Transcript - Palm Beach County Trauma System

TITLE: Palm Beach County Trauma System

[siren]

>> Narrator: Trauma…it will touch the lives of one out of every three Americans...as a traumatic injury can happen to anyone, anywhere, at any time.

>> Testimonial: If they hadn't taken her by helicopter, she was gone.
>> Testimonial: They saved my daughter's life.
>> Testimonial: Every day I see him it's a miracle. It's a blessing
>> Testimonial: Maybe one day it will happen to you and you'll feel the way that other people felt when they were hurt or injured or something.

[helicopter landing]

>> Narrator: In 1988, Palm Beach County voters recognized the importance of a comprehensive trauma system when they approved a referendum that created the Health Care District of Palm Beach County. By May of 1991, the county's Trauma System had taken flight…and over the past 21 years has provided lifesaving care to more than 51,000 trauma

victims.

>> Ronald J. Wiewora, MD, MPH, Chief Executive Officer, Health Care District of Palm Beach County: The Health Care District is proud to be a part of the system where we can assure that a resident or visitor to Palm Beach County who's injured will receive the care that they need to have the greatest chance of surviving whatever injury or accident happened.

>> Ivan Puente, MD, FACS, Trauma Service Medical Director, Delray Medical Center: For the last 20 years we have been an example for the rest of the state. We were the first to set aside funding to pay for this. We were the first to really come up with a true trauma system. This is a county where from the moment a patient gets injured to the moment they leave the rehabilitation facility, all the care is coordinated, which is really unbelievable.

>> Narrator: Palm Beach County's Trauma System is regulated by Florida State law. The county is one of Florida's 19 Trauma Service Areas. The State has designated the two verified trauma centers in our service area as St. Mary's Medical Center and Delray Medical Center. Through the Health Care District's model of funding and oversight, trauma patients in Palm Beach County have access to quality care delivered by specialists who are at the ready around the clock. Prior to the State having an organized Trauma System in place, there were delays in patient care.

>> Sandra Schwemmer, DO, FACOEP, FACEP, Trauma Medical Director, Health Care District of Palm Beach County: And before that was there, you know, patients lay in the emergency room sometimes for days and you just crossed your fingers and hoped that they would survive long enough to be attended by the specialist that they needed.

[jaws of life cutting through car]

>> Narrator: When someone is traumatically injured…every second counts. 911 is alerted and EMS, Fire Rescue and police are dispatched to the scene. Paramedics provide emergency care and follow standardized treatment and transport protocols created by the Health Care District's Trauma Agency. If they find that the patient meets Trauma Alert criteria, the patient is immediately triaged and transported either by ground or flown by one of the Health Care District's two Trauma Hawk air ambulances to one of the county's two Trauma Centers… Delray Medical Center to the south and St. Mary's Medical Center to the north. There, a Trauma Resuscitation team comprised of a trauma surgeon, an anesthesiologist and other highly-trained specialists and trauma-trained nurses await the patient's arrival.

>> Robert Borrego, MD, Chief of Staff & Director of Trauma, St. Mary's Medical

Center: The sooner you provide the definitive care, the better the outcome, so that's the golden hour. Especially when someone's hemorrhaging, or has a traumatic brain injury, especially with the brain, you know the brain doesn't tolerate blood loss or lack of oxygen very much.

>> Narrator: At the center of this coordinated model of care is the Health Care District's Trauma Agency, which funds and oversees the Trauma System and monitors quality.

>> Dr. Schwemmer: The Trauma Agency actually coordinates all aspects of trauma care, from the injury through transportation of the patient to the Trauma Center. The trauma care that's delivered and care after discharge from the trauma center to the rehab centers as well as discharge home.

>> Sandra Smith, RN, MSN, Trauma Administrator, Health Care District of Palm Beach County: Palm Beach County has a very high survival rate. For those patients that arrive at our Trauma Centers with vital signs, last year we had a 97% survival rate.

>> Dr. Puente: You know, one of the things we forget, it's not only about saving lives, but it's also saving disability. You know, patients get injured and they could end up being very disabled if we don't get to them on time and correct the problem. So a lot of these people, not only do they survive but they go back to being useful members of our society and there's no price for that. You can't put a price on that.

