



Health Systems
Management, Inc.

A Special Cardiac (Heart Care) Resource for the



International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

Local 292

Minneapolis & St. Cloud, MN

Mpls 612-379-1292 or 800-337-8310 St. Cloud 320-253-1292



Members, Retirees and Dependents

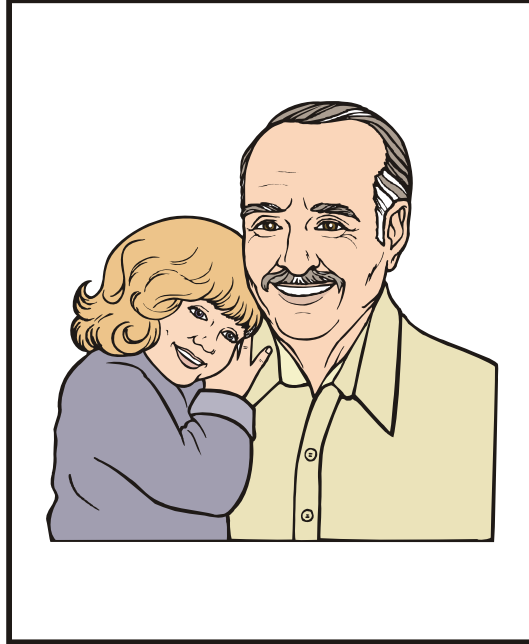
If you suspect you are having a heart attack or some other acute life threatening medical problem, you should call 911 immediately or get to the nearest hospital emergency room!

For Members, Retirees and Families

This booklet describes a new resource for members, retirees and their families,

- ☑ who believe they may be at risk for heart problems -- or
- ☑ who have been diagnosed with heart or heart-related medical conditions -- or
- ☑ who are in need of treatment or follow-up care for heart conditions.

The purpose of this resource is to help you identify and access physicians, surgeons, and hospitals, who are widely renowned for their expertise in preventing, diagnosing and treating specific types of heart problems.



Voluntary and Confidential

Use of this resource is voluntary. You (or a family member) can choose to use the service at any time, including (but not limited to) the following situations:

- ☑ You need a diagnostic procedure or you are about to receive treatment for a heart condition.

Heart specialists, who are experienced and expert in diagnosing and treating your condition, will provide the best chance for an optimal outcome. This resource will help you identify and access these specialists and hospitals.

- ☑ Your doctor said you have heart disease or another serious heart-related condition.

Your medical condition is potentially life threatening or is affecting your quality of life and ability to function normally. You want information about possible treatments that may be available.

- ☑ Your doctor says you require surgery or other tests to find out whether you have a heart related or other condition.

You need help in developing questions so that you can better evaluate the options that are being presented. (Unfortunately, many doctors and hospitals will only tell you about the options that they or their

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partners are able to provide. There may be many other less painful or more accurate options available -- just not at this hospital or from this doctor.)

- You are currently being treated for a heart condition.

Your current treatment is not working well or there are unpleasant side effects. You want to know whether there might be other treatment options.

- You have a family history of heart problems and want to know whether you are really at risk.

If you are at risk, what are the best preventive steps to take? How, where, and when should you begin?

- You want to know about new research that is being conducted to treat a heart-related condition.

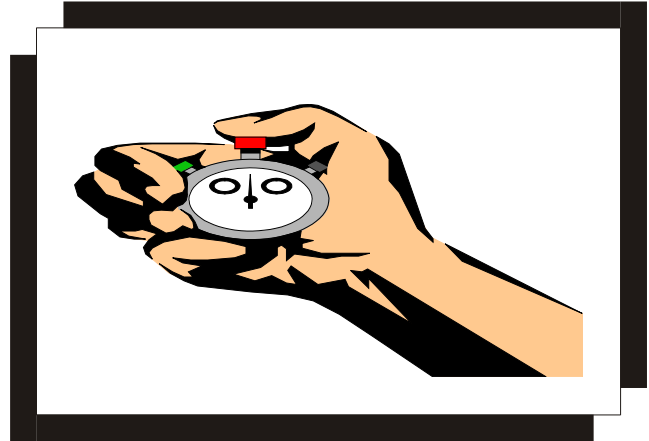
Does this new treatment work? What types of patients are likely to benefit most from the new treatment?

- You were diagnosed and treated for a serious heart condition in the past and would like to know about options for preventing your disease from recurring.

- You need help in getting a timely appointment with a physician that specializes in your condition -- or you need information to help in making the best travel plans.

Please call

1 877 961 1120 (toll free)



Timing is important for a good outcome. Call or email as soon as possible!

Or send a Fax to

1 251 961 3151

Or send an email

hsminc@gulftel.com

Or visit our website

<http://www.hsminc.net>

Why Have a Special Cardiac Resource?

It's unfortunate (but true) that one or more members of most American families will experience a serious illness at some point in time. When that occurs, many people are too overwhelmed to know what to do.

