Providing emergency medical assistance in the vicinity of the hospital

Dear Editor,

With regards to the comments in the above article published in the Journal (Hong Kong J Emerg Med 2009;16(2):67-9), I would like to share with readers how we do it at Singapore General Hospital.

There is a team-based Code Blue approach which is utilized. There are teams which are ward-based, specialist outpatient clinic-based and other specific area-based. There is also a team from the Emergency Department and this team is rather unique. The members will respond to emergencies within the hospital and campus, which covers all the public areas such as waiting areas, corridors, the lobby and even the roads connecting the different buildings and wards. All staff (clinical and non-clinical) in the institution is educated on this and they know how to activate the team as required. If upon activation, the location or venue of the emergency or incident is within walking distance, the Emergency Department team members will push the necessary ever-ready equipment and walk to the location. If the location is some distance away, there is a hospital ambulance which is on standby at the entrance of the department, 24 hours a day, which will be used for transport. This ambulance is well-equipped as per any standard Emergency Medical Services ambulance.

This is a system which has worked for us at this institution. There are other institutions that have come up with systems unique to their setting, feasible and practical. Therefore, it is recommended that each institution plans the establishment of one such approach which can work for them.

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