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The 130 Million Square Foot Trauma Room

By Michael Rocque, Clinical Research Center

Last summer, staff at Blue Hill Memorial Hospital and EMMC found themselves in a unique situation made possible by the Telehealth research study in which both hospitals are participating. This study, led by **Dr. Erik Steele, DO**, expands the Telehealth program to regional hospitals, allowing “real-time” consultation between local emergency departments and trauma specialists at EMMC.

According to **Pret Bjorn, RN**, the trauma coordinator at EMMC, the Telehealth project has, in effect, created a “one-hundred thirty million square foot trauma room, where we are all there together” allowing multiple hospitals assist in patient care at once. “I think this makes health care more effective for trauma, where every little decision really does count,” he says.

This ‘130 million square foot trauma room’ was put into action when five people were involved in a car accident near Blue Hill. Ideally, the telecommunication between the specialists at Blue Hill and EMMC would have taken place while the patients were at Blue Hill Memorial Hospital. In this case, the video monitors did not become activated until the patients were en-route to EMMC. At this point, the “real-time” consultation began. The technicians, nurses, and physicians who had taken part in the work-up and initial treatment now were able participate in all stages of care. In this way, they had the opportunity to be involved during the entire process, receive feedback from EMMC medical staff, and to find out how each patient fared.

The video system is “incredibly advanced,” says Bjorn. So much so, that one can actually “count the freckles” on patients from hundreds of miles away. And when the video monitors were turned on that day in Bangor and Blue Hill, the hospital staff from both hospitals truly did feel as if they were all in the same room together, working as a team.

According to Bjorn, after telecommunication sessions like the one involved during the Blue Hill case, “everybody just feels good about it. We feel like we have done something real, that we have treated patients better than if we had done it individually.” These types of advances are made possible by innovative research that EMMC is proud to take part in.