Data Shows Ambulance Fees Will Deter Emergency Calls for Help

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ROCKVILLE, Md., May 13 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Multiple data sources, including scientific survey data, medical studies and analyses of data in regions that have imposed ambulance fees, indicate that ambulance fees will discourage calls to emergency services for help, risking the health and safety of those experiencing medical emergencies. More specifically,

- A paper released on May 6, 2010 by the Heart Foundation of Australia – whose emergency medical system is similar to that in the U.S. – reported that almost 7% of participants would be "very" or "somewhat" likely to delay calling an ambulance due to the costs involved.
- A February 2008 survey of Montgomery County, MD residents found that 74% of respondents believe that it is "very" or "somewhat" convincing that ambulance fees would cause poor and elderly patients needing transport to a hospital to hesitate or delay calling 911.

Three studies in peer-review medical journals found that cost considerations may play a factor in delaying activation of the emergency medical system in cardiac emergencies:

- "Economic considerations may affect EMS system utilization among underinsured and low-income patients experiencing a cardiac event," cited in *Association between prepayment systems and emergency medical services use among patients with acute chest discomfort syndrome (for the Rapid Early Action for Coronary Treatment (REACT) Study)*, Ann Emerg Med. 2000 June; 35(6):573-8.

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