- ☑ What questions should I ask?
- ☑ Is the diagnosis accurate and complete?
- ☑ Where should I go for treatment? Is my local hospital okay? Is it in my best interests to have the treatment performed in my doctor's office or do I need the resources available at another clinic?
- ☑ What treatment options are available?
- ☑ Have I been informed about all possible treatments -- or just the treatments that my doctor or his partners can provide? What treatment options are available?
- ☑ Is this the best treatment for me? Do patients that undergo this specific treatment at this facility have good outcomes? Are the facility and the doctor experienced?

Most medical professionals are busy people. They do not have time to research all the treatment options that are available for each patient. Many offer only the treatment options that are "standard" or that are available through their own office or in the local community.

Many doctors assume that patients and families would not be willing to go elsewhere

-- even when it means the difference between life and death -- or between painful disability and good quality of life.

What this Resource Provides

The primary goal of this resource that is available to members, retirees and dependents is to provide the personalized assistance necessary to make you a knowledgeable health care consumer. Most healthy people don't think about medical care until they or a loved one become sick or disabled. At that time, it is difficult to gather the strength to seek out the resources you need to be a knowledgeable health care consumer. This resource can help you.

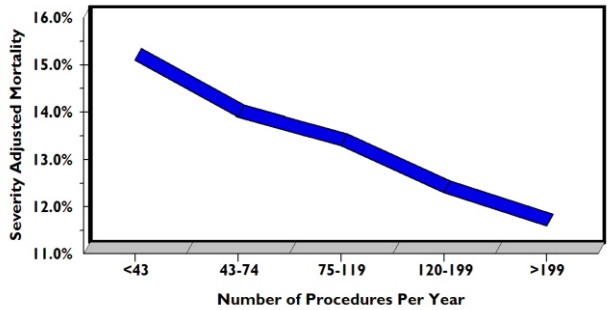
In addition, this resource will help you with the following:

- ☑ Access the most experienced, expert cardiac centers for your condition.

In medicine (as in other areas of life), "practice makes perfect." This service will help you identify and access the most experienced centers and specialists that specialize in treating your specific cardiac condition.

It is important to know that no medical center (no matter how large) has the resources to be "best" in everything. Larger centers, therefore, tend to specialize. For example: A cardiac center may specialize in particular types of heart disease or possibly heart transplants. Others may

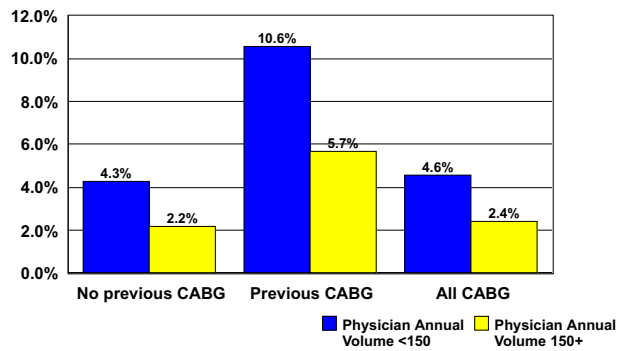
Hospital Volume (Experience) and Patient Mortality Mitral Valve Replacement



Source: N Engl J Med, Vol 346, Nbr 15 April 11, 2002
Statistical significance P < .001

Patients do better at experienced hospitals!

In-Hospital Mortality Rate (Unadjusted) After Isolated CABG by Previous CABG Status and Physician's Annual Procedure Volume



JS Buechner et al, Outcomes of Invasive Cardiac Procedures, Rhode Island Department of Health, June 2000



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specialize in assisting people with diabetes, who develop heart disease or end stage renal disease.

Typically, medical centers will offer a greater variety of effective treatments for the conditions in which they specialize. This is partly because centers expend more resources for hiring experienced staff, developing innovative clinical research programs, and purchasing sophisticated laboratory equipment and other technology. In addition, they may have developed advanced testing methods to determine which treatments will work best for individual patients. (These complex tests are seldom available at other medical centers.)

Patient assistance and advocacy

An important part of this service is to ensure that patients have been provided with information about their medical problem and possible treatments that are available. It is not uncommon for patients to hear only about the treatments that are offered locally - not those that are available at highly sophisticated medical centers in other cities.

Provide patient educational material and other information to help you select among the best centers to treat your condition.

Assistance with medical referrals.

It is very hard for most people to ask their doctor for a referral to a different doctor or medical center. Many patients are too embarrassed to make such a request. Some people even hesitate to ask questions

about their treatment because they think it will upset their doctor.

We can help you ask your doctor for a referral or to refer yourself without your doctor's help. We can help with transferring records and (if you desire) ensure that your primary doctor is kept informed about your progress.

Help patients confirm their diagnoses.

Many medical diagnoses involve complex conditions. They may not be accurate in every respect. This means that patients may not receive the most appropriate treatment for their conditions the first time. And the success of future treatments may be compromised by the first treatment.

