Facts About Pennsylvania’s Trauma Centers

Trauma centers provide highly skilled teams of medical specialists to provide care during and after an occurrence of trauma. Trauma centers operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

Trauma is any injury caused by physical force and is often the result of a motor vehicle crash, a fall, gunshot, fires/burns, or assaults. Trauma teams include trauma surgeons, emergency physicians, trauma nurses, personnel from radiology, blood bank, and other health care professionals. Up to 16 physicians in specialties ranging from neurosurgery to obstetrics/gynecology are on standby, and nursing teams are ready in the operating room and critical care units.

- Trauma is the fifth leading cause of death in Pennsylvania among individuals aged one to 44.
- In Pennsylvania, the most common cause of injuries is from falls, motor vehicle crashes, acts of violence, and motorcycle accidents.

Trauma Center Statistics Tell Story of Success

- Since 1985, 740,337 patients have been treated in Pennsylvania trauma centers, with a statewide average of 40,000 trauma patients treated each year.¹

- In Pennsylvania, during 2014, 96 percent of the 40,948 trauma patients treated at accredited trauma centers survived. The percentage of unexpected survivors has more than doubled since 1987.¹

- During the last decade, the number of patients treated in Pennsylvania trauma centers has increased every year. However, the percent of mortality of trauma patients at trauma centers continues to decrease every year.¹

- In a national study published during 2006, it was found that the mortality rate of seriously injured patients was 25 percent lower in trauma centers than in non-trauma centers. The mortality rate one year following the injury was 3.4 percent higher for patients treated at non-trauma centers.⁴

Pennsylvania’s (33) Accredited Trauma Centers:

Abington Memorial Hospital
Allegheny General Hospital
Aria Health, Torresdale Campus
Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center
Crozer-Chester Medical Center
Einstein Medical Center Philadelphia
Forbes Hospital
Geisinger Medical Center
Geisinger Wyoming Valley Medical Center
Geisinger Community Medical Center
Grove City Medical Center
Hahnemann University Hospital
Lancaster General Health
Lehigh Valley Health Network Cedar Crest
Paoli Hospital
Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center
Penn Presbyterian Medical Center
Pocono Medical Center
Reading Hospital
Guthrie Robert Packer Hospital
St. Christopher’s Hospital for Children
St. Luke’s University Hospital - Bethlehem
St. Luke’s Miners Campus
St. Mary Medical Center
Temple University Hospital
The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia
The Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC
Thomas Jefferson University Hospital
UPMC Altoona
UPMC Hamot
UPMC Mercy
UPMC Presbyterian
York Hospital

*Also, accredited as Pediatric Trauma Centers
Facts About Pennsylvania’s Trauma Centers

- Grove City Medical Center was accredited as a level IV trauma center on November 1, 2014

Financial Perspective on Trauma Care

- Approximately 24 percent of all trauma cases treated at Pennsylvania trauma centers during 2014 were primarily covered by Medicaid or were self-pay. More than 55 percent were primarily covered by Medicare and/or Medicaid as a primary or secondary payor.

- Trauma centers have higher levels of uncompensated care than other hospitals. During fiscal year 2010, trauma centers contributed 53 percent of all uncompensated care costs among hospitals.²

- The average Pennsylvania trauma center spends $1.35 million per year on specialists, equipment, staff, training, and education to meet the standards for compliance for accreditation. These costs are separate and distinct from the trauma center’s role as a tertiary or teaching facility.

- In a national study published during 2010, it was found that even though trauma centers are more expensive, the benefits in terms of lives saved, quality of life, and years gained outweigh the costs, particularly for the most severely injured patients.³

- Two level III trauma centers withdrew from the Pennsylvania trauma system during 2010 citing a lack of trauma center funding as a primary reason.¹

The Pennsylvania Trauma Systems Foundation (PTSF)

Under state law, the foundation develops standards based on the American College of Surgeons guidelines for trauma centers to assure quality patient care for trauma patients. The foundation also surveys trauma centers, assures regulatory compliance by accredited trauma centers, and promotes optimal outcomes for all trauma patients in Pennsylvania.

¹Pennsylvania Trauma Systems Foundation, PTOS Trauma Registry, 2015
²HAP analysis of Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council data