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# Unspoken "Rules" of EMS

*What We Think We Might Know for Sure*

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New York State Department of Health

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# Please Do Not Shoot the Messenger!



# Lee's Disclaimer



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So...

I would like to make you a  
*little* mad!

I hope to make you think...  
*hard!*

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# We Think We Know So Much...

- Because...
  - ▶ We are taught...
  - ▶ We are told...
  - ▶ We've always done it that way...
  - ▶ We follow protocols!
- Is it all true???
- What has experience taught us?
- What does the data show?



# Is it Time to Consider a...

- Paradigm shift?
- Is EMS
  - ↳ Primary care?
  - ↳ Initial care?
  - ↳ Introduction to the health care system?
  - ↳ Not that emergent?



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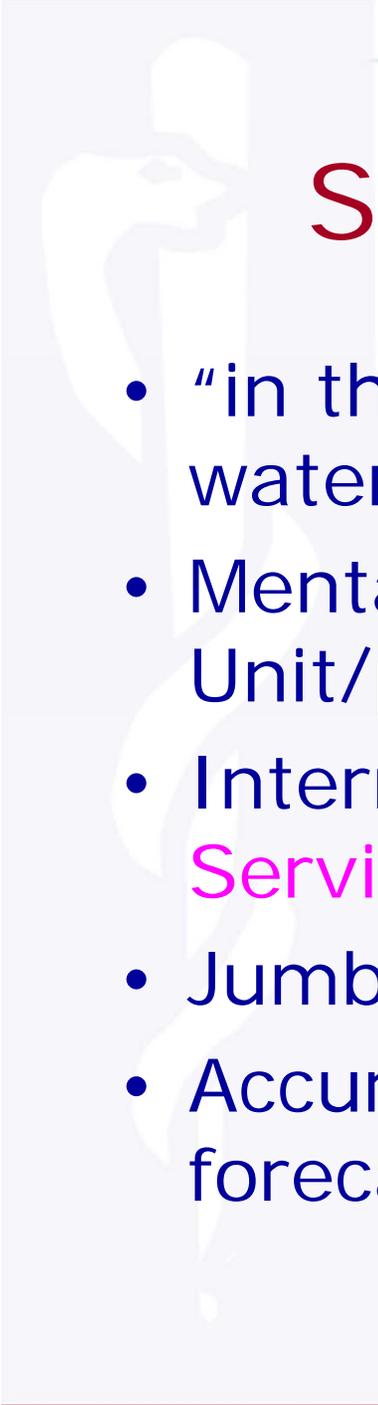
# Oxymoron

An **oxymoron** (plural **oxymorons** or **oxymora**) (from Greek, "sharp dull") is a figure of speech that combines normally contradictory terms.

Oxymorons appear in a variety of contexts, including inadvertent errors and literary oxymorons crafted to reveal a paradox.

...Wikipedia

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# Some of Life's Examples

- “in the event of a water **landing**...”
  - Mental **Health** Unit/patient
  - Internal Revenue **Service**
  - Jumbo shrimp
  - Accurate weather forecast
  - Boneless chicken wings
  - Legal brief
  - Same difference
  - Once again
  - Detailed summary
  - Pretty ugly
  - **Cost effective prehospital care**
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Are killing ourselves from the **INSIDE???**

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## So, Lets Talk About...

- EMS education
- EMS operations
- Patient care
- Inter-personal communications
  
- Lee's personal observations (gripping)



# EMS Education and Training

- Bag-Mask-Ventilation
- Nasal-pharyngeal airways
- Cherry red skin
- Hypoxic drive
- Epiglottittis
- Battle Signs

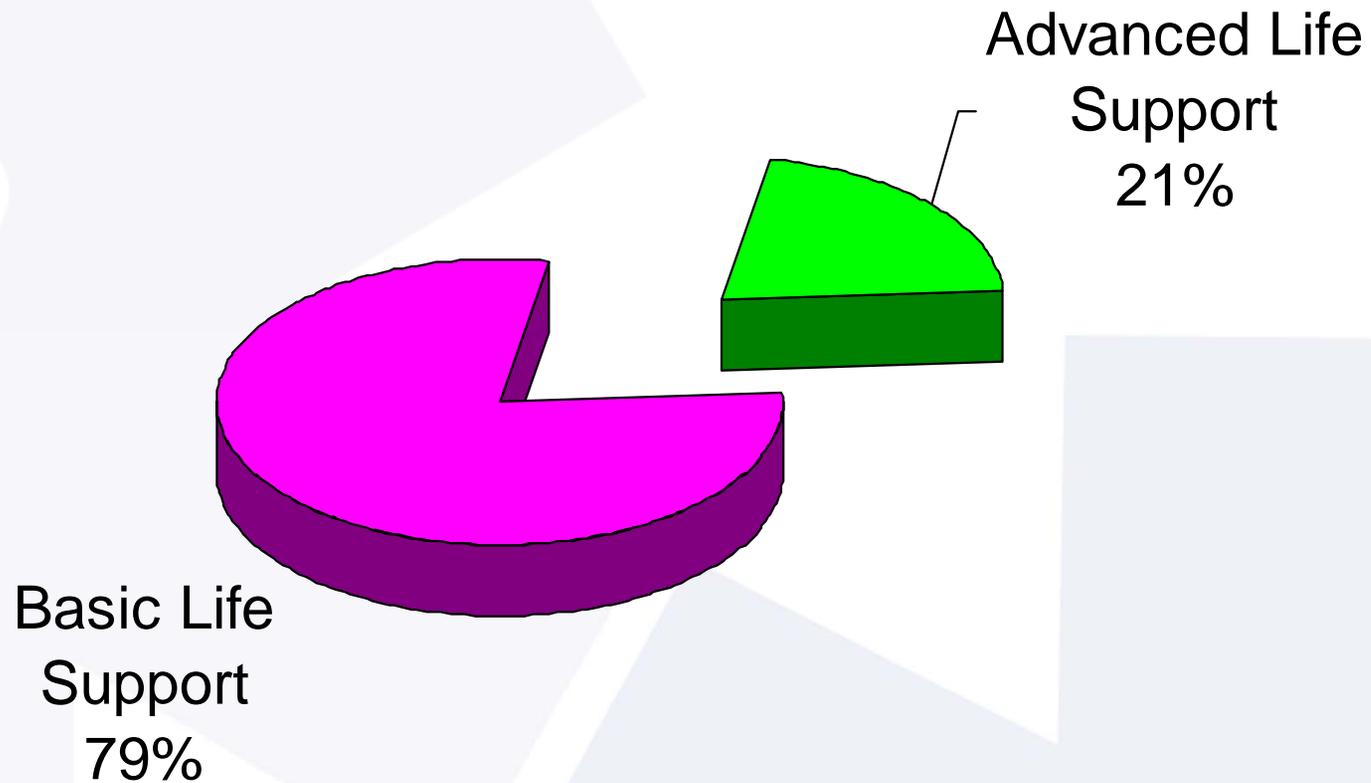


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# EMS Operations

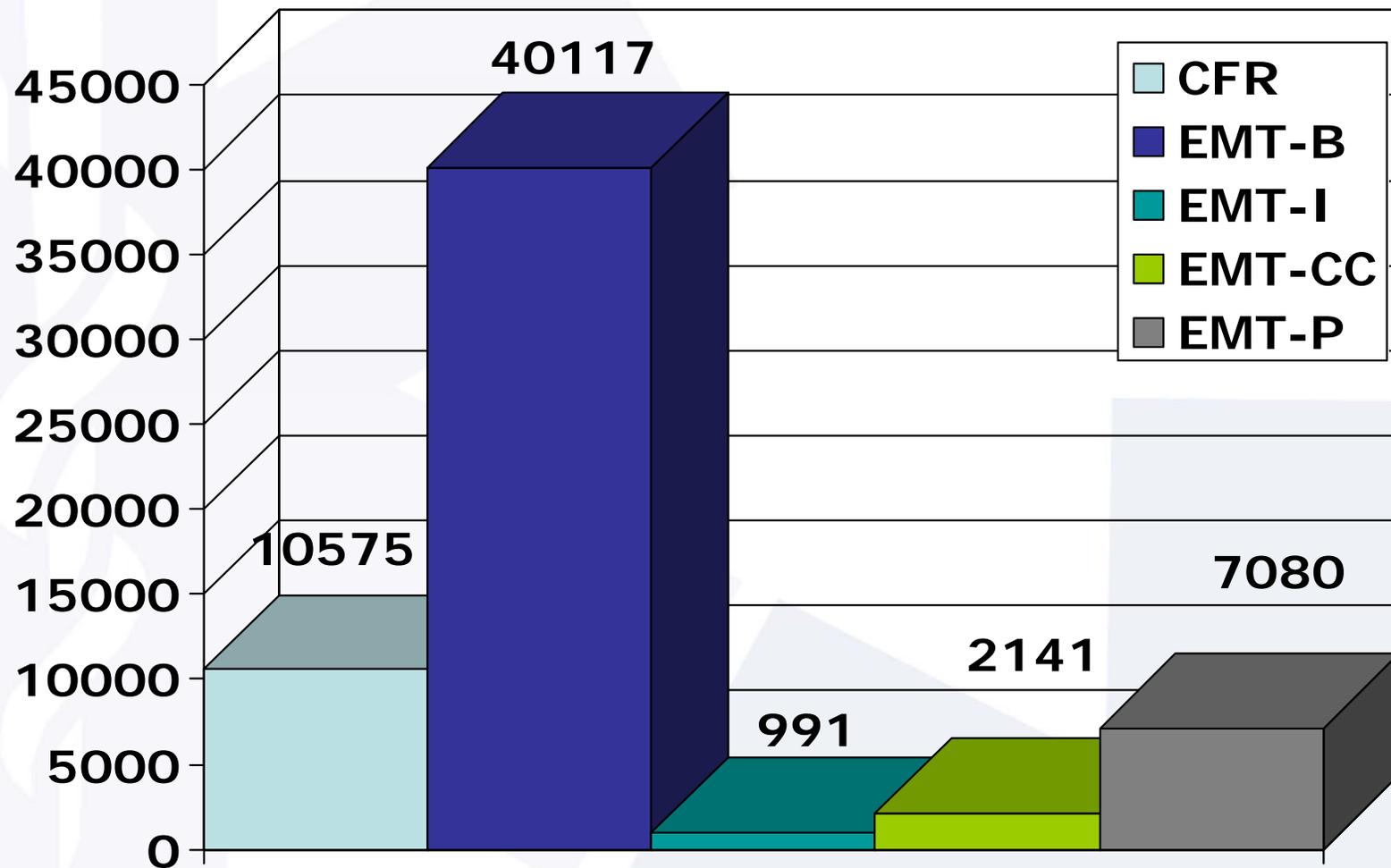
- *Oxymorons?*
  - ▶ We need to have paramedics!
  - ▶ Without the fire departments there would be no ambulance service
  - ▶ Volunteers do all the calls
  - ▶ The calls happen in the evening when everyone is out of work or school.

