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**STATE RELEASES COMPARISON ON HEART ATTACK CARE IN HOSPITALS**

**SACRAMENTO** – The California Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD) released the results of its fifth California Hospital Outcomes study. The report provides comparative information on the performance of hospitals in caring for patients with heart attacks (Acute Myocardial Infarction or AMI).

Heart attacks are one of the leading causes of death both nationwide and in California. For this reason the state of California chose heart attacks to be one of the first conditions studied in the Hospital Outcomes Project. The most recent AMI study covers the years 1996-98 during which 128,509 heart attack patients were admitted to 398 California hospitals. Of these admitted patients 15,567 (12.09%) died within 30 days of admission.

California is a national leader in conducting studies that measure healthcare quality. Utilizing data that hospitals are required to submit to the state, OSHPD uses a risk-adjustment methodology to assess the quality of heart attack care provided by California hospitals. The 1996-98 report can help patients make informed decisions about their healthcare choices, and gives hospitals the opportunity to evaluate and improve their quality of care.

“Californians will be happy to know that most hospitals perform well in caring for patients with heart attacks,” said OSHPD Director, Dr. David Carlisle.

California’s Hospital Outcomes Project is the result of legislation in 1991 (AB 524) that responded to the needs expressed by healthcare purchasers, providers, and consumers to have publicly available information that objectively compares hospitals on factors other than price. The legislation called for the selection of medical, surgical and obstetrical conditions for study of outcomes of hospital care.

“It is important to publicly release these results because they provide hard, validated data that can inform healthcare decision-making by providers, purchasers and consumers of healthcare in California,” said Dr. Carlisle. “It also gives providers information that can be used by them in quality improvement strategies.”

The fifth report on Heart Attack Outcomes Studies can be accessed at the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development’s web site at [www.oshpd.state.ca.us](http://www.oshpd.state.ca.us) or by contacting the HealthCare Information Resource Center at 916 326-3802.