

A FEW NEW VIEWS ON QUEUES

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In many healthcare systems, the care of patients consists of two phases of service: assessment and treatment. Often these are carried out by the same medical provider and so there is a question as to how to prioritize the work in order to balance initial delays for care with the need to discharge patients in a timely fashion. We model a hospital emergency room (ER) triage and treatment process as a tandem queue with a single server. We explore alternative service disciplines under various scenarios and identify optimal policies for each.