# Level of Care Provided



# Certified EMTs by Level

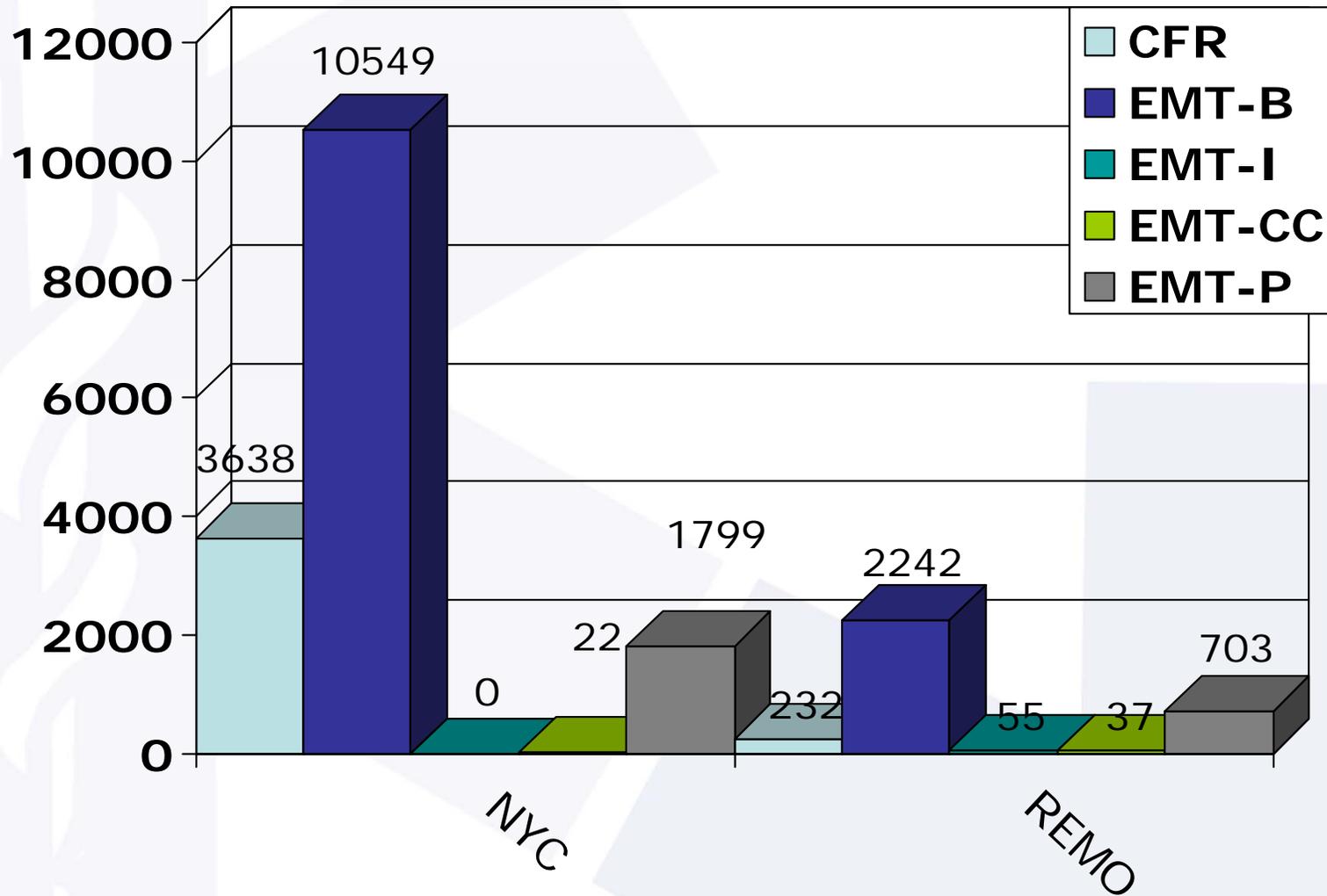
Statewide



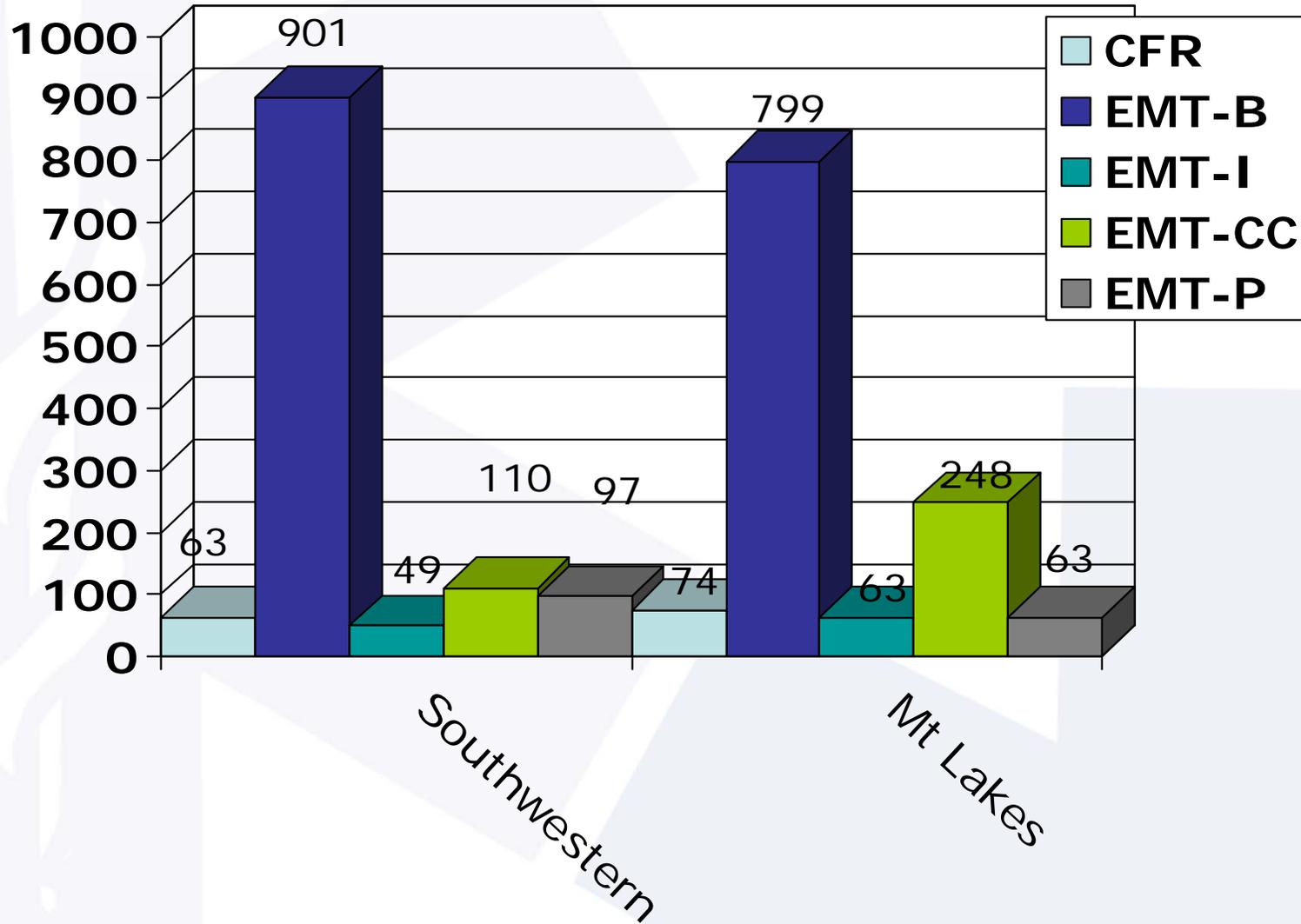
*N= 60,904*

*Valid after 12/1/2011*

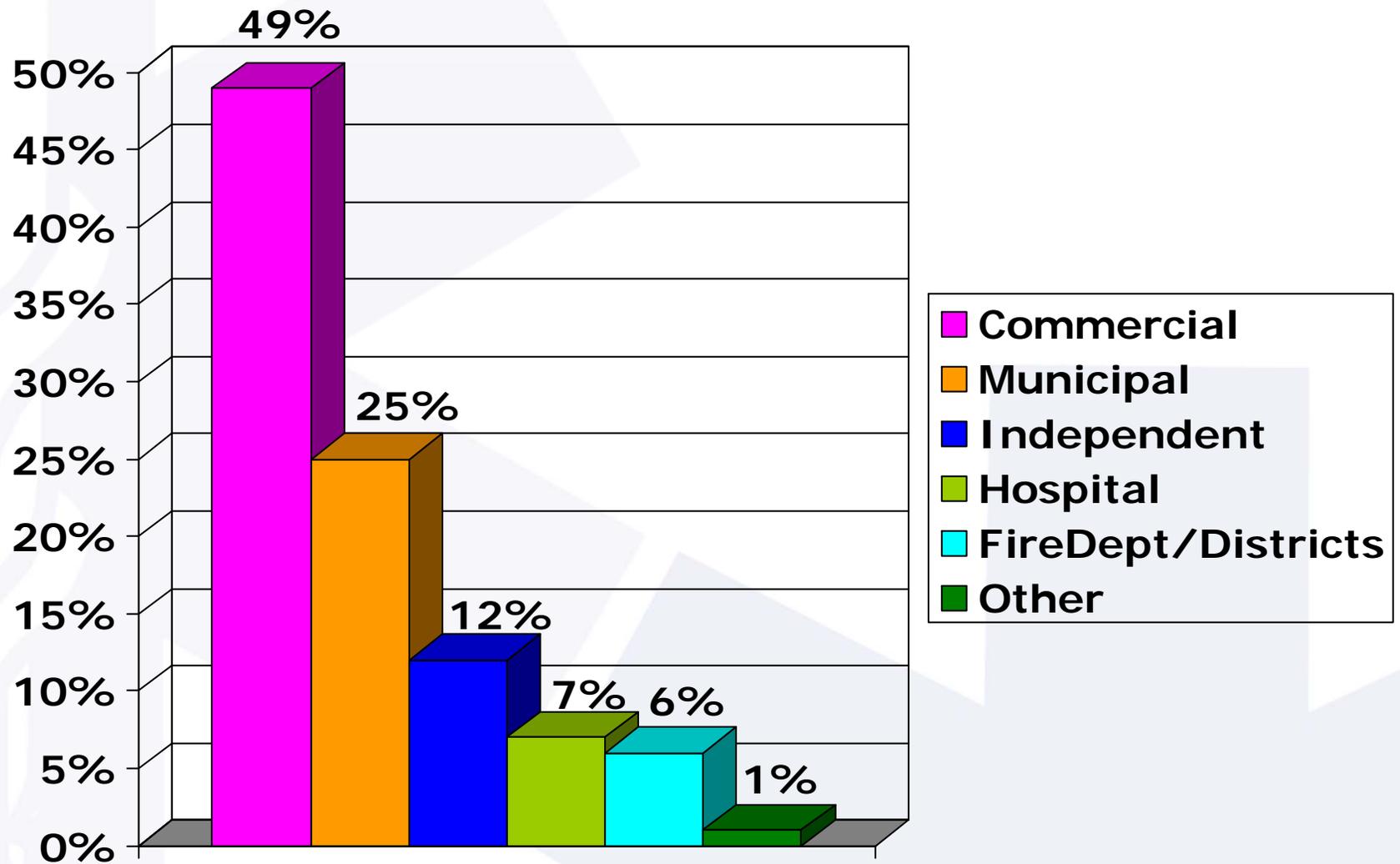
