

IDENTIFYING THE NEED FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL DISPATCH TRAINING

Kansas program seeks to improve emergency care for heart attack & stroke victims

Public Health Problem

- Heart attack is a leading cause of death in Kansas, accounting for more than a third of all deaths.
- Almost half of heart attack deaths occur before an ambulance arrives.
- Rapid emergency response and the use of standard protocols for care can lessen the possibility of long-term disability or death from heart attack.

Program

- The Kansas Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program and the Kansas Trauma Program assessed emergency medical dispatch centers throughout the state to identify gaps in knowledge, assess the use of standard protocols of care, and identify costs and resources for implementing training.
- More than three-fourths of the state's 133 centers responded to the survey which found:
 - One-fourth of the centers don't require any formal training for dispatchers
 - Many emergency centers have no requirement for continuing education
 - More than half of the centers do not require that their dispatchers are trained in providing instructions to callers requesting emergency assistance on actions they should take before the emergency staff arrive.
 - Lack of funding was cited as a major barrier by half of the respondents

Impact

- The Kansas Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program and the Kansas Trauma Program identified a statewide need for standardized emergency medical services dispatcher training.
- A partner contract agreement established a training network for each of the state's six regional trauma councils, providing standardized training to key emergency medical dispatch personnel.
- More than 330 emergency medical dispatch personnel have been trained to use standard protocols that enable recognition of signs and symptoms of heart attack and facilitate quick treatment for heart attack victims.

Contact

Misty Jimerson
Kansas Department of Health and Environment
785/296-3921
mjimerson@kdhe.state.ks.us