysis reveals that 43% of the admissions to Bozeman Deaconess and other Montana hospitals were referred out by the Madison County practitioners. It is highly likely that

all of the referrals out were for specialty care. 57% of the admissions, therefore, or at least 66 admissions, represent “self-referrals” out of town. The self-referrals likely represent admissions for both primary (non specialty) and specialty care, but the breakdown cannot be specifically determined from the data.

Number of Admissions to other MT hosps	117
MVH Practitioner-referred	51
Self-referred	66

The clear implication is that MVH is doing a good, but perhaps less than an excellent job of serving the primary hospitalization needs of the people in its service area. Only 43% of all admissions to other Montana hospitals were “known” - that is, 57% of the total hospital admissions were *not* occasioned by the patient getting any primary medical care in Madison County.

The fact that commercially insured persons report hospitalizations in Bozeman (32.6%) approximately 10% more often than in Ennis (23.5%), combined with the fact that Medicare beneficiaries utilize MVH facility significantly more often (62.8%) than they do Bozeman (47.8%) may indicate one of three possible biases. It may be that Madison County physicians have an unconscious bias in their referral practices, preferentially sending commercially insured patients to Bozeman. It may be, however that this bias comes from a patient-expressed preference. Or, it may be that there is some actual medical reason associated with the differing medical needs of older vs. younger individuals. Regardless of the reason, this bias will most likely tend to lower the financial performance of Madison Valley Hospital, all other factors being equal.

Butte, Billings, Great Falls, Helena, and Dillon were cited as other cities where hospitalization occurred. Three respondents cited Ft. Harrison as being their major health care provider.

MVH scores exceptionally well on all of the satisfaction questions. The concepts of quality, competence, friendliness, emergency room care, and physician care could all be used in future marketing material, or at least should be the subject of casual conversation of all significant persons associated with the hospital. Health care consumers rarely express much satisfaction with the financial implications of receiving healthcare. But in this survey, even this indicator is only slightly lower than “Good”. The concepts of “reasonableness of charges” and “billing and financial services” receiving marks above the middle of the scale indicates that there is general acceptance of the present charge structure. This would be expected in light of the high percentage of commercial insurance and medicare patients with supplemental insurance responding to the survey. This may also indicate that there is at least some price elasticity. MVH could very likely raise its prices on selected services a small percentage, which would bring in a small amount of incremental revenue. . .

## Medical Staff

### **MVH Medical Staff Utilization**

\* Percentage of all visits occurring in Ennis

Percentage of each type of physician visit, by location

All Ennis*		Ennis	Bozeman	Harrison	Other
77 %	Routine visit	70 %	12 %	6 %	12 %
14 %	Emergency care	76 %	11 %		13 %
9 %	Specialty care	25 %	36 %	3 %	36 %

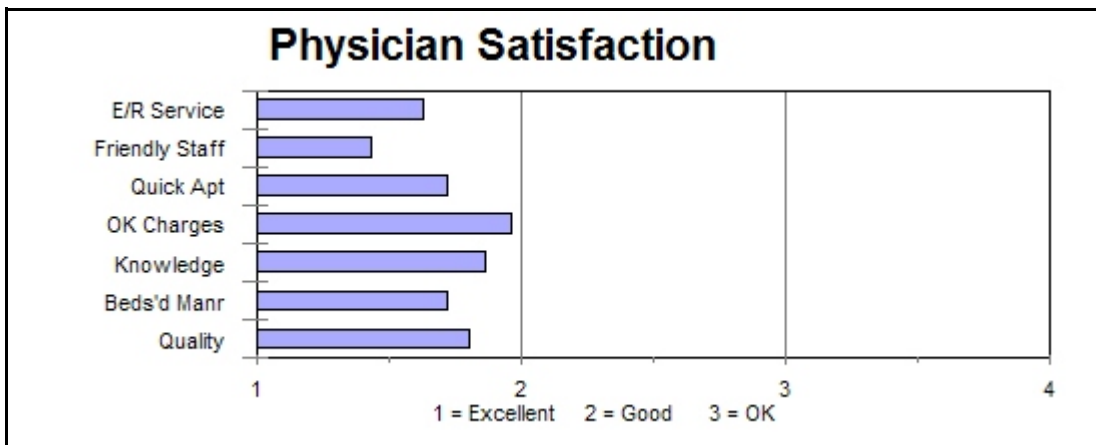
### **Where is your regular family physician?**

Percentage of all responding to this question, by location of residence

Place of residence	Ennis Physician	Bozeman Physician	Other MT Physician	OoS Physician
Madison Valley	72 %	18 %	5 %	5 %
Other MT	33 %	33 %	33 %	
Out of state	3.2 %			96.8 %
Unknown	60 %	20 %	7 %	13 %

### **Community satisfaction with medical staff, average of each indicator, all providers**

1 = Excellent 2 = Good 3 = OK 4 = Poor



## Discussion:

Survey results indicate excellent utilization of the physicians located in Madison County. Indeed 64% of all respondents who indicated the location of their primary physician, identified using physicians in the Ennis clinic. This is verified by the fact that 76% of all reported routine physician visits occur in either Ennis or Harrison.

Moreover, the survey indicates excellent satisfaction with the current physician providers, generally ranking the medical staff as “excellent” or “good” on the various satisfaction indicators. As discussed in the “hospital” section, respondents are not likely to express satisfaction with the level of physician charges, and yet in this survey, even that indicator is rated slightly better than “good.” Indeed, these scores indicate more satisfaction that is generally seen in rural Montana towns.

Responses to the questions concerning *why* respondents might choose a regular physician in another city demonstrate results typical of other “rural” Montana hospitals. “Services I want are not available locally” generally scores in the 50% range, and in this survey it is 56%. “Quality is better elsewhere” generally scores less than 20%, and in this survey it is 19%. And “I only go to specialists” generally scores less than 20%, and in this survey it is 22%.

It is noted that 20% of the respondents cite the feeling that they have more privacy in another location (which is equivalent to that seen in other rural Montana areas.) The hospital and physicians should be encouraged to address this issue with the office staffs.

The factor checked by most part-time Madison Valley residents concerned having a longstanding relationship with an out of town physician.

Although there is a high level of satisfaction and loyalty to the Ennis health care presence, including physicians, there is an underlying theme of the awareness of “big city” healthcare, that distinguishes Ennis from other, more isolated rural towns. (This same theme was previously noted in another “far-fringe urban” town near Billings.) One clear indication of this is seen in the fact that reported “routine doctor’s visits” account for approximately 66% of all physician visits, while in more isolated areas, it may be 80% or higher. 23% of all reported visits are “specialty” visits (in more isolated areas this is as low as 10%.) For comparison, persons giving out-of-Madison Valley zip codes (including no zip code given) reported routine doctor’s visits at 58%, and specialty visits at 32%. That being said, these responses must still be viewed in light of the fact that Madison Valley physicians are, in fact, accomplishing slightly more than 65% of all reported physician visits.

The question concerning the usage of specialist physicians demonstrates results similar to those seen in other hospitals the size of MVH. . .