# Certified EMTs by Level



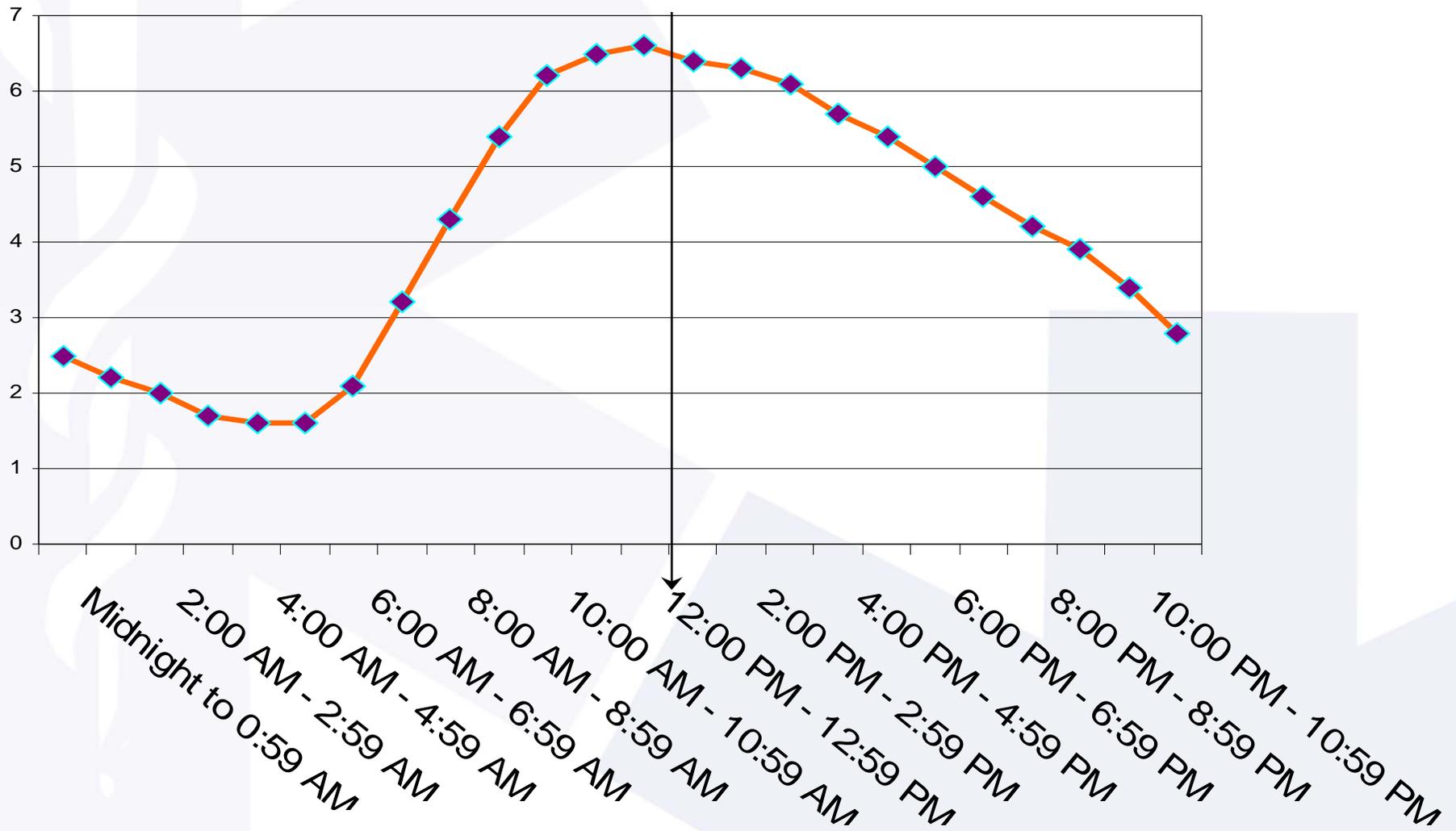
# Certified EMTs by Level



# Whose Doing the EMS Calls...



# Time of Emergency Call



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# Assessing and Treating Patients