Help physicians to refer their patients.

This includes assisting with the "mechanics" of referral (record transfer, travel and lodging information, etc.) for evaluation and treatment.

Provide personal support for patients and their families.

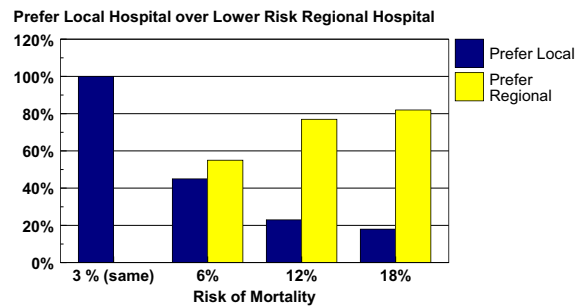
Sometimes patients have to travel to receive the care that is most appropriate for them. Many people feel they need help in a strange city or at a new medical center. At your request, we can provide you with the extra help that you need to cope. If you are alone or a family member is ill, such help can be important.

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- ☑ Continue to help the patient and family throughout the diagnostic, treatment and follow-up periods.
- ☑ Discounted travel and accommodation arrangements, when necessary.

For patient evaluations, treatment, and one year follow-up, we will assist with travel and accommodation information. We know about the resources available, including special patient housing and transportation options, for patients and families.

Majority of Patients Will Travel to Lower Risk



A Special Confidential Resource for You

The objective is to offer a confidential resource for patients and families that are confronted with serious illness. Are there other treatment options somewhere? Is this diagnosis correct? How can I find out more about my problem?

More Questions or Concerns?

If you or a family member have any questions or want more information about **this resource, please call**

1 877 961 1120 (toll free)

Or send a Fax to

1 251 961 3151

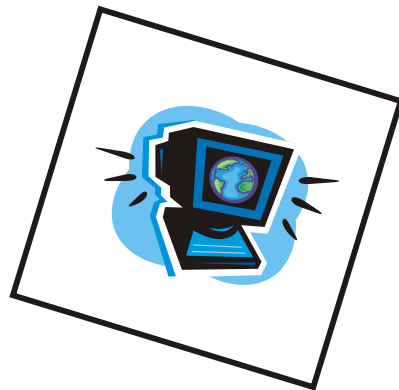
Or send an email

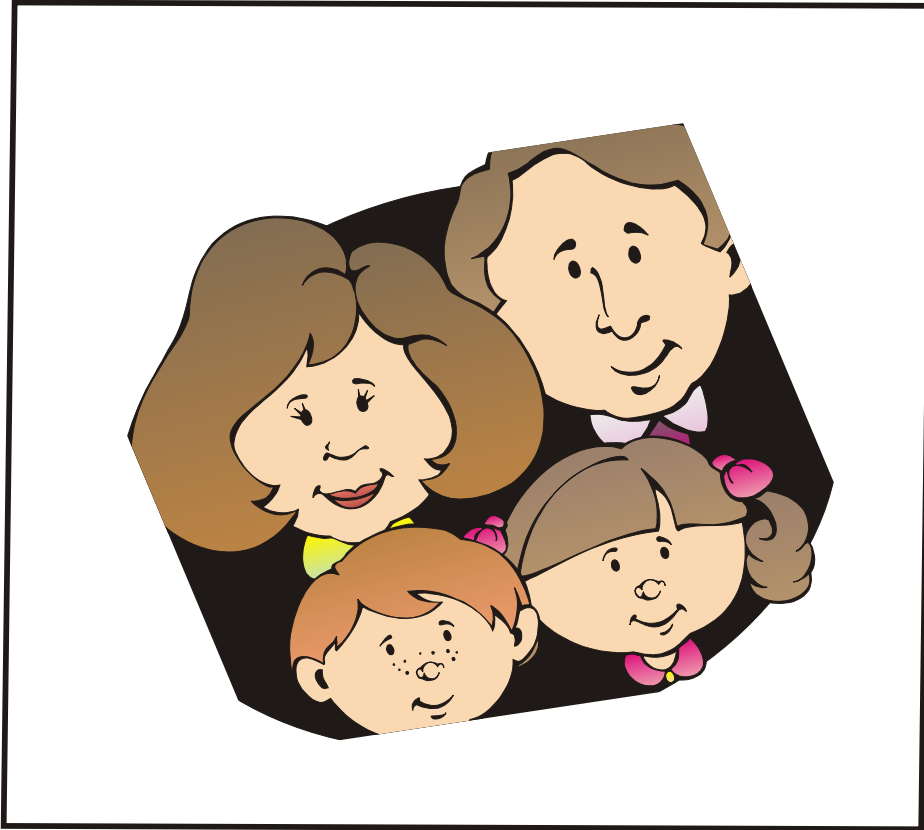
hsminc@gulftel.com

Or visit our website

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**A Confidential Resource for Members, Retirees,
and Families**