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## **Put ICE on Your Cell Phone: Emergency Physicians Teach Patients to Program Phones with Emergency Contact Information**

### **New Study Presented at ACEP's Scientific Assembly**

New Orleans - Emergency patients and visitors will agree to program their cell phones with an emergency contact name and phone number under the acronym ICE [in case of emergency] when emergency department staff explain why it is important and how to do it. Researchers led by Dr. Dennis McKenna from Albany Medical Center in Albany, New York will present their study today at the Research Forum during the annual meeting of the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) in New Orleans.

Of 178 people waiting in an emergency department who had cell phones with them and listened to an educational session, 129 agreed to have an emergency contact designated on their phones using the acronym ICE. Of those 129 people, 58 did it themselves, 36 had a family member do it, and 35 allowed hospital staff to do it for them. Researchers explained how important it is for physicians to be able to contact a family member or friend when an emergency patient is unable to communicate that information.

"We often are struggling to reach family members when a patient cannot speak to us, and the first place we might look is a cell phone," said Dr. McKenna. "A family member or friend is one of our best resources for learning about the patient's medical history. Our study shows that people are very willing to program their phones as long as someone tells them why and how to do it, or even does it for them."

Dr. McKenna also said emergency physicians sometimes have opportunities to educate patients and their families while they are waiting in an emergency department.

"Once a visitor is in the emergency department, we can make the most of his or her time by teaching something valuable," said Dr. McKenna. "In the future, patients with ICE on their cell phone may help us give them the best possible treatment in a timely fashion."

Dr. McKenna's research is on display this week in New Orleans, Louisiana, at ACEP's annual Scientific Assembly where emergency physicians from the around the country and many other nations gather to share research and learn the latest developments in emergency care and patient safety. More than 400 poster presentations are scheduled to be presented this year. For more information about the research, visit [www.acep.org](http://www.acep.org).

ACEP is a national medical specialty society representing emergency medicine with more than 25,000 members. ACEP is committed to advancing emergency care through continuing education, research and public education. Headquartered in Dallas, Texas, ACEP has 53 chapters representing each state, as well as Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia. A Government Services Chapter represents emergency physicians employed by military branches and other government agencies.

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