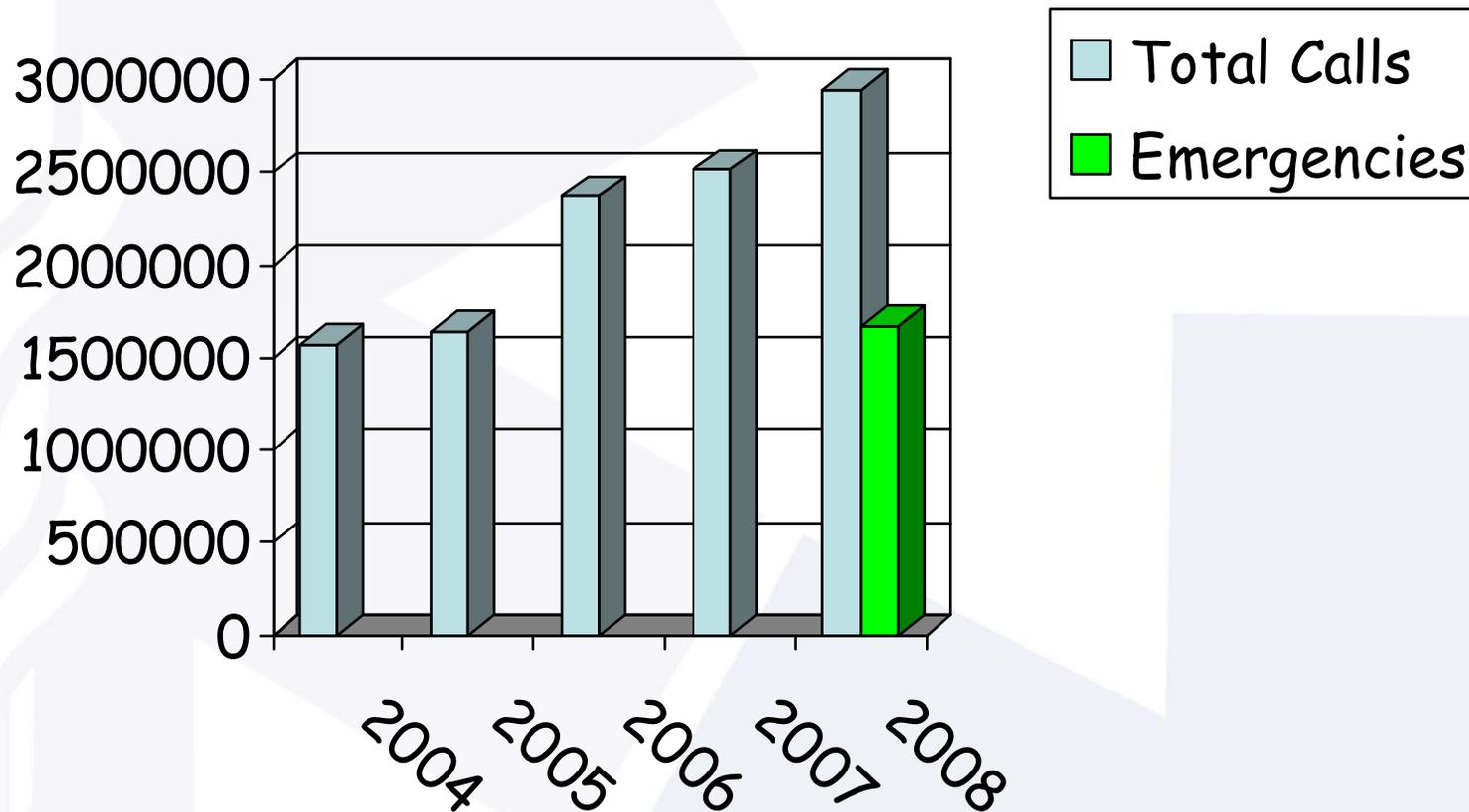
- The “Look Test” – Earl Evans
- Lung sounds
- Vital Signs... “the numbers”
- Mechanism of Injury
- 2 beers!
- “It’s not about what you see... it’s about what you suspect”
  - ▶ “you can observe a lot by just watching”  
–Yogi Berra

# Assessing and Treating Patients

- “We respond to lots of cardiac arrests... and intubate TONS of people!”
- “We are ‘street surgeons’... we have trauma all the time!”
- “He can’t be injured, he’s just drunk!”
- “We know our business!”

