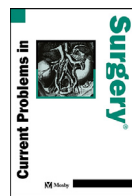




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Foreword

The concept of systems of care, organizing resources across the continuums of both complexity and geography, continues to evolve. Leading this is the development of such systems for care of the trauma patient. The genesis of a trauma system originated in the military but has now been implemented across the U.S. and increasingly internationally with growing evidence of its benefits. In this issue of *Current Problems in Surgery*, Dr. David Spain and his colleagues from the Stanford University provide a masterful perspective on this topic entitled, "The Impact of Trauma Systems on Patient Outcomes." They begin with a discussion of the burden of trauma and then provide a history of trauma systems, beginning with their military origins. Subsequent sections define the comprehensive trauma system, outlining its components and the critical role of the American College of Surgeons Committee on Trauma in their organization. The authors subsequently address the impact of trauma systems on care, including injury prevention, regionalized networks, trauma registries, and quality improvement. They conclude with a discussion of international trauma systems. Their presentation is lucid and provides the balanced perspectives of experts in the field. This superb treatise is a significant addition to the literature on this subject and should become a valued resource for all surgeons and policy makers with a stake in the care of patients with traumatic injury.

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