

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO HOSPITAL: CARE FOR OUR CHILDREN:

A Briefing On Why the U of C Children's Trauma Center Should Raise Its Age Limit

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.

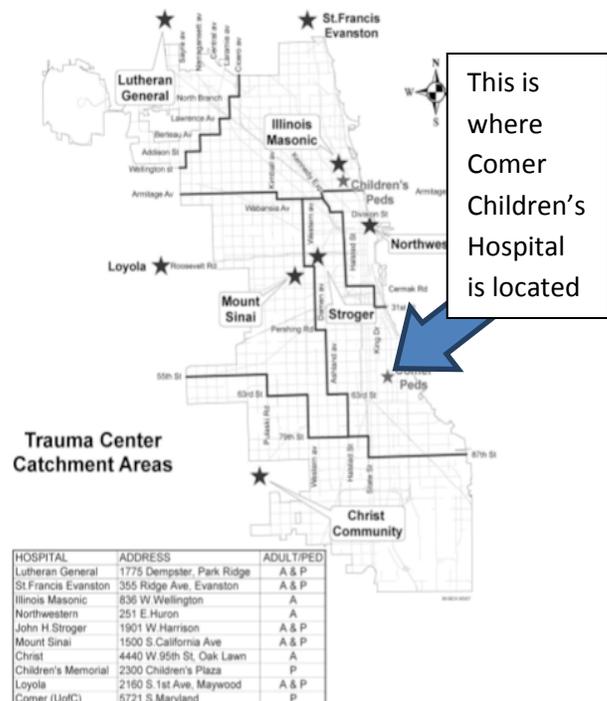
Patients living on the Southeast Side of Chicago face the longest ambulance run times of any residents in the city. Over the last three years, at least 15 times ambulances leaving [South Chicago] took at least 40 minutes-- twice the citywide standard.¹

The University of Chicago Hospital opened its adult trauma center in 1986 and closed it in 1988. **The University of Chicago Hospital opened The Children's Comer Hospital in 2006, which has a children's trauma center, but only takes children up to age 15.** U of C administrators made this decision even though they sit in the middle of a gun violence epidemic claiming the lives of dozens of children every year.

In 2011, on the Southeast Side, there were approximately 120 children aged 17 – 18 in need of trauma care due to gunshot wounds. 30 of these children died. Aged 17 – 21 there were over 200 children in need of trauma care due to gunshot wounds and **72 of these children died. These are lives the U of C Hospital could have saved!**²

Children's trauma centers across the country save lives of children of **all ages.**

- **There are over 50 children's trauma centers within 30 states across the U.S. that take children over age 16.**
- **There are over 15 trauma centers across the U.S. that take children over age 18.**³



This Is an Issue of Social Justice

The University of Chicago Hospital is one of Chicago's most resource-rich hospitals and uniquely positioned to provide trauma care to all children on the South Side. Yet many South Side children are taken out of the city to Advocate Christ Hospital, in the southwestern suburb of Oak Lawn, or to Northwestern Memorial Hospital, on the northern edge of downtown.

- **The U of C Hospital gets \$58.6 million dollars in annual tax breaks and provides only \$10 million in charity care**⁴
- The U of C Hospital recently opened a \$700 million research building.

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

² Based on FLY's analysis of Red Eye Homicide Data.

³ Based on a phone survey conducted by FLY in August 2012.

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.

The U of C Hospital cites a study⁵ that says travel times do not impact mortality.

However, the study does not reflect conditions in Chicago. Craig Newgard, the lead author, admits there are unanswered questions.

- The cities analyzed in the study do not reflect the traumatic injuries of Chicago. Specifically, Chicago has much more penetrative trauma than the cities analyzed.
- Also, the data analyzed does not draw a distinction between blunt and penetrative trauma. Because gunshot wounds are penetrative trauma, distinguishing them could lead to different results.

In a soon to be published study that analyzes data tracking over a decade of gunshot wounds in Chicago, Dr. Marie Crandall⁶ of Northwestern Hospital shows travel times DO impact mortality. Dr. Crandall suggests that this impact could result in 7 lives being saved each year.

Trauma centers are part of a continuum of antiviolence programs. Ceasefire has a successful Hospital-Based Intervention Program⁷. This program includes an on-call interrupter who is called to a trauma center when a shooting occurs. The interrupter then works with the family and friends of the victim to deescalate violence. Trauma centers, like jobs and afterschool programs, are an important part of the continuum of antiviolence programs.

The Trauma Center Campaign was started by Fearless Leading by the Youth (FLY) after the passing of one of its co-founders, Damian Turner. On August 15th, 2010, Damian Turner was shot on 61st and Cottage Grove, two blocks from the U of C Hospital. Chicago Fire Department paramedics were required to drive him to the nearest Level 1 trauma center, more than nine miles across the city at **Northwestern Memorial**

Hospital on the northern edge of downtown. Though he was still considered a child by his mother and his community, he was too old to be treated at the University of Chicago's trauma center. Mr. Turner, at age 18, was pronounced dead less than 90 minutes after the bullet ripped into his back.



For Information, Contact:

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⁵ Newgard et al. "Emergency Medical Services Intervals and Survival in Trauma: Assessment of the "Golden Hour" in a North American Prospective Cohort *Annals of Emergency Medicine* Volume 55, No.3: March 2010 p. 235 – 246.

⁶ Dr. Crandall stated this at a teach-in organized by FLY and SHE on October 20, 2011.

⁷ <http://ceasefirechicago.org/in-the-community/hospital-partnership>