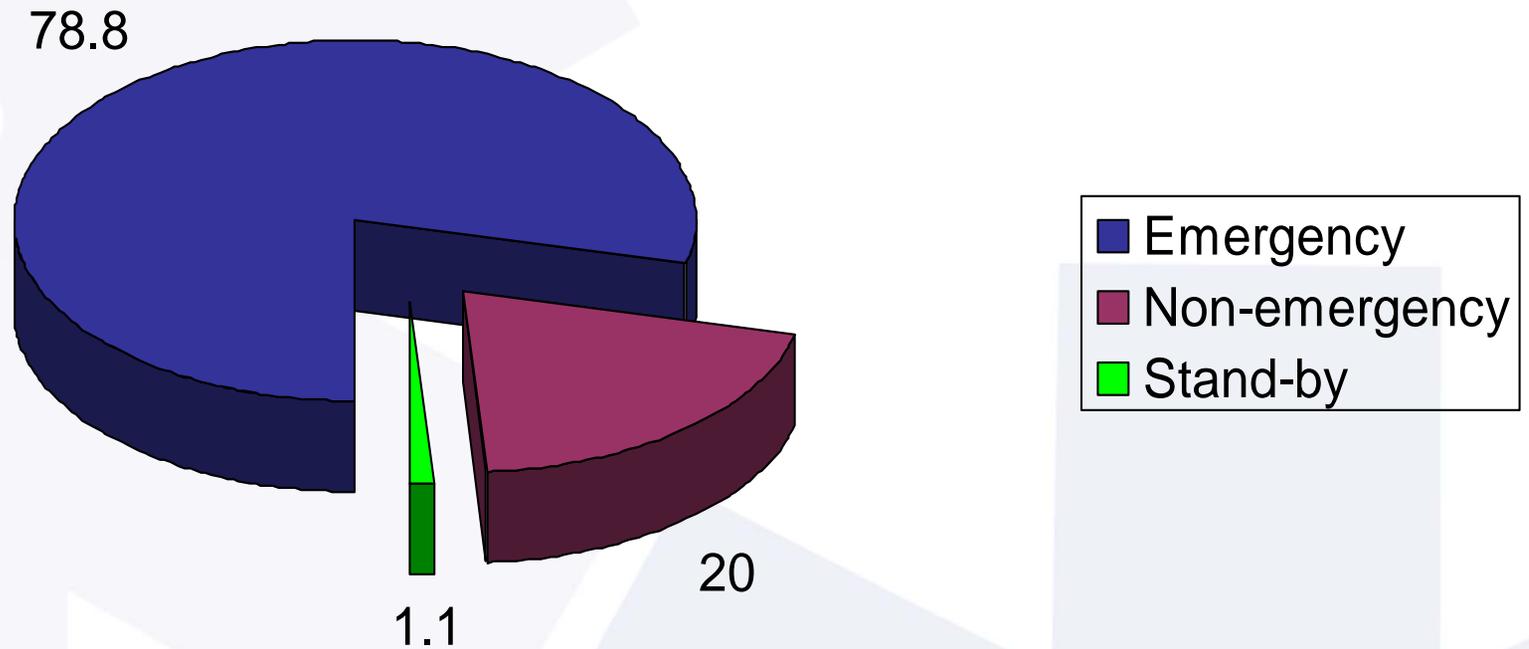


# New York Statewide PCR Data 2004 through 2008



*Note: 2006 and 2007 Includes FDNY Data*

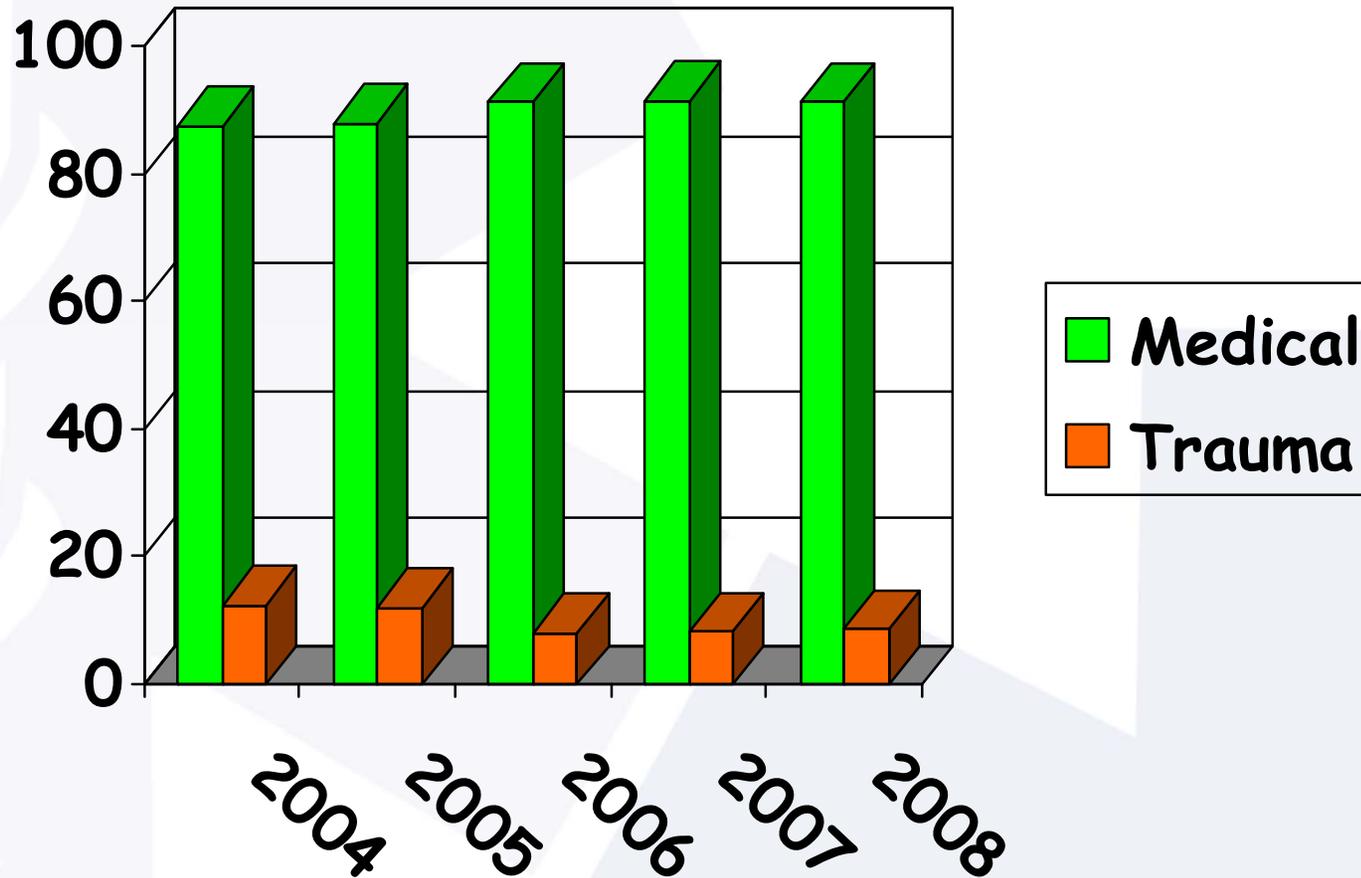
# Statewide PCR Data - Call Type



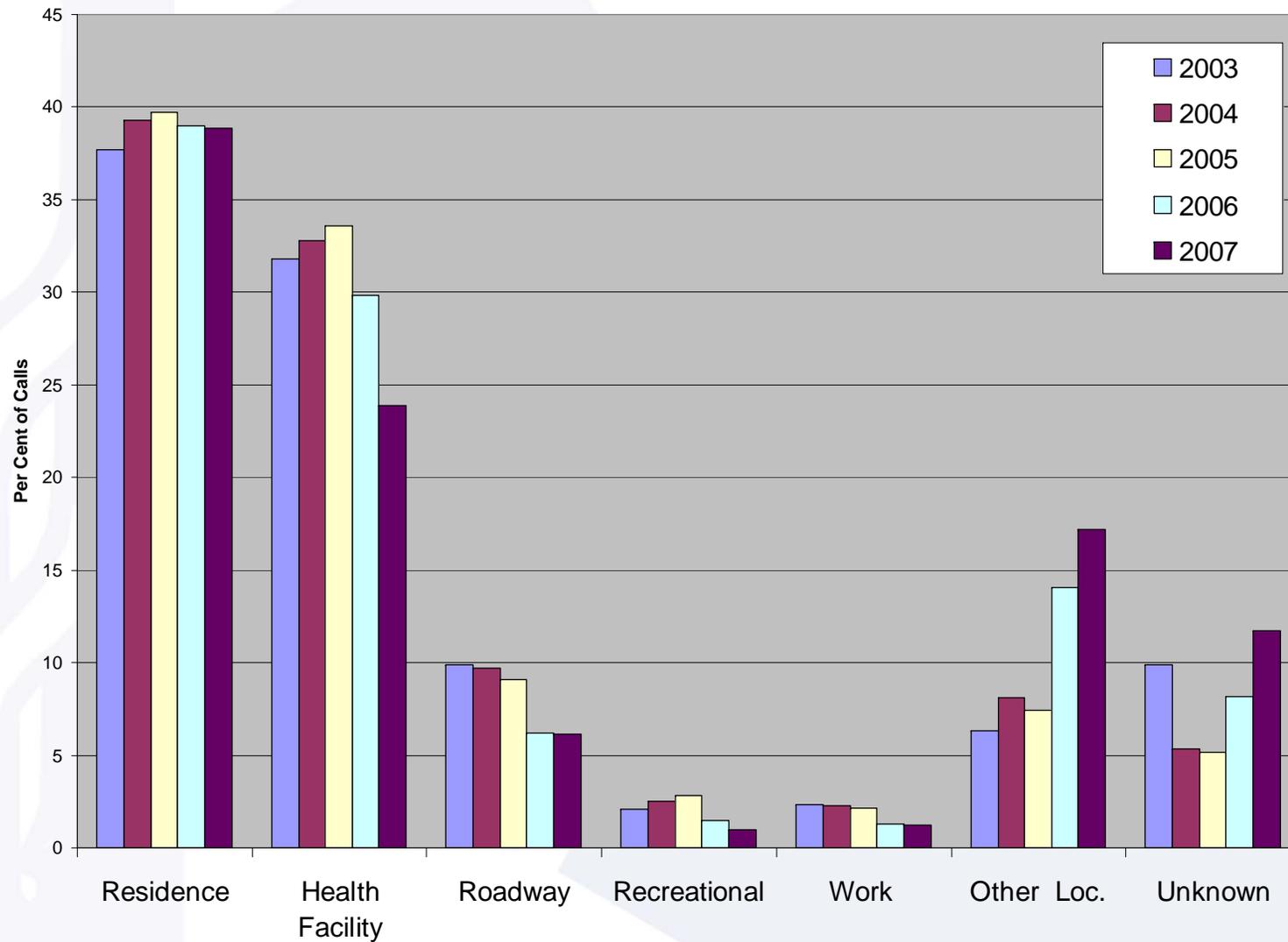
Statewide PCR Data

# PCR - Medical vs Trauma

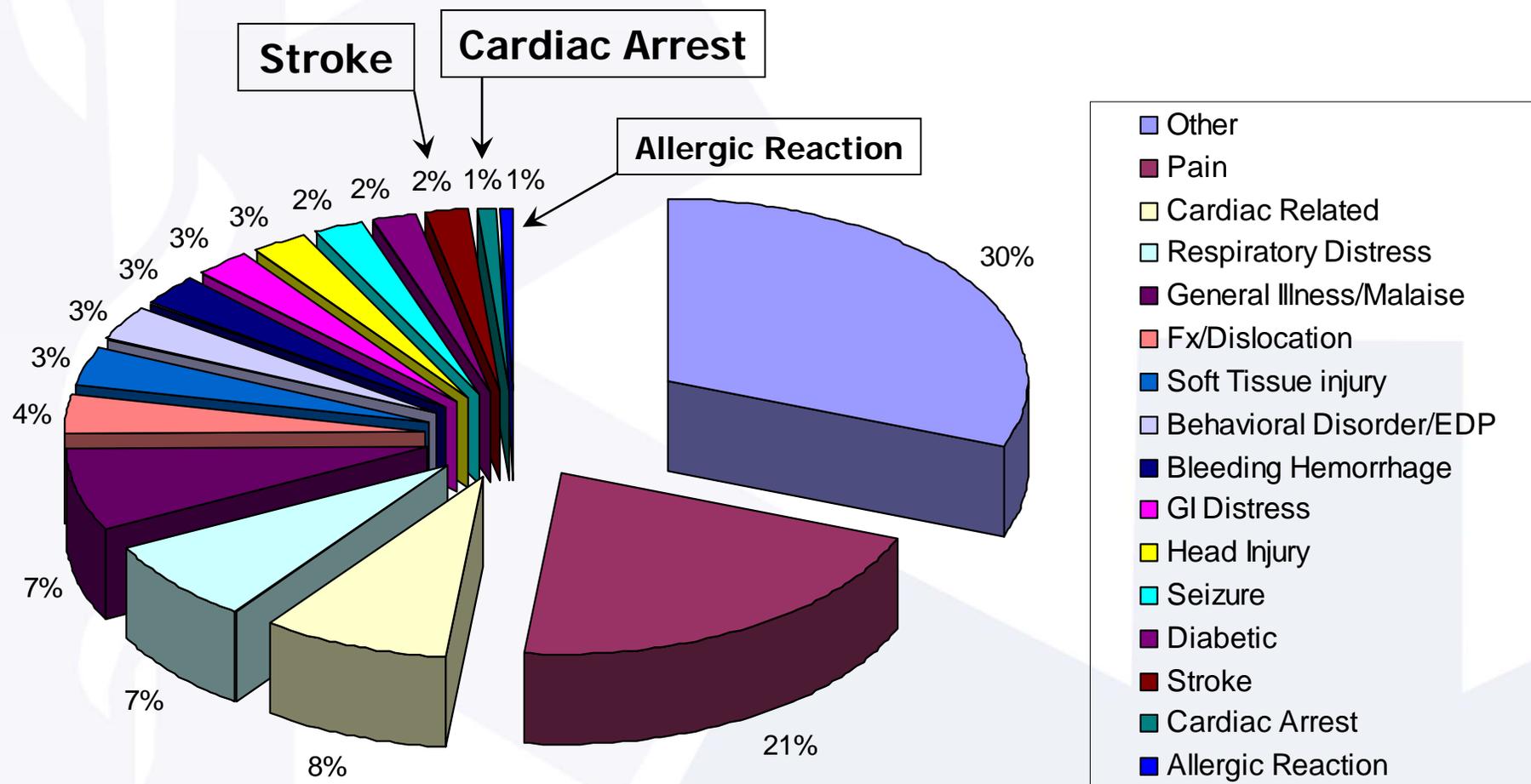
Percentages based on Presenting Problems



