

In a Heartbeat

A project of the

Maine Quality Forum

www.mainequalityforum.gov/inaheartbeat.html

Project Outline 2008

What is 'In a Heartbeat' (IHB)?

- Collaborative statewide effort to ensure every person in Maine experiencing a heart attack receives the right care at the right time, regardless of his or her location in the State.
- **Goal:** To improve the quality of medical care, the rate of survival and the quality of life of people in Maine who experience a heart attack.

What is IHB doing?

- Creating a statewide heart attack treatment pathway and protocol
- Developing a system to collect EMS and hospital data about heart attack care to assess how well the system is working
- Reaching out to communities to increase awareness about heart attack symptoms and the need to call 9-1-1 immediately

Why does Maine need IHB?

- Nationally, about one-third of heart attack victims do not receive the care that they need, when they need it, resulting in lost heart muscle and lives
- Most heart attack patients wait two or more hours after symptoms begin to call 9-1-1. Others never call 9-1-1.
- 88% of Maine residents cannot correctly identify the warning signs of a heart attack and the need to call 911.

How is IHB organized?

- Executive Committee to provide oversight and guidance
- 3 Workgroups to address specific areas of need:
 - Community Engagement
 - Medical Response and Treatment
 - Metrics and Data
- MQF serves as neutral convener and provides project staffing

What are the Workgroups doing right now?

- **Medical Response and Treatment**
 - Training EMS personnel to conduct 12-lead electrocardiograms in the ambulance to expedite early diagnosis of heart attacks.
 - Rolling out a Quality Improvement Tool to evaluate EMS system performance
- **Community Engagement**
 - Implementing a state-wide train-the-trainer initiative that promotes consistent messages about heart attack symptoms and calling 9-1-1 via local presentations to community groups by EMS, hospitals, Healthy Maine Partnerships, Healthy Community Coalitions, community educators, and others
 - Reviewing additional strategies for raising public/community awareness

- **Metrics and Data**

- Developed data elements to be collected within EMS, emergency departments and hospitals
- Assisting contractor and participating hospitals with implementation of database for data collection and analysis

Why collect data?

- The '*In a Heartbeat*' data analyses will seek to answer the following critical questions:
 - How well is the medical system doing in reducing the time from onset of symptoms to treatment?
 - How well is the medical system doing in reducing the time from call to 9-1-1 to treatment?
 - How well are EMS services and hospitals doing at maximizing the efficiency of the process of care for STEMI*?
 - How well are the outcomes of STEMI care improving within hospitals and across the state?
 - What do the data tell us regarding the use of thrombolytics and percutaneous coronary intervention relative to care outcomes?
 - What barriers to improved care can be addressed within hospitals and across the state?

*STEMI = a specific kind of heart attack known as "ST-elevation myocardial infarction" that occurs when there is a blockage of a major artery that feeds the heart