



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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BETTER CHANCE OF SURVIVAL FOR HEART ATTACK PATIENTS *New System Dramatically Speeds Up Time for Administration of Lifesaving Procedure*

Heart attack patients now have a better chance of survival thanks to a recent collaboration between the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) and the local healthcare community. The Cardiac System of Care dramatically improves the time before heart attack victims receive potentially lifesaving treatment.

County health officials worked with local cardiologists and hospitals to develop the new system, which enables paramedics in the field to better identify the most life-threatening type of heart attack by using 12-lead electrocardiogram (EKG) equipment. The system, implemented in January 2007, has cut the wait time for catheterizing patients – the process of opening clogged arteries – almost in half. Thirteen hospitals in the County of San Diego are participating in the system.

“Thanks to this great partnership between the County and our healthcare community, heart attack victims can receive lifesaving treatment faster,” said Greg Cox, Chairman, County of San Diego Board of Supervisors, at a news conference announcing the results of the system.

“The system has cut in half the time to open a blocked artery in the heart from about two hours to about one hour,” said Bruce Haynes, M.D., Medical Director of HHSA’s Emergency Medical Services (EMS).

“Paramedics can now identify the most severe type of heart attack and relay that information to receiving hospitals,” Dr. Haynes said. “Hospital staff can prepare for the patient’s arrival and take them immediately for cardiac catheterization.”

Participating hospitals include:

Alvarado Hospital; Naval Medical Center, San Diego; Palomar Medical Center; Scripps Memorial Hospital, La Jolla; Scripps Mercy Hospital; Scripps Mercy Hospital, Chula Vista; Scripps Memorial Hospital, Encinitas; Sharp Chula Vista Medical Center; Sharp Grossmont Hospital; Sharp Memorial Hospital; Tri-City Medical Center; UCSD Medical Center, Hillcrest; and UCSD Thornton Hospital.

For more information on the Cardiac System of Care, please call (619) 285-6429.

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