# PCR - Call Locations

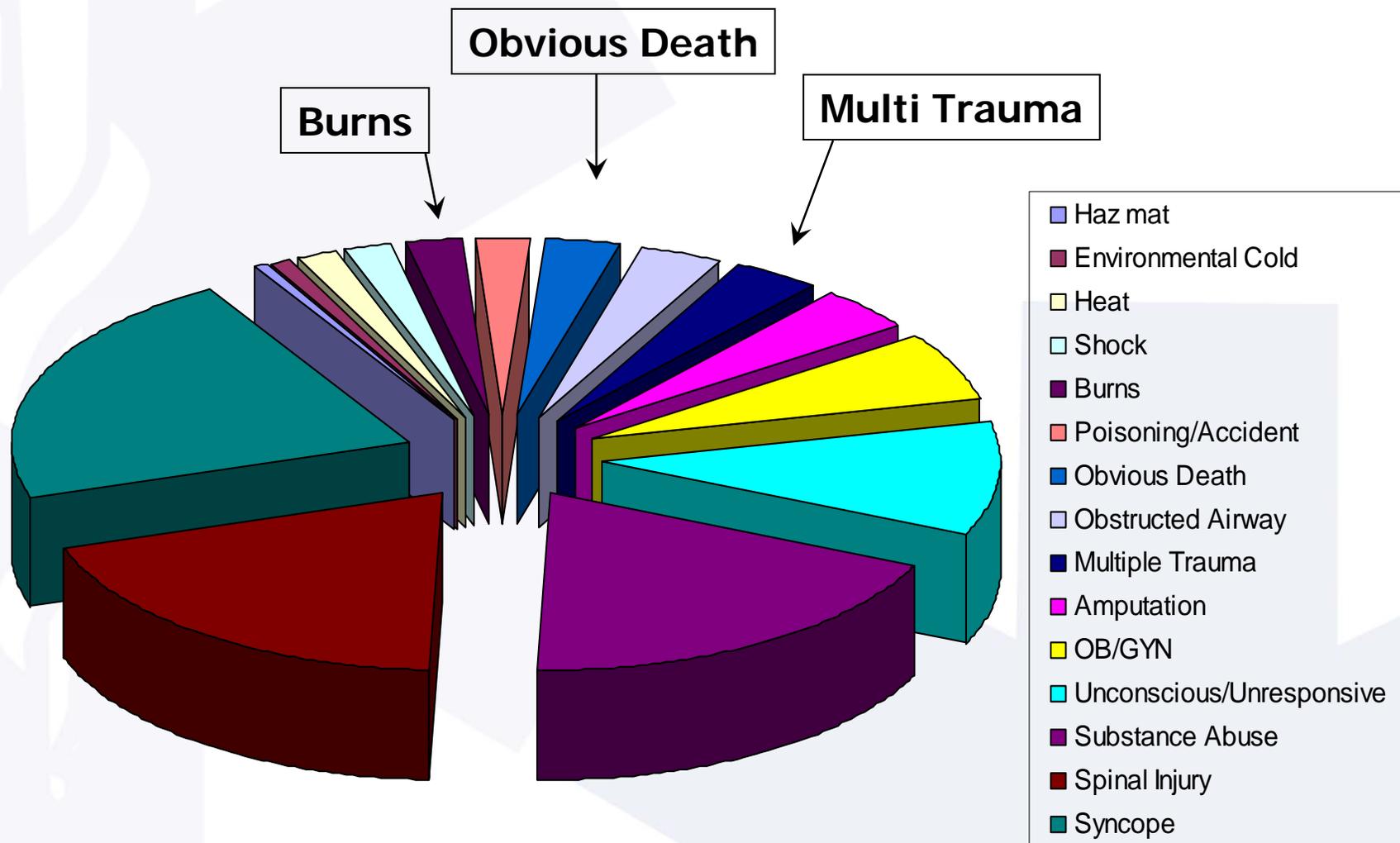


# Top Presenting Problems



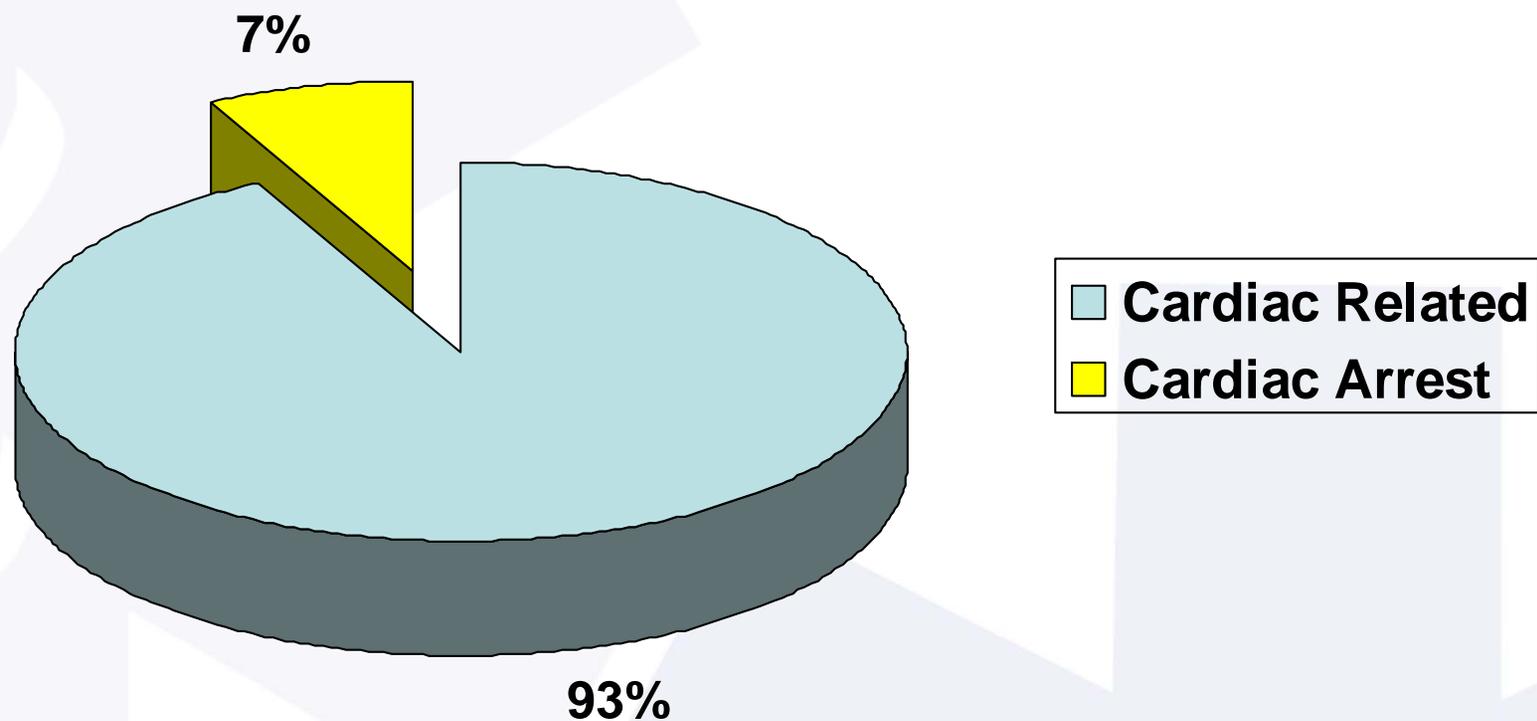
# Presenting Problems

Under 2% of the Total Call Volume



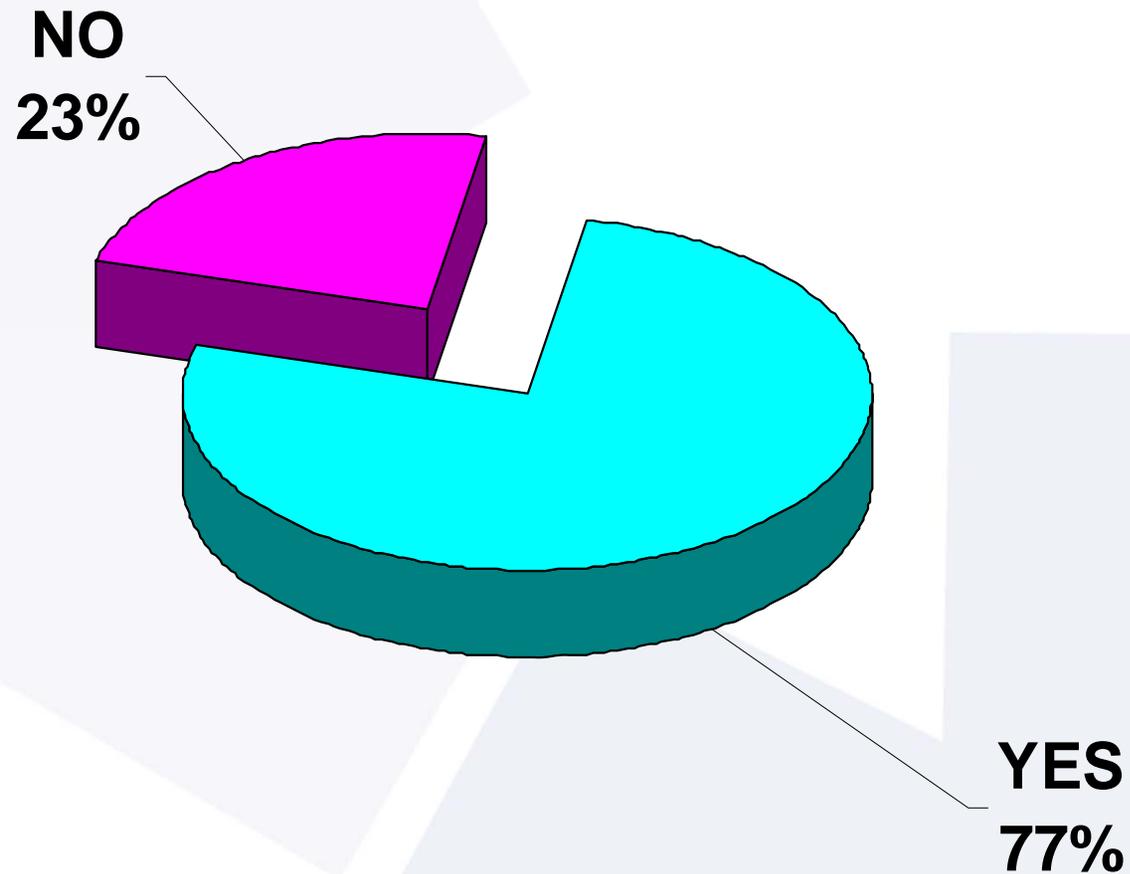
# Emergency Cardiac Calls

Based on 146,872 cardiac calls



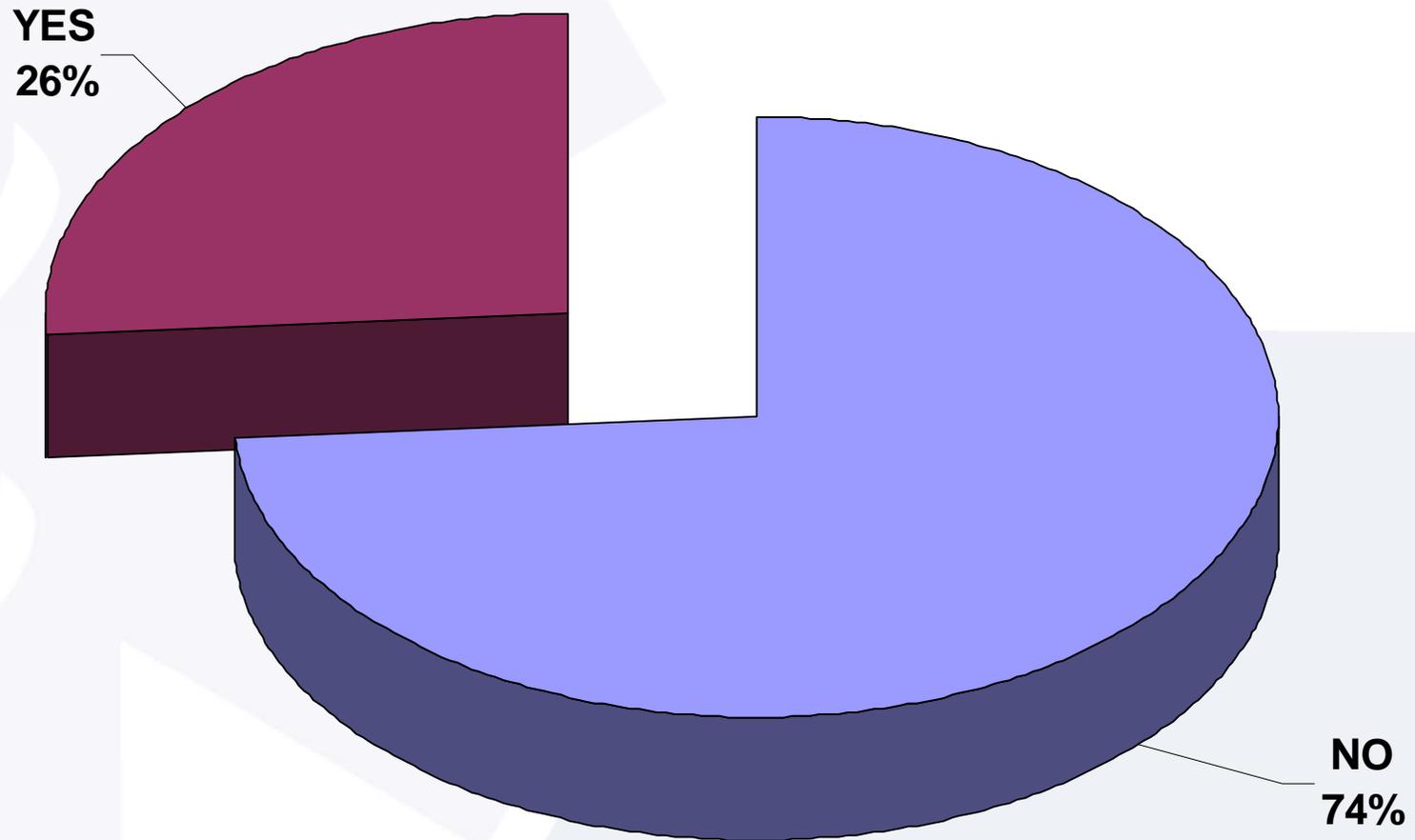
# Oxygen Administered to Chest Pain

(Based on 122,526 Documented Calls)



