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New RAND Study Shows U.S. Poison Centers Save the Nation Billions Each Year

Illinois Poison Center Highlights Local Impact and Encourages Community to Utilize Free, Life-Saving Services

CHICAGO - U.S. Poison Centers save \$3.1 billion every year in medical costs and lost productivity, according to a new independent study released by America's Poison Centers®. Conducted by RAND the report confirms that Poison Centers provide substantial economic and societal benefits for communities across the country. The Illinois Poison Center (IPC) responds to approximately 70,000 cases annually, providing critical services to prevent poisonings and 24/7 expert support to families and individuals in the community.

The RAND report, [Poison Prevention, Treatment, and Detection as Public Health Investments](#), found that for every \$1 invested in poison center services, communities receive \$16.77 in benefits. These cost-saving benefits reflect reduced emergency department use, shortened hospital stays, decreased mortality risk, enhanced public health surveillance, and improved patient outcome.

However, despite their growing value, overall funding for Poison Centers has decreased by 8 percent from 2011 to 2024 in real dollars, in addition to a decrease in subsidized support. Amid rising healthcare costs, these budget cuts are an increasing threat to the ability of Poison Centers to provide life-saving services and essential 24/7 coverage.

"This study underscores the essential role our clinicians play in communities every day," said IPC Medical Director Michael Wahl, MD. "As the nation's oldest poison center, we are proud to join poison centers nationwide in providing fast access to specialists that keeps people safe at home, prevents costly emergency room visits, and supports providers caring for complex cases."

In addition to 24/7 guidance to the public and healthcare professionals, IPC's highly trained clinical staff also provides disaster response, toxicology training and consultation, safety education, substance use and overdose prevention, and surveillance for public health outbreaks that involve food, illicit drugs and infectious diseases such as H1N1, Ebola and Coronavirus to assist with local and state public health responses. IPC staff, in collaboration with the Toxikon Consortium, also collects and analyzes data for abstracts, journal articles and book chapters to advance knowledge of clinical and medical toxicology.

For additional information, or to read the full report, visit poisoncenters.org/national-impact-study. For fast, free, confidential help for a potential poisoning or question, contact the Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222, PoisonHelp.org, or visit illinoispoincenter.org.

About Illinois Poison Center

The Illinois Poison Center, operated by the Illinois Health and Hospital Association, is a nonprofit health service that provides the people of Illinois with comprehensive and trusted information and treatment advice on potentially harmful substances via a free, confidential 24-hour helpline (1-800-222-1222) staffed by specially trained physicians, nurses and pharmacists. The Illinois Poison Center is dedicated to reducing harm due to poisoning. IPC's expert-led helpline provides immediate treatment recommendations to the public and healthcare providers. IPC is the oldest and one of the largest poison centers in the nation. IPC has provided timely poison prevention and treatment services since 1953.

About America's Poison Centers

America's Poison Centers® represents the 53 accredited Poison Centers across the country. We are united in our cause to prevent poison-related health emergencies in America. Through the national Poison Help line (1-800-222-1222) and PoisonHelp.org our member centers provide all Americans expert advice. We also maintain the National Poison Data System® (NPDS), our nation's only near real-time poisoning data surveillance system, integrating the latest information from across Poison Centers.

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