

Leon County EMS presents study at national conference

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TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (WCTV) — Leon County Emergency Medical Services is receiving national recognition after presenting a study published in the journal "Prehospital Emergency Care," to medical experts from across the country.

Local paramedics presented the study at the National Association of EMS Physicians annual meeting in San Diego, California. It looked at data collected over a four-year period dealing with calls made to LCEMS for cardiac arrest. The study was done in conjunction with the Florida State University College of Medicine.

According to local paramedics, there are two primary techniques used by first responders to help resuscitate a person in cardiac arrest, meaning their heart stopped. One way is administering medicine directly into the bone. The second way is through the vein using an IV.

Through their study, the paramedics determined there was a higher success rate using the IV method than injecting through the bone. Data presented showed a 41 percent success rate in resuscitating the patient when using IV access, compared to a 22 percent success rate when done through the bone.

Stephen Suarez, a Captain for LCEMS who participated in the study, said the opportunity to present at the conference has shined a light on the often overlooked work of paramedics.

"People who survive cardiac arrest from an out of hospital setting are the people who get really good care on the scene of the cardiac arrest," said Suarez, acknowledging the importance of work done by paramedics. "We're not just taking in best practices from all over the country, but we're starting to establish some of the best practices by participating in some of this research here."

The study took two years to complete. LCEMS will not be changing any protocol based on the findings just yet, but rather, plan to continue studying the subject.

"We will continue to participate in research that gives us the best opportunities to save lives," said Leon County Emergency Medical Services Chief Chad Abrams. "More research is being conducted to prove the accuracy of these findings and this is a huge first step, to present in front of the nation's top medical experts sparks a conversation."