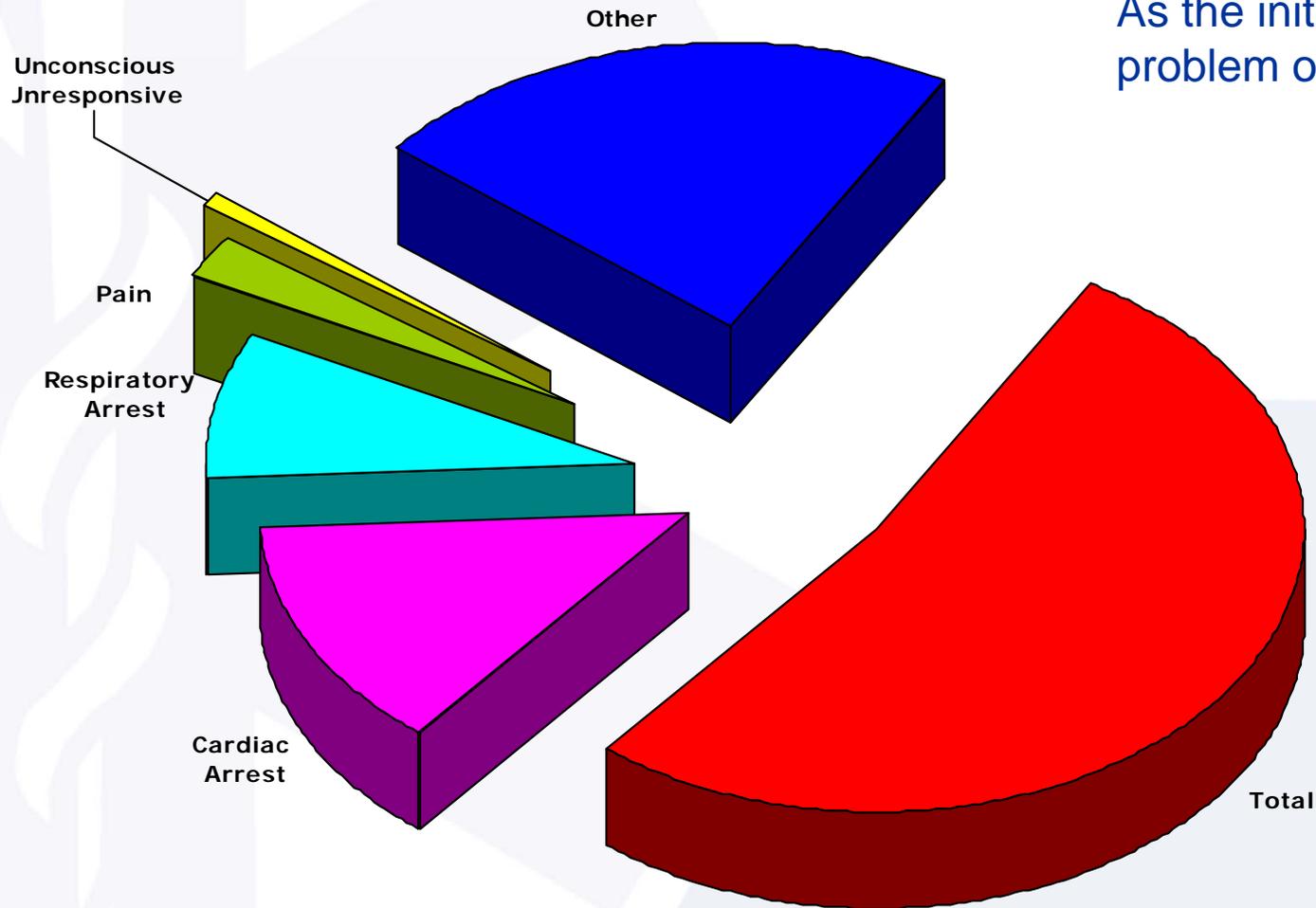
# Cardiac Arrests Defibrillated

(Based on 12,700 Calls Documented)



# Endotracheal Intubations

As the initial presenting problem on the PCR



$N = 1171$

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# Customer Service

- What's the definition of an Emergency?
- Whose definition are we using?
- Communicating with our patients
- Asking your patients permission...



