

Delaware First Responders and Hospitals Recognized for 20 Years of Saving Lives



Trauma System Leaders
honored for 20 years of
continuous service

DOVER, DE – When someone is seriously injured, seconds or moments can make the difference between life and death. To increase the chance of survival and reduce the chance of permanent disability, Delaware created an integrated, statewide trauma system 20 years ago that begins with a 9-1-1 call and does not end until after the patient receives high quality hospital care.

The Delaware Trauma System members include 9-1-1 Emergency Communications Centers, Emergency Medical Service (EMS) providers of Basic and Advanced Life Support, fire and police agencies, air medical transport, hospital emergency trauma teams, operating rooms, and intensive care units. The system includes the helicopters you might see in the sky, the ambulance you might see on the road, and the emergency room medical personnel and surgeons that could save someone close to you.

To celebrate the men and women of the trauma system, dozens of medical professionals, and first responders filled the House of Representatives chambers at Legislative Hall on Tuesday, joined by state and local officials to mark the 20th anniversary of the Delaware Trauma System.

Delaware has one of the nation's few inclusive statewide trauma systems in which every acute care hospital participates. The state's trauma system is credited with

saving 1,319 lives and caring for 101,000 seriously injured people since 2000; an almost 50 percent decrease in the mortality rate in that time. The Delaware mortality rate is now consistently lower than the national rate reported by the federal National Trauma Data Bank.

“No matter where people are injured in Delaware, they enter a system of care with a goal of ensuring that trauma patients are treated using the most up-to-date standard of care and in the facility best equipped to manage their injuries,” said Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) Secretary Rita Landgraf at the Legislative Hall press conference held October 11, 2016.

The DHSS Division of Public Health Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) oversees the system from the time traumatic incidents occur through the full continuum of care. OEMS has played a critical role in building one coordinated system of care that functions as a statewide team of caregivers. The Delaware General Assembly and then-Governor Thomas Carper created the Delaware Statewide Trauma System via legislation in July 1996.

Governor Jack Markell and U.S. Senator Carper offered their best wishes in prepared statements:

“Delaware has a vast network of prepared, highly trained professionals to ensure that injured patients receive fast, efficient, and life-saving care,” said Governor Markell. “The men and women of the Delaware trauma system are heroes every day as they work to save lives and reduce the impact of serious injuries.”

“Twenty years later, I am thrilled to celebrate a system we started to help save the lives of countless Delawareans,” said U.S. Senator Carper. “To all the people that deliver the continuity of care in Delaware’s Trauma System: thank you for all that you do to make Delaware a better place to live and

work.”

“Seriously injured people have a much better chance of surviving now than they did 20 years ago because the state, our first responders and hospitals are synchronized in their care and treatment of trauma patients,” said Division of Public Health (DPH) Director Dr. Karyl Rattay. “I am proud of the work of the DPH Office of Emergency Medical Services and grateful to everyone in the entire trauma system for their dedication and commitment to saving lives.” Rattay also led a moment of silence for the men and women who lost their lives in the line of duty.

“Decades ago, trauma caregivers statewide realized that if we adopted consistent care and uniform processes, we could prevent deaths and reduce the likelihood of injuries becoming serious disabilities,” said Dr. Glen H. Tinkoff, Trauma Director at Christiana Care Health System’s Wilmington Hospital. “With the 1996 passage of the enabling trauma system legislation, we have significantly reduced trauma-related mortality and morbidity because we developed and implemented a system that is integrated with Delaware’s EMS system.” Dr. Tinkoff served as medical adviser to the state trauma system from 2000 to 2016.

When hospitals meet the rigorous standards for verification by the American College of Surgeons Committee on Trauma, they receive state designations as Trauma Centers:

- Christiana Hospital of the Christiana Care Health System is designated a Regional Level 1 Trauma Center. A Regional Resource Trauma Center has the capability of providing leadership and comprehensive, definitive care for every aspect of injury from prevention through rehabilitation.
- Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children in Wilmington assumes a leadership role in caring for injured children. As a Pediatric Regional Level 1 Trauma Center, it has the

capability of providing leadership and comprehensive, definitive pediatric trauma care for the most severely injured children within its geographic area.

