

# Public Awareness of a Statewide Trauma System

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## Introduction and Purpose

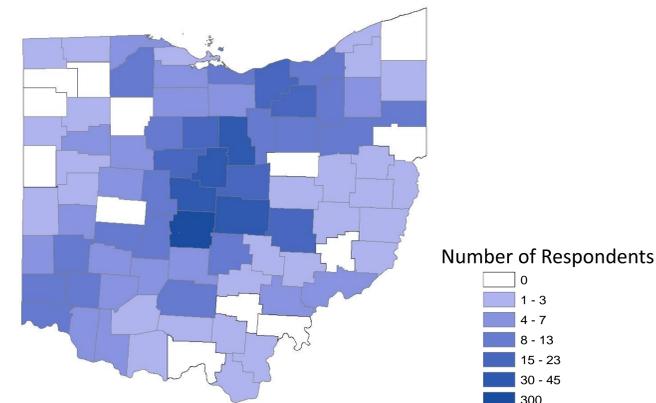
The federal government and the American College of Surgeons have described public knowledge and awareness of trauma systems as an essential component of those systems. Currently, there is a gap in the literature regarding methods to measure and describe public knowledge and perceptions of state trauma systems. The State of Ohio Department of Public Safety conducted a public survey with three aims:

- 1) Investigate Ohioans' perceptions and awareness of the state trauma system;
- 2) Create a valid, low-cost method of surveying the public;
- 3) Use the results of the survey to more effectively target public awareness and information campaigns.

## Methods

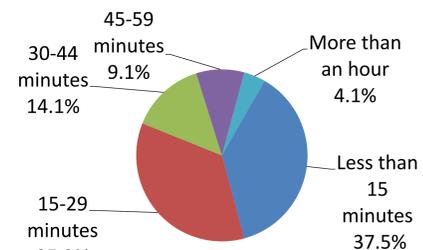
A 10-question survey of the public's knowledge and awareness of the state trauma system was created and adapted from a prominent national trauma survey. The survey was administered electronically through a web-based survey site by staff of the Ohio Department of Public Safety. The venue selected to administer the survey was the Ohio State Fair, where attendee demographics closely match US Census Bureau demographics of Ohio. Passers-by were solicited to participate. Consent was implied through voluntary participation. Incentives in the form of the chance to win one of 40 \$25 gift cards for participation were offered. The incentives were provided by the Ohio Society of Trauma Nurse Leaders. IRB approval was received from the Ohio Department of Health IRB, approval #2012-29.

## Distribution of Survey Respondents per County of Residence



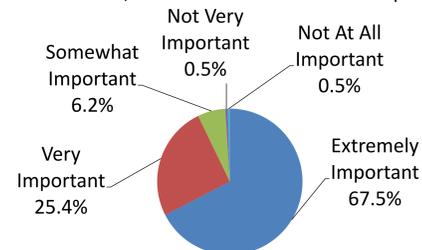
## Sample of Results

From your home, how long would it take you to reach the nearest trauma center by ambulance in the event of a serious or life threatening injury?\*

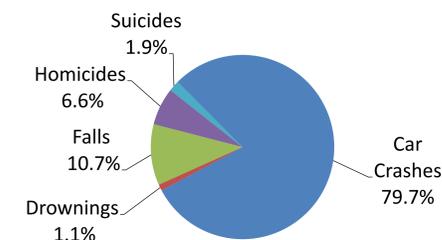


\*82.3% of Ohioans live within 45 minutes of a Level 1, 2 or 3 trauma center

If you were badly injured, how important would it be that an ambulance be required to take you to a trauma center, even if it's not the closest hospital?

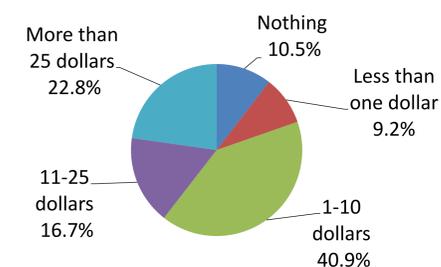


Which of the following do you believe is the leading cause of injury-related death for people that live in Ohio?\*\*\*



\*\*\*Leading causes of injury-related death in Ohio, in order are: 1) MVC, 2) GSW, 3) Falls

How much money per year would you be willing to spend in order to be sure everyone in Ohio lives within a 60 minute drive of a trauma center?



## Results

During the Fair's 12-day run, 839 people completed the survey. 886 individuals initiated the survey, with 47 determined to be ineligible. A slight majority of respondents (55%) correctly identified injuries as the leading cause of death in ages 1-44, and 80% correctly identified MVC as the leading cause of injury-related death. 93% felt it very or extremely important for EMS to bypass non-trauma center hospitals to transport directly to a trauma center. 80% of respondents were willing to pay an annual amount to ensure all citizens live within 1 hour of a trauma center, with 25% willing to pay \$25 or more. There was self-selection bias as the survey was completed by more females than males (61%/39%) and by older people (50% of respondents aged 45-54 vs. Ohio median age of 38).

## Conclusions

A state fair is a valid venue for state trauma systems to survey the public for trauma system perception and awareness. The method used fulfilled the study's three aims of understanding Ohioans' knowledge, perceptions and misperceptions of the state trauma system, creating a low-cost method of surveying the public, and creating a tool to target public awareness and information campaigns.

