Okaloosa County
News Release

For Release August 6, 2013

Kathy Newby, 850.651.7515, knewby@co.okaloosa.fl.us

P13-114

Photo Caption: Okaloosa County recognized at today's county commission meeting in Crestview. (L-R) *Kevin Burton, EMS Coordinator, Ft. Walton Beach Medical Center; Mitch Mongell, CEO, Ft. Walton Beach Medical Center; Al Herndon, Okaloosa Co. EMS Division Chief; Jeff McInnis, FWBMC Board President; Dino Villani, Okaloosa Co. Public Safety Director.*

NACO Award FWBMC CEO photo: Mr Mitch Mongell, chief executive officer for the Fort Walton Beach Medical Center addresses the Board of County Commissioners about improved heart patient care through its partnership with Okaloosa County.

Okaloosa Granted Achievement Award by National Association of Counties

Okaloosa County Emergency Medical Services Division of Public Safety and the Fort Walton Beach Medical Center partnered to develop an innovative system to transmit electrocardiograms immediately and directly to the Emergency Room, providing an early warning activation system to save patients under cardiac arrest – the STEMI Program. The name is derived from patients found to have an **ST elevated myocardial infarction** or STEMI. The National Association of Counties granted Okaloosa County with the 2013 Achievement Award in recognition of the program and "hard work yielding positive results for Okaloosa County," as stated in the letter.

"This is another great example where we have worked with others in the community to increase public safety for our residents," stated Chairman Don Amunds, Okaloosa County Commissioner. "Fort Walton Beach Medical Center reached out to us as a routine transporter of cardiac patients, which resulted in dramatic patient improvement and successful outcomes, due in large part to the team commitment for better patient care," stated Public Safety Director Dino Villani.

"Okaloosa Emergency Medical Services (EMS) has worked with our facility on this program since 2010, resulting in Fort Walton Beach Medical Center becoming an Accredited Chest Pain Center and a Blue Distinction Center for Cardiac Care®," said Mitch Mongell, FWBMC CEO. "We provide feedback on the patients' success for their own Quality Assurance reviews and truly work as a team. Thanks to Dino Villani and Chief Herndon for their leadership and forward thinking regarding community health and safety. While this is such a significant achievement, FWBMC and our county EMS will continue to set higher goals on our achievements for our community's health and well-being."

Since the inception of this program, two other hospitals within Okaloosa County have placed receiving equipment in their Emergency Rooms that facilitate EMS sending them early EKGs on patients we transport to them. One other hospital has begun receiving STEMI patients as well and is beginning to see the kind of patient outcomes that are touted above.

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