

Benefits justify trauma center commitment, cost

Each month more than 250 trauma patients are brought to the Level 1 trauma center at Scottsdale Healthcare Osborn. These patients with life-threatening injuries come from a wide geographic area, some by ambulance and some by medical helicopter. Whether the patient is coming from Scottsdale, Mesa, Carefree, Gilbert, Apache Junction or elsewhere, the average injury-to-arrival time is



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well within the "golden hour."

Most importantly, our focus is about providing the best care for our patients and the community we serve. Scottsdale Healthcare Osborn became a state-designated Level 1 trauma center in 1980. Several expansions helped keep up with growth in our city and neighboring communities. In 2004, Scottsdale Healthcare invested \$28 million in a new wing to expand the

trauma center, emergency department and intensive care unit.

That investment not only reflects the commitment of Scottsdale Healthcare to provide the highest level of care to our community, but it also increased our ability to serve as a regional disaster response center. Combined, our Level 1 trauma center and emergency department treat in excess of 60,000 patients a year. Our facility is designed to handle double that number.

A Level 1 trauma center is expensive to operate. As a not-for-profit health system, Scottsdale Healthcare embraced the challenge to provide this level of care because of the benefit it provides the community.

Specialists must be available around the clock, including surgeons for orthopedics, neurosurgery, cardiac, thoracic, hand, microvascular, reconstructive, obstetric, gynecologic, ophthalmologic, otolaryngology and urology. Operating

rooms, laboratory, radiology and other services must be available 24/7.

Not all hospitals are able to make this commitment nor is it reasonable to expect this of them. Avoiding unnecessary duplication of services is financially prudent, especially in light of current economic conditions. We must also avoid diluting the volume needed to provide the highest quality care. We are good at what we do because we do it a lot and we do it well.

Our support of trauma services goes above and beyond that of a typical hospital. Scottsdale Healthcare staff provides education and outreach in the community, as well as working closely with emergency medical service providers.

Scottsdale Healthcare Osborn is the first civilian hospital in the U.S. to offer a military trauma training program. Graduates of this successful partnership are treating combat injuries overseas. While they are training here in Scottsdale, our community benefits

from additional medical staff in the hospital and the added disaster response expertise we have gained from this partnership. The program has widespread local and Congressional support.

Most recently, the American College of Surgeons awarded Scottsdale Healthcare Osborn the highest level of verification for a U.S. trauma center. We are now one of only two ACS Verified Level 1 trauma centers in Arizona.

We believe that Scottsdale Healthcare Osborn meets the trauma needs of the Northeast and East Valleys.

We are a community asset and our community expects us to be responsible stewards of its care. It is important that we ensure state budget cuts do not negatively impact a hospitals' ability to provide emergency and trauma care. After all, our common goal is to save lives!

Vicki Bennett is a Level 1 trauma program manager for Scottsdale Healthcare.