>> Narrator: In 2011, more than 28-hundred trauma patients were treated in Palm Beach County's Trauma System.

>> Sandra Smith: For a long period of time, motor vehicles were the major cause of trauma. And last year falls surpassed motor vehicle crashes as the major cause of trauma in Palm Beach County as well as in the state.

>> Narrator: When 78-year old Providence Balzano fell in 2011, the Health Care District's Trauma Hawk flew her to Delray Medical Center's Trauma Center, where the Trauma team performed brain surgery.

>> Patrick Balzano, Husband of Trauma Survivor: When they let me go up, there she was in a coma and they were taking good care of her. It was amazing.

>> Providence Balzano, Trauma Survivor: I miss some of my memories but otherwise we're doing fine.

>> Narrator: Back in 2007, Marvin Crawford was 9-years old and riding a friend's bicycle near

his home when he was struck by an SUV.

>> Suzette Morris, Mother of Trauma Survivor: He sustained an open and a closed head injury, he had two broken pelvic bones and a broken arm.

>> Narrator: As paramedics treated her son, Marvin's mother Suzette Morris feared the worst.

>> Suzette Morris: It took them a while to leave the scene because they said they had to stabilize him, but I didn't hear anything and that was a very scary moment. Um, but then, after a while, all I heard was him cry out and that was the best feeling in the world. I mean, you don't want to see your child hurt, you don't want to hear him crying, but to hear him cry, then I knew that he was alive.

>> Narrator: Marvin was in a coma at the Trauma Center at Delray Medical Center for 13 days. Through rehabilitation, another critical component of the Trauma System, Marvin learned how to walk again.

>> Suzette Morris: I think the Health Care District is a great asset to Palm Beach County...I credit them because they made it possible with the funding to have this system, to have the doctors and the nurses in place and to have them available to care for my son when he came here.

>> Narrator: Emily O'Keeffe was also traumatically injured in 2007. She was 15 when a car crash left her clinging to life.

>> Emily O'Keeffe, Trauma Survivor: It's scary to think what could have happened and especially if I didn't get here as quickly as I did or didn't have all these amazing doctors and nurses.

>> Narrator: Emily also received lifesaving surgery at the Trauma Center at Delray Medical Center, followed by extensive therapy.

>> Maureen O'Keeffe, RN, BSN, Mother of Trauma Survivor: Having a traumatic brain injury has not been easy, but Emily does have a future thanks to the Health Care District of Palm Beach County...People really do need to understand the hard work that goes into the planning and being prepared 24/7, because it could be you or your loved one that needs this care.

[water lapping at boat dock]

>> Narrator: 29-year old Rob Murphy never thought he would need trauma care…until the day

he was scuba diving in 2009 and was struck by a boat propeller.

>> Rob Murphy, Trauma Survivor: We were surfacing very near the boat that I was on and had a dive flag flying. And another boat came in going pretty fast and came very close to us. And despite our best efforts to try to avoid it, he ran me over and severed both of my legs below the knee.

>> Narrator: Rob's friends raced him to shore where was airlifted here to the Trauma Center at St. Mary's Medical Center. Both of his legs had to be amputated below the knee. Weeks of treatment and skin grafts were followed by intense physical therapy and rehab.

>> Rob Murphy: About four months after everything happened I started getting fitted for my first prosthetics and was walking first with a walker, then a cane and eventually walking on my own within about five months.

>> Narrator: A local provider custom built and donated to Rob special prosthetic legs designed for scuba diving. He now dives two or three times a week.

>> Rob Murphy: I'd just like to thank everybody that was involved every step of the way. I give them full credit for saving my life and it's something I'll never forget. And I'm so grateful to be here and be alive and still doing what I love."

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Medical Executive Committee

Date: May 07, 2024

Location:

In-Person & Zoom Meeting - SEE MEETING DETAILS INCLUDED.

Lakeside Medical Center

39200 Hooker Highway

Belle Glade, FL 33430

Social Media

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