

**Minutes of the Statewide Trauma and Health Systems
Advisory Council (STHSAC) Meeting
September 28, 2023 – 10 a.m.
Via Phone/WebEx**

Members Present by Phone/WebEx: Elwin Crawford, M.D., Jon Howell, Jon Simmons, M.D., David Hughes, proxy for Teresa Grimes, Jeffrey Kerby, M.D., proxy for Rony Najjar, M.D.

Members Absent: Scott Harris, M.D., Tracy Doughty, Alzo Preyear, D.O., Shannon Scaturro

Staff Present: Alice Floyd, Sara Matthews, Tabatha Ross, Jamie Gray, Chris Palmer

Guests Present: John E. Blue, II, Robert Jackson

Staff Present via Phone/WebEx: Kimmi Wilson, Michele Jones

Guests by Phone/WebEx: Allan Pace, Alex Varnum, Dion Schultz, Brian Hale, Michael Minor, Sean Gibson, Will Montalban, Renee Mills, Travis Parker, Jim Fox, Stephanie Spain, Carolyn Bern, April Turner, Lynn Morrison, Priscilla Bode

Welcome

In Dr. Harris' absence, Dr. Crawford welcomed all participants and called the meeting to order.

Adoption of June 12, 2023, Meeting Minutes

Dr. Crawford asked for a motion to approve the Minutes of the June 12, 2023, meeting. The motion was made and seconded. The Minutes were approved without objection.

Unfinished Business

Dr. Crawford stated that as a result of discussion during the last meeting concerning omissions in trauma data and stroke data submission, Acute Health Systems staff, Dr. Kerby, regional staff, and he met in-person to discuss how to improve the data return. He relayed that it was a good meeting and the decision was made to have a renewed focus on data submission. The regional staff will follow up with the hospitals in their region to ensure hospital staff are aware of the reporting expectations and to check for infrastructure issues which may prevent reporting. The regional staff will also assess for training needs due to ongoing staffing changes.

Dr. Crawford stated that the in-person meetings will continue.

System Updates

Trauma System

Dr. Kerby discussed the North Region Trauma Plan revisions. He stated there were some language changes for the Trauma System Overload and Traumatic Brain Overload (TSO/TBO) portion of the plan, which was submitted prior to the meeting. Dr. Kerby provided a summary of the submitted changes which included that if Huntsville Hospital (HH) is on TSO/TBO, they will accept all physiologic criteria patients, anatomic criteria patients, and mechanism of injury patients transported from scene within the North Region. The previous language included all patients but now clarified that all patients except

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Discretion patients would be accepted, if on TSO/TBO. An additional step was added that included the Alabama Trauma Communication Center (ATCC) would be contacted to facilitate a call between the pre-hospital EMS transport agency and the Emergency Department Supervisor at HH with destination to be determined by the HH Main ED physician. Those transfers would be handled by a direct call to the transfer center. Dr. Kerby asked if ATCC involvement is implied and if more context could be provided.

Dion Schultz commented that the region has been conducting three-way calls for years. He clarified which patients should be transported to HH at specific times when they may not be available for certain patients. Related to pediatrics, more clarification was added as to what HH can accept or will accept based on how patients come to the hospital. If a pediatric patient is being flown, they should go to the proper children's facility instead of HH.

Michael Minor stated that much of the clarification was for pre-hospital personnel and hospital staff education about the process change so they would be aware of the process prior to ATCC involvement and to clarify pediatric destination in the plan so EMS would know the expectation.

Dr. Kerby asked if the age of 15 is the addition and clarification for this and Mr. Schultz confirmed that it was.

A motion was made and seconded to accept to accept the updated North Region Trauma Plan, There were no objections; the motion carried unanimously.

Dr. Kerby explained that a presentation for training on Accelerated Transfer/Rescue Stop has been developed. There will be two virtual training sessions per EMS region and a presentation at the EMS conference.

Dr. Crawford stated that University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) Hospital has been reverified as a Level I Trauma Center by the American College of Surgeons. The agenda indicates an action item; however, the Regional Advisory Council (RAC) did not receive the information to vote. There are no operational changes and this will be on the December agenda for a vote.

Stroke System

Dr. Crawford said that the severity-based stroke triage (SBST) information had been presented in two stroke symposiums and both were well attended. The next symposium will be in October.

The new SBST routing will start on October 10, in the Birmingham Region. The SBST routing will have a guideline of 1-hour transport. If a large vessel occlusion (LVO) stroke is identified in the field using the Emergency Medical Stroke Assessment (EMSA) and transport is less than 1 hour to a mechanical thrombectomy stroke center, the patient will be transported to that stroke center. If an LVO is identified in the field and transport is greater than 1 hour or if there are extenuating circumstances, the patient will be routed to the closest available stroke center for evaluation.

Dr. Crawford reported that several stroke site visits had been completed.

UAB Hospital was recertified by The Joint Commission (TJC) as a Level I Comprehensive Stroke Center. Because the information was not provided to the RAC for a timely vote, this will be an action item for a formal vote at December's meeting.

North Okaloosa Medical Center, which is TJC Certified as a Primary Stroke Center, applied for Level II Stroke Center status. Baptist Medical Center South applied for Level IIa, Thrombectomy Capable Stroke Center status. Stroke site visits were completed and the team recommended the application process be continued. Both stroke hospitals were approved by the Southeast Region RAC to continue the application process.

Stroke site visits in the Birmingham Regional EMS System (BREMSS) Region included: Birmingham VA Medical Center as a Level II, Walker Baptist Hospital as a Level III, UAB Medical West as a Level III, UAB Freestanding Emergency Department as a Level III, St. Vincent's East requested a change from a Level II to a Level III, St. Vincent's Blount as a Level III, St. Vincent's St. Clair as a Level III, and St. Vincent's Birmingham as a Level III. All were approved by the BREMSS RAC to continue the application process.

Dr. Crawford asked if there was any opposition to approve the RAC's recommendations for the hospitals to continue in the stroke system at their respective levels except for St. Vincent's East who requested to change from a Level II to a Level III. There was no opposition; the motion was made and seconded to approve the recommendations. The motion carried unanimously.

Acute Health Systems Report

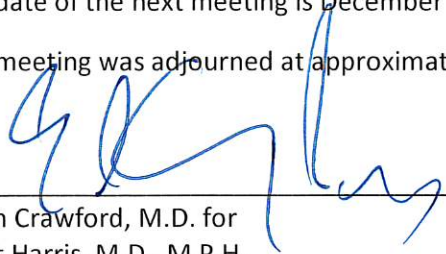
Mr. Minor presented the Acute Health Systems Report.

Dr. Crawford thanked the EMS Regions for their renewed focus to obtain the feedback reports. He added Alabama's 27 percent thrombolytic rate is much better than many places in the nation.

Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting is December 13, 2023.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:35 p.m.



Elwin Crawford, M.D. for
Scott Harris, M.D., M.P.H.
Statewide Trauma and Health Systems Advisory Council



Alice B. Floyd, B.S.N., R.N., EMT-P
Acute Health Systems Manager