

**Press Release**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**August 02, 2010**

**Mayor Bloomberg and Fire Commissioner Cassano  
Announce Life-Saving Hypothermia Treatment Now Being  
Administered by City Paramedics**

*Phase I of Project Hypothermia, which has Increased Survival for Cardiac Patients in Hospitals by 20 Percent, Now Moves to Phase II with Paramedics Giving Treatment to Patients in Ambulances*

**New York, NY** Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and Fire Commissioner Salvatore J. Cassano today announced that City Paramedics have begun treating cardiac arrest patients with hypothermia therapy - a new, life-saving medical procedure that has been proven to slow the deleterious impact of cardiac arrest on the human body. The treatment involves providing cold intravenous liquids to patients in an effort to halt muscle and tissue damage as well as preserve neurological function for patients who survive a cardiac arrest. Hypothermia treatment has already helped save hundreds of lives during the past 18 months in New York City hospitals, where it's been administered to patients during Phase I of Project Hypothermia, a joint initiative between the City's Emergency Medical Service and the Greater New York Hospital Association. During Phase II, which began today, Paramedics will provide the treatment sooner, in ambulances and outside the hospital setting, in an effort to save even more lives with earlier intervention. The Mayor and Commissioner Cassano were joined by Elmhurst Hospital Executive Director Chris Constantino; Elmhurst Hospital Medical Director Dr. Jasmin Moshirpur; and Elmhurst Hospital Director of Emergency Medicine Dr. Stuart Kessler.



"Hypothermia therapy slows down the brain's demand for oxygen, which in turn can prevent damage to brain cells resulting from cardiac arrest," Mayor Bloomberg said. "This innovative treatment, which has already been used to help hundreds of people survive and recover following cardiac arrest, will save lives and keep our city on the cutting edge of pre-hospital emergency medical care."

"New Yorkers already know they get excellent service from our Paramedics, EMTs and firefighters - and today we're taking another big step to improve on what we do best - saving lives," Commissioner Cassano said. "Hypothermia therapy has helped patients recover from the traumatic experience and damage normally associated with cardiac arrest. With our Paramedics beginning this treatment sooner in the field, even more patients are going to benefit and we're going to do an even better job of saving and improving the lives of affected New Yorkers."

Phase I of Project Hypothermia was initiated in January 2009. Since then, more than 2,600 cardiac arrest patients were transported as potential recipients to 43 city hospitals that set up protocols to administer hypothermia therapy. This led to a dramatic increase in the number of patients that have not only survived, but left the hospital with little or no permanent neurological or physical impairment. Since the program began, the survival rate of cardiac arrest patients admitted to a hospital after being stabilized in the Emergency Room has increased 20 percent. There has also been a 30 percent increase in the number of those patients discharged from hospitals. Nearly seven out of 10 patients who received hypothermia treatment left hospitals with little or no lasting mental or physical impacts.

On Sunday, Paramedics on 911 system ambulances began administering the chilled intravenous fluids themselves. Paramedic ambulances have been outfitted with refrigeration equipment and members have been trained in how to administer the treatment. FDNY EMS expects to administer the therapy to 6,000 patients over the next year, more than doubling the number of patients who benefited from it during the first phase of the program.

Hypothermia therapy reduces the body temperature of patients to approximately 32 degrees Celsius for 24 hours. Cardiac arrest patients who are not immediately revived by resuscitation efforts, such as shocks from a defibrillator, will receive the treatment unless they are under the age of 18, have fluid in their lungs or have suffered trauma, such as smoke inhalation or burns.