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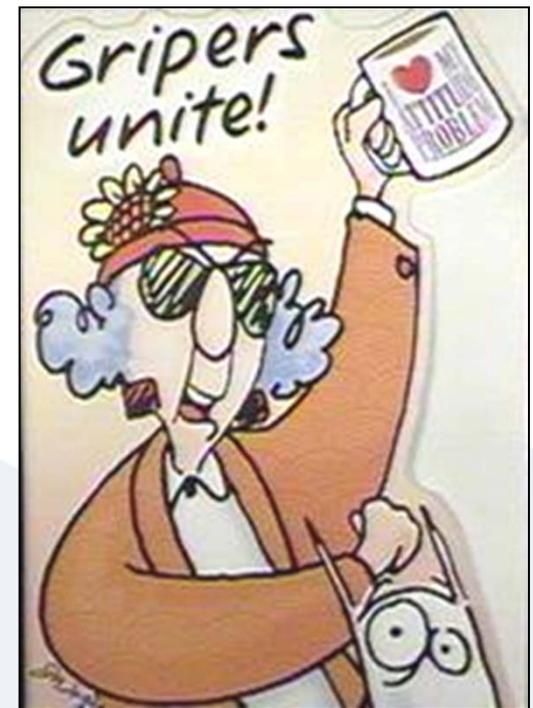
# Is This an Emergency?

- What is the definition of a medical emergency?
  - ▶ A **medical emergency** is an injury or illness that poses an immediate threat to a person's life or long term health. These emergencies may require assistance from another person, who should ideally be suitably qualified ...  
Dependant upon the severity of the emergency, and the quality of any treatment given, it may require the involvement of multiple levels of care, from a EMS to an emergency department to a specialist.

- *Wikipedia*

# This is the Patient's Emergency!

- When a request for EMS is made, someone has access the emergency system, because...
  - ▶ They can no longer deal with their current problem...
  - ▶ They are having a crisis!
  - ▶ They have no one else to call!
  - ▶ You are EMS!
- Remember, this is **NOT YOUR EMERGENCY!!!**
- **The emergency is defined by the caller!**



# Communicating with Our Patients



- *Starts with...*
  - ▶ Professional appearance
  - ▶ Appropriate uniform
  - ▶ **Clean** and neat
  - ▶ Personal choices
    - Jewelry
    - Tattoos
    - Body piercings
    - Pins, buttons and patches

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The **DREADED** Nickname...

**Pops**

**Dear**

**Babe**

*Hon or Honey*

**Sweetie**

**Sunshine**

**Bud or Buddy**

**Dude**

*... and all of your local favorites*

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# Bedside Manners

- **Bedside manner** is a term describing how a care provider communicates with a patient...
- **Good** bedside manner ?  
or
- **Poor** bedside manner?



*Hugh Laurie – “House”*

# "Bedside Manners"



- The term was first used in Britain to describe a doctor's attitude/ambiance when examining a sick patient in bed
- If the doctor had a "good bedside manner", he treated the patient with respect and care...
- The patient was made comfortable and reassured that the illness outcome would be positive.

# Talking to the Patient



- Asking to assess or treat the patient
  - ▶ Take their blood pressure
  - ▶ Start an IV
  - ▶ Go to the hospital
  - ▶ ... *You are asking permission to do your job... STOP!*

## ... and the State Says...

- You have to carry a valid EMT card on your person at all times.
- You have to use black pen on the PCR.
- You have to have red lights on when you are transporting a patient.
- All DOAs have to be transported by ambulance.
- If you are a basic EMT are riding with an AEMT, you can perform ALS procedures.
- Certification remains valid if you are enrolled in a refresher.



# Conclusion...

- Do we really save lives?
- Most of the time... NO!
  - ▶ Patients die in spite of us!
  - ▶ Patients live to spite us!
- But!
  - ▶ We make lives better!



- Bringing Out the Dead, 1999

# EMS Responders

## September 11, 2001

- **Keith Fairben** - NY Presbyterian Hospital
- **Andre Robert Lahens** - FDNY EMS
- **Carlos Lillo** - FDNY EMS
- **Yamel Merino** - Metrocare Ambulance
- **Richard Pearlman** - Forest Hills Vol. Ambulance
- **Ricardo Quinn** - FDNY EMS
- **Mario Santoro** - NY Presbyterian Hospital
- **Mark Schwartz** - Hunter Ambulance
- **David Marc Sullins** - Cabrini Medical Center
- **Zhe Zack Zeng** - Brighton Volunteer Ambulance
- **Deborah Reeve** - FDNY EMS (March 15, 2006)

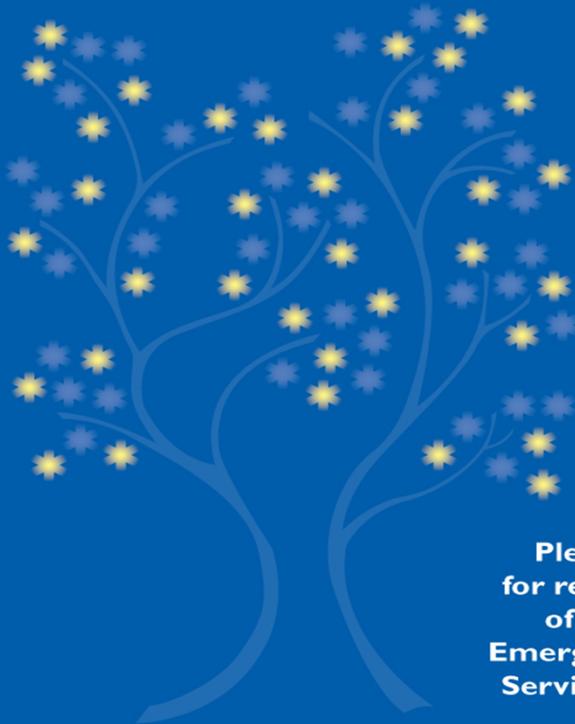


Yamel Marino and her son Kevin

## EMS Memorial Dedication

Empire State Plaza  
Albany, New York

May 18, 2011  
11:00 am



Please join us  
for remembrance  
of our fallen  
Emergency Medical  
Services Providers

For further information including group  
attendance or emergency vehicle registration  
please contact Donna Johnson at 518-402-0996 ext 3

- **Paul Bazonet**

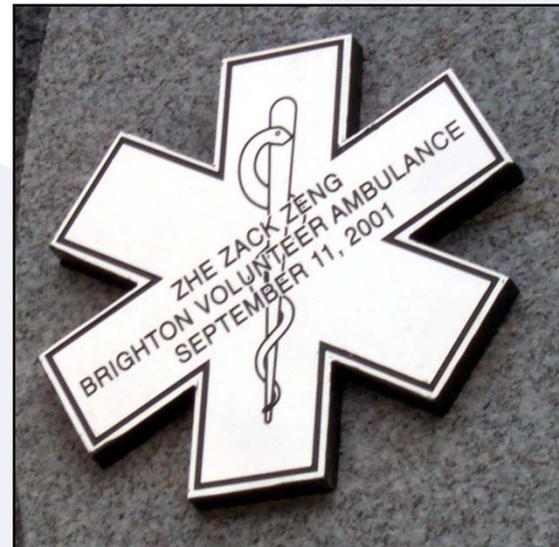
Glens Falls, NY—Warren County  
Date of Death: January 3, 2010  
Empire Ambulance Service

- **Karen Hand**

Lisle, NY—Broome County  
Date of Death: October 5, 2010  
Broome Volunteer EMS

- **LeRoy Kemp**

Barton, NY—Tioga County  
Date of Death: January 13, 2010  
Tioga Emergency Squad



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# Vital Signs EMS Conference - 2012

- **Where:** OnCenter, Syracuse
- **When:** October 18 through 21
- **Information:** [www.vitalsignsconference.com](http://www.vitalsignsconference.com)



# Questions?



Thank You So Much for Coming!

