Script – Broadcast - Improving Survival Rates Through Trauma Training

Ask anyone on the front lines of emergency medicine and they'll tell you, teamwork is essential to a patient's survival. It requires lots of training, trust, collaboration and education.

That's why, for the past 15 years, OSF HealthCare Saint Anthony Medical Center, a Level I Trauma Center, has hosted an annual Trauma Symposium. The most recent gathering brought more than 170 EMS personnel, plus trauma nurses and physicians from the northern Illinois region.

SOT: Dr. Stathis Poulakidas, Critical Care Surgeon - Burn Unit, OSF HealthCare Saint Anthony Medical Center

"It's important to, kind of, give education back to the community. We have a lot of different hospital systems that actually refer patients to us and it's good to give them updates in terms of what's important now in trauma and burn care. And so, with that, getting them some of the knowledge base they need and some of the updates they need is critical to facilitating their ability to be able to care for our patients, as well as transfer them to us in a timely fashion." (:24)

With subjects ranging from treatment of fractures and PTSD to pediatric orthopedic, head and spine trauma, attendees learned about new approaches to initial treatments in the field and at referring medical centers.

Dr. Poulakidas says up to 60% of traumas come to OSF Saint Anthony from outside sources.

SOT: Dr. Stathis Poulakidas, Critical Care Surgeon - Burn Unit, OSF HealthCare Saint Anthony Medical Center

"There's still the horrible weapons and the horrible, devastating injuries where some people still die at the scene. I think our EMS personnel are very fast in getting the patients to us quicker so that we get into that golden hour rule and are really able to intervene and save a life. And I really think that's really the greatest advent we have to our abilities." (:17)

The symposium also served as important reminder to referring medical agencies and ambulance providers that a patient's survival from a traumatic injury can often depend on the decision to transport them to a Level I Trauma Center, like OSF Saint Anthony.

SOT: Dr. Stathis Poulakidas, Critical Care Surgeon - Burn Unit, OSF HealthCare Saint Anthony Medical Center

"When you look at the data and you see the people getting cared for at non-Level I Trauma Centers you see that the survival is actually a little bit less and there's a higher mortality. By having a Level I at their fingertips this really changes the care and the outcomes of these patients for the positive." (:15)

OSF Saint Anthony has been a designated Level I Trauma Center for 32 years.

Also at the symposium, the Fire and Iron Station 53 Motorcycle Club, made up of EMS providers and firefighters, presented a check of $3600 to the OSF HealthCare Saint Anthony Medical Center Burn Unit. Over the last five years, the club has donated more than $15,000.