

U of C PRESIDENT ZIMMER and DEAN POLONSKY CAN SAVE LIVES:

A Briefing On Why President Zimmer and Dean Polonsky Should Expand Access to Trauma Care

What is a Trauma Center?

A trauma center is a hospital unit specializing in the treatment of patients with acute and especially life-threatening traumatic injuries.

There are NO Adult Level 1 trauma centers on the south side.

Trauma patients on the south side of Chicago are taken out of the city to Advocate Christ Hospital in the southwest suburbs of Oak Lawn or to Northwestern Memorial Hospital on the northern edge of downtown. South side patients face longer ambulance run times than other residents in the city, often 30-40 minutes, two to three times the city standard. Meanwhile north side residents rarely travel over 5-10 minutes to a trauma center.¹

The University of Chicago Hospital opened its adult trauma center in 1986 and closed it in 1988 even though they sit in the middle of a gun violence epidemic claiming dozens of lives every year.

In a study published in June 2013 in the American Journal of Public Health Dr. Marie Crandall² of Northwestern Hospital analyzed a decade of gunshot wound data in Chicago, and found that people who travel more than 5 miles to a trauma center are 23% more likely to die than those who do not.

See map from Crandall Study (we drew a green circle with a 5 mile radius showing the area which a U of C trauma center would serve).

This is an issue of social justice.

Running a Level 1 Adult Trauma Center costs between \$20-40M a year, a Level 2 Trauma Center, which would stabilize patients, costs \$3-10M a year³. The U of C Hospital is one of Chicago's most resource rich hospitals and uniquely positioned to provide trauma care on the south side.

- **U of C Hospital gets \$58.6 million dollars in annual tax breaks and gives only \$10 million in charity care.⁴**
- The U of C Hospital recently opened a new \$740 million building.
- In 2012 the hospital brought in \$1.3 billion dollars in revenue and made \$156 million dollars in 'profit'.⁵
- The U of C Hospital has a children's trauma center with an age limit of 18, the limit could be raised to 21⁶.
- Of the top 25 medical schools, the University of Chicago is the **ONLY ONE** without a level 1 trauma center.

Dean Kenneth Polonsky of the U of C Hospital argues that opening a trauma center would require other important programs to be cut, suggesting that he only allocates a set amount of money to 'the community,' and that this number cannot be increased. We do not ask that the hospital cut other services, but rather partner with us to find ways to increase the budget they allocate to trauma care, addressing life and death needs for the neighborhood around them. In May 2012 Dean Polonsky said he was willing to be part of a regional solution to expand access to trauma care, however, to date he has done nothing to make good on this commitment.

Join us in demanding that President Zimmer and Dean Polonsky honor their civic commitment and respond to a critical local healthcare need by expanding access to trauma care on the south side.

Get involved and help save lives: contact **The Trauma Care Coalition** at: www.traumacenternow.org

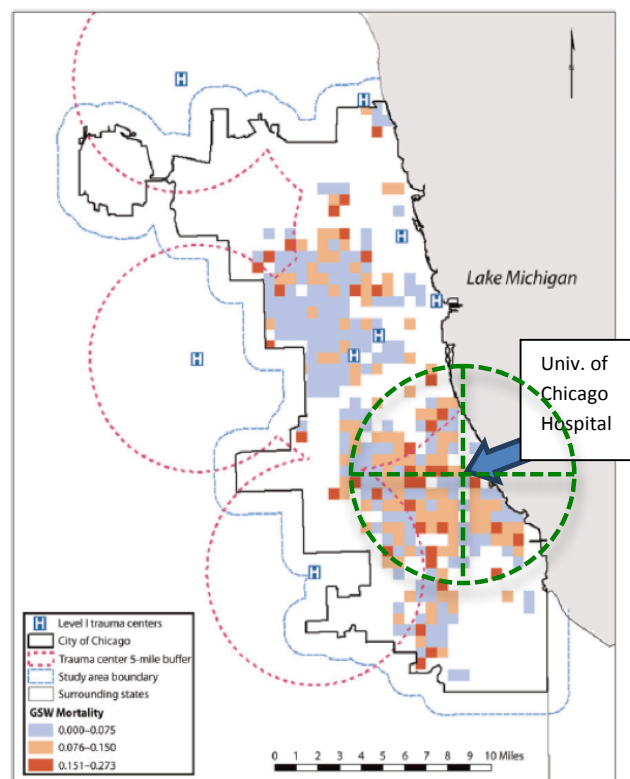


FIGURE 1—Density map of gunshot wound (GSW) mortality and distance from a trauma center: Chicago, IL, 1999-2009.

¹ <http://www.wbez.org/story/would-adding-new-trauma-center-save-lives-south-side-93103>

² <http://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/abs/10.2105/AJPH.2013.301223>.

³ Testimony by Dr. Marie Crandall at IL Senate Public Health Hearing: on the Proximity to Trauma Care and Mortality (Trauma Care Deserts), 11/20/2013.

⁴ Heather O'Donnell and Ralph Martire. "An Update: An Analysis of the Tax Exemptions Granted to Non-Profit Hospitals in Chicago and the Metro Area and the Charity Care Provided in Return". Center for Tax and Budget Accountability: April 2009.

⁵ <http://finserv.uchicago.edu/pdf/2012FinState.pdf>

⁶ many Children's trauma centers around the country, including Boston Children's Hospital, have an age limit of 21