

Fire Department

An office in the cardiology unit of Toledo Hospital regularly sends reports to the Sylvania Township Fire Department with follow-up on patients they have transported to the hospital.

Most of them are brief, factual, and sprinkled with medical jargon and acronyms. It's not often that one ends with the word "Wow."

That, however, was the word chosen by Julie DiCecco, STEMI/chest pain coordinator, ProMedica Heart and Vascular Institutes, when she noted that only 44 minutes had elapsed from when the first township EMT began to work on a man who had called 911 from his home and when angioplasty was underway in the hospital's catheterization lab.

Ms. DiCecco, a nurse for about 30 years, said time is one of the most important considerations when an individual is experiencing a heart attack. She said it is vital to get oxygen-carrying blood flowing to the muscle to avoid death or serious damage.

"I give "wows" when they're deserved," she said.

"The Sylvania Township Fire Department has excellent personnel".

"They not only get the latest and greatest in training, but a lot of them teach advanced life support."

Ms. DiCecco also noted that the good outcome for the patient is also the result of a program which is relatively recent. It is known as STEMI, and allows township firefighters to essentially diagnose a cardiac patient and have a cardiology team waiting when the patient arrives at the hospital.

The program allows the patient to bypass the emergency room and they are taken to the catheterization lab where a team is assembled and goes immediately to work to begin angioplasty.

In this case, the patient's wife had been notified and she rushed to Toledo Hospital. For a time they couldn't locate him because no paperwork had been begun on him.

Ms. DiCecco noted that in this program everything is focused on the wellbeing of the patient. Paperwork can be dealt with later.

In a letter written to Fire Chief Jeff Kowalski, the patient said he had been told by members of the hospital cardiology team that without the quick work by members of the department he probably would have died or had severe heart damage.

Four stents were placed in cardiac arteries and he is going to cardiac rehab, but is in good health.

In her note to the fire department, Ms. DiCecco wrote that "his left ventricle function was preserved thanks to your coordinated efforts."

She also noted the man did the right thing in calling 911. She said it is very dangerous to try to drive yourself to the hospital. It is even dangerous to have someone else drive you.

"If you live in (the Sylvania Township Fire Department area) you have excellent medical care. They can begin what's needed wherever you are rather than wasting time trying to get to a hospital."

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