

# Okaloosa County News Release

April 25, 2014

Kathy Newby, 850.651.7515, [knewby@co.okaloosa.fl.us](mailto:knewby@co.okaloosa.fl.us)

NR14-48

## **Okaloosa County EMS Recognized with Silver Award by American Heart Association *International Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Week May 18- May 24, 2014***

Just in time for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) week May 18-24, Okaloosa County has received the **American Heart Association's Mission: Lifeline<sup>®</sup> EMS Silver Award** that recognizes its commitment and success in implementing specific quality improvement measures for the treatment of patients who suffer a severe heart attack known as a STEMI (ST Elevation Myocardial Infarction). Agencies that receive the Mission: Lifeline Silver award have demonstrated at least 75 percent compliance for each required achievement measure for the entire year, and treat at least eight STEMI patients for the year.

“Okaloosa County Public Safety is pleased to be recognized for our dedication and achievements in emergency medical care, and especially improving the quality of care for all STEMI patients,” said Director Dino Villani.

“We commend Okaloosa County for this achievement award, which reflects a significant commitment to improve the quality of care for heart attack patients,” said A. Gray Ellrodt, MD, Chair of the Mission: Lifeline committee and Chief of Medicine at the Berkshire Medical Center in Pittsfield, Mass. “All too many heart attack patients in the United States still fail to receive appropriate treatment for their life-threatening condition within the recommended timeframes.

Mission: Lifeline's new EMS recognition program recognizes those emergency responders for their efforts in improving STEMI systems of care and improving the quality of life for the almost 300,000 people experience a STEMI, a type of heart attack – which is caused by a complete blockage of blood flow to the heart and requires timely treatment.

Emergency Medical System providers are vital to the success of Mission: Lifeline. EMS agencies provide education in STEMI identification and access to 12-lead ECG machines and follow protocols derived from American Heart Association/American College of Cardiology guidelines. The correct tools and training allow EMS providers to rapidly identify the STEMI, promptly notify the medical center and trigger and early response from the awaiting hospital personnel.

Okaloosa County EMS consists of emergency physicians, emergency medical technicians, paramedics, educators, administrators and others. For more information, contact Okaloosa County Public Safety, 850-651-7150.

###

### **About Mission: Lifeline**

The American Heart Association's Mission: Lifeline<sup>®</sup> program helps hospitals and emergency medical services develop systems of care that follow proven standards and procedures for STEMI patients. The program works by mobilizing teams across the continuum of care to implement American Heart Association/American College of Cardiology clinical treatment guidelines. For more information, visit [heart.org/missionlifeline](http://heart.org/missionlifeline) and [heart.org/quality](http://heart.org/quality).