Pennsylvania Burn Centers Provide Essential Specialized Care

The medical teams at Pennsylvania’s six burn centers provide essential care to patients who come to them with the most serious of burn injuries, and work especially hard to help children who are burn victims.

Pennsylvania’s burn centers bring together top surgeons, experienced nurses, specially-trained therapists, and other key health care providers to ensure that patients receive the surgical and rehabilitative treatment they need to help them heal. Not only do Pennsylvania’s burn centers lead the way in providing the physical care that patients need, they also make sure burn victims receive the psychological, emotional, and nutritional support they must have to recover from these very painful kinds of injuries.

When it comes to children, Pennsylvania’s burn centers go above and beyond to help them heal. From annual camps that help young victims rebuild trust and regain self-confidence by learning trapeze tricks and braving rock walls, to technology that creates multisensory environments that can soothe and relax patients as well as divert their attention during difficult procedures, these hospitals are dedicated to the complete healing journey of their patients.

In addition to treating patients who are physically present in their facilities, Pennsylvania’s burn centers also care for thousands of patients through TeleBurn technology.

TeleBurn technology allows health care providers at dozens of hospitals to use photographs and technology to consult with Pennsylvania’s top burn experts in real time. For instance, a burn specialist in Lehigh County can review photographs and help a physician in Adams County determine the best course of treatment for a patient, often in a hospital very close to the patient’s home.

Successfully treating patients with complex burns from the time of their injury through rehabilitation to full recovery is a lengthy, labor-intensive, and expensive process. That is why the 2014–2015 state budget (as did prior year budgets) included an additional state payment for Pennsylvania’s burn centers.

Unfortunately, the Governor’s proposed 2015–2016 state budget zeroed out the supplemental appropriation for burn centers, and even though House Bill 1192 would have restored this line item, that legislation was vetoed. Beyond the impact this cut has on patients, reducing state funding for burn centers carries an additional consequence—it triggers a loss of federal matching funds.

Pennsylvanians deserve continued access to essential, specialized burn care.

Pennsylvania must sustain hospital funding and reject proposals that do not move hospitals forward. Therefore, we urge the Legislature and the Governor to:

- Support the hospital spending included in House Bill 1192.
- Support changes to the Hospital Quality Care Assessment that will improve hospital payments and advance health care in the commonwealth.