- Delaware has seven Community Level 3 Trauma Centers: Bayhealth Kent General Hospital, Bayhealth Milford Memorial Hospital, Beebe Healthcare, Nanticoke Memorial Hospital, Saint Francis Healthcare (provisional), Wilmington Hospital of Christiana Care Health System (provisional), and Peninsula Regional Medical Center (Salisbury Maryland) via reciprocity. Community Level 3 Trauma Centers provide assessment, resuscitation, stabilization, and triage for all trauma patients. They arrange timely patient transfers for those who need a Regional Trauma or Specialty Center, and deliver care to those patients whose needs can be met by the facility's resources.

Secretary Landgraf, Dr. Rattay and State Senator Bruce Ennis recognized 14 Trauma System leaders for their 20 years of continuous service:

- Edward L. Alexander III, MD, FACS of Bayhealth Kent General Hospital
- Marilyn K. Bartley, MSN, RN of Christiana Care Health System
- Steven Blessing, MA, Chief, EMS and Preparedness Section, DPH
- Steven D. Carey, MD, FACS of Nanticoke Memorial Hospital
- Dean Dobbert, MD, FACEP, Kent County EMS Medical Director
- Deborah Eberly, BSN, RN, CEN, CNML of Bayhealth
- Gerard J. Fulda, MD, FACS of Christiana Care Health System
- Linda Laskowski Jones, MS, APRN, ACNS-BC, CEN, FAWM, FAAN of Christiana Care Health System
- MarySue Jones, RN, MS, State Trauma System Coordinator, OEMS, DPH
- James P. Marvel, Jr., MD, FACS of Beebe Healthcare
- Ross E. Megargel, DO, FACEP, State EMS Medical Director
- Stephen G. Murphy, MD, FACS of Nemours/Alfred I. duPont

Hospital for Children

- Lawrence E. Tan, Esq., NRP, Chief of Emergency Medical Services, New Castle County
- Glen H. Tinkoff, MD, FACS of Christiana Care Health System

Additionally, State Senator Bruce C. Ennis (D-Smyrna) read a joint resolution recognizing the trauma system's anniversary, and trauma survivor Melanie Pertain shared how the trauma system helped her and her family after they were involved in a serious motor vehicle crash.

Trauma can result from intentional as well as unintentional injuries. Unintentional injury, the leading cause of death and disability of Delawareans and visitors between the ages of 1 to 44 years, results from falls, burns, roadway crashes involving motor vehicles, bicycles or pedestrians, and from farm and industrial incidents. Intentional injuries result from violence, assaults, shootings, stabbings, and suicides.

Falls, highway, and assault-related injuries make up more than 77 percent of all injury-related hospitalizations in Delaware.

For more information about the Delaware Trauma System, visit <http://dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/ems/trauma.html> or call the Office of Emergency Medical Services at 302-223-1350. For information about the Delaware Coalition for Injury Prevention, visit their web page [here](#).

A person who is deaf, hard-of-hearing, deaf-blind or speech-disabled can call the DPH phone number above by using TTY services. Dial 7-1-1 or 800-232-5460 to type your conversation to a relay operator, who reads your conversation to a hearing person at DPH. The relay operator types the hearing person's spoken words back to the TTY user. To learn more about TTY availability in Delaware, visit <http://delawarerelay.com>.

Delaware Health and Social Services is committed to improving the quality of the lives of Delaware's citizens by promoting health and well-being, fostering self-sufficiency, and

protecting vulnerable populations. DPH, a division of DHSS, urges Delawareans to make healthier choices with the 5-2-1 Almost None campaign: eat 5 or more fruits and vegetables each day, have no more than 2 hours of recreational screen time each day (includes TV, computer, gaming), get 1 or more hours of physical activity each day, and drink almost no sugary beverages.