

HeartSafe Communities Help People Get Better Emergency Care for Life-Threatening Heart Attacks and Strokes

Public Health Issue

- Heart disease and stroke are leading causes of death in Maine.
- Almost half of all heart attack and stroke deaths happen before an ambulance arrives or the victim is hospitalized, a sign that people don't act on quickly enough on early warning signs.
- With timely treatment, lives can be saved and disability caused by heart attack and stroke can be lessened.

Program

- The Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention- Cardiovascular Health Program (MCVHP) and Maine Emergency Medical Services adapted and expanded the Maine HeartSafe Community Program to reflect the cardiovascular Chain of Survival, a process which can help save the lives of victims of sudden cardiac arrest.
- HeartSafe Communities is an Emergency Medical Services recognition program designed to promote early access to these essential components of emergency care for heart attack and stroke.
- This effort focused on increasing community knowledge of signs and symptoms of heart attack and stroke and the importance of calling 911, one of five primary emergency response objectives.
- Since 2006, the number of HeartSafe Communities has steadily increased fueling an increase in the number of educational programs conducted by HeartSafe Communities on stroke and heart attack symptom recognition & timely 911 calls.

Impact

- Today, HeartSafe Communities cover 64% of the Maine population.
- People living in Maine HeartSafe Communities designated in 2006 & 2007:
 - Now have better heart attack and stroke symptom recognition than the 2005 baseline.
 - Show greater improvement between baseline and follow-up in heart attack symptom recognition compared to other communities
 - Show varied improvement in stroke symptom recognition compared to other communities

Contact

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