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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Flagler County Fire Rescue receives American Heart Association award for implementing a higher standard of care

July 3, 2024 – Flagler County Fire Rescue has distinguished itself for its excellence in heart attack and stroke care and has been awarded the national American Heart Association “Mission: Lifeline EMS Gold” for 2024. The additional criteria for “stroke measures” was added this year.

“It is a great honor to receive this award,” said Fire Rescue Chief Michael Tucker. “We were delighted to have received the Silver-level award last year, and we are beyond ecstatic to receive the Gold-level this year with expanded criteria.”

The Target Heart Attack (STEMI) designation focuses on coordinating care between prehospital agencies and the destination hospital, according to www.heart.org. A heart attack with a completely blocked coronary artery is called a STEMI. The acronym stands for ST Elevation Myocardial Infarction.

“With heart tracing there is a particular area that is called the ST segment. When this segment is elevated, the person is said to have a STEMI,” Tucker said. “This indicates the flow of oxygen-rich blood is being cut off to a section of the heart.”

Fire Rescue paramedics can begin patient treatment upon arrival, which is invaluable and potentially lifesaving time.

“Patients can receive medical care up to an hour sooner than someone who is driven to the hospital by a friend or relative,” said Fire Rescue Lt. Jon Moscovitz. “Paramedics are also trained to provide resuscitation efforts to someone whose heart has stopped. Patients who arrive by ambulance may also receive faster treatment at the hospital, because of earlier notification to Emergency Room staff of suspected heart attack or stroke.”

Mission: Lifeline EMS is the American Heart Association’s national initiative to advance the system of care for patients with high-risk, time-sensitive disease states, such as severe heart attacks and strokes. The program helps reduce barriers to prompt treatment – starting from when 9-1-1 is called, to EMS transport, and continuing through hospital treatment to discharge.

Andy Dance
District 1

Greg Hansen
District 2

David Sullivan
District 3

Leann Pennington
District 4

Donald O’Brien, Jr.
District 5

The Mission: Lifeline EMS achievement award focuses on agencies' on-scene care, bringing to the forefront the collaboration and contributions to patient care for prehospital providers.

“The American Heart Association Mission: Lifeline EMS awards are an important way to recognize the crucial roles and performances of EMS personnel in stroke and cardiac patients' care,” Tucker said. “The Mission: Lifeline program puts proven knowledge and guidelines to work on a daily basis, so patients have the best possible chance of survival.”

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