

Quicker Response to Heart Attacks

“Door-to-balloon (D2B) time” starts when a cardiac patient arrives at the Emergency Room and stops when a lifesaving angioplasty procedure is performed. Experts recommend a D2B of 90 minutes or less, however, few hospitals nationwide have consistently reached this benchmark.

In 2006, the American College of Cardiology sought to “take the extraordinary performance of a few hospitals and make it the ordinary performance of every hospital.” It set the bar high, asking hospitals to achieve a 90-minute D2B in 75% of cardiac cases.

Pali Momi Medical Center prioritized this goal and by 2010 had attained a 92% success rate. Most important, heart attack victims in West O’ahu are being treated quickly.

“We had a complex challenge,” says critical care director Cheryl Kozai, RN. “Creating an ‘ST Segment Elevation Myocardial Infarction’ (STEMI) program required a highly orchestrated effort among our emergency medical technicians, emergency physicians and staff, cardiologists, nurses, hospitalists, primary care physicians, and administration. Many hospitals don’t have the processes in place to support that level of coordination.”

In Fiscal Year 2010, Pali Momi also established a transfer protocol with Wahiawa General Hospital to quickly send heart attack victims from O’ahu’s North Shore to Pali Momi, significantly broadening the number of people and communities with access to the best heart attack care possible.



Cardiologist John Kao, MD, in Pali Momi Medical Center’s cardiac catheterization lab. “We now have a protocol that significantly improves your chance of surviving a heart attack,” he says. “Our frontline staff embraced this goal because better outcomes mean the difference between life and death. The STEMI program at Pali Momi is making a huge difference for the residents of West O’ahu and the North Shore.”

