

Advances in Crash Response

[Announcer] This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC – safer, healthier people.

Welcome to this CDC podcast on the benefits of using an Advanced Automatic Collision Notification system, or AACN, to help with emergency triage of people injured in vehicle crashes. I'm Dr. Richard Hunt, Director of CDC's Division of Injury Response in the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control.

CDC's Division of Injury Response and the CDC Foundation, in partnership with the GM Foundation and OnStar, recently released a report titled: *Recommendations from the Expert Panel: Advanced Automatic Collision Notification and Triage of the Injured Patient*. The report recommends using vehicle telemetry systems that provide Advanced Automatic Collision Notification to rapidly send critical information to emergency responders about a vehicle crash. The report on AACN evolved out of a long-standing CDC initiative to help improve field triage.

At the scene of every injury, EMS providers must determine how severely people are injured, and decide how to treat them and where to bring them if they need care at a trauma center. This immediate decision-making – or field triage - is vital. Past CDC-supported research found that decisions made at the scene of an injury can mean life or death. In fact, severely injured patients who are transported to a Level I trauma center have a 25 percent decreased risk of dying.

With this in mind, CDC convened a multidisciplinary panel of experts, which included representatives from federal agencies, such as the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the Health Resources Services Administration, as well as leaders in public health, emergency medical services, emergency medicine, trauma surgery, and vehicle and public safety.

The key finding from the expert panel is that Advanced Automatic Collision Notification systems show promise in saving lives. Essentially, the panel determined that AACN systems can help in two key ways. First, AACN can help predict the severity of injuries. This information is key in determining what resources are needed and deciding where to transport people who are injured. Second, AACN communication and vehicle locating or GPS capabilities can help EMS providers find crashes faster, which may be especially important in rural or isolated areas.

Based on these findings, the panel also recommended:

- that seatbelt use be added to current AACN response systems;
- that AACN be considered to help in early identification of traumatic brain injuries;
- establishing real-time communications of AACN information to emergency responders;
- research to measure effectiveness of the newly developed AACN protocol in the report;
- adding information available from AACN systems into existing field triage protocols, such as the Field Triage Decision Scheme; and
- adding AACN data to current national data systems about injury.

AACN is an example of how existing information technology can be used to improve current systems for emergency care. We will continue to build upon scientific knowledge and apply it to put life-saving tools in place so that all Americans can live to their full potential.

For more information on CDC's efforts to help emergency personnel make on-scene triage decisions to save lives, and for more information about Advanced Automatic Collision Notification, visit www.cdc.gov/FieldTriage.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO 24/7.