

**Minutes of the Statewide Trauma and Health Systems
Advisory Council (STHSAC) Meeting
September 14, 2021 - 10 a.m.
Via Phone/WebEx**

Members Present by Phone/WebEx: Scott Harris, M.D., Elwin Crawford, M.D., Teresa Grimes, Jon Howell, David Spillers, Jeffery Kerby, M.D., proxy for Rony Najjar, M.D., Alzo Preyear, M.D.

Members Absent: Vernon Johnson, Jon Simmons, M.D.

Staff Present via Phone/WebEx: Jamie Gray, Alice Floyd, Kent Wilson, Lori McInerney, Michele Jones, Stephanie Payne

Guests by Phone/WebEx: Dave White, John E. Blue, II, Allan Pace, Dion Shultz, Travis Parker, Glenn Davis, Jim Fox, Shea Duerring, M.D., Michael Minor, Lydia Tones, Priscilla Bode, Denise Louthain, David Garmon

Welcome

Dr. Harris welcomed all participants. He thanked them for their attendance and called the meeting to order.

Adoption of June 15, 2021, Meeting Minutes

Dr. Harris asked for a motion to approve the Minutes of the June 15, 2021, meeting. The motion was seconded, and the minutes were approved without objection.

New Business - Revised North Region Patient Routing Guidelines

Dr. Crawford reported that the AERO (Alabama EMS Region One) Region Advisory Council (RAC) revised their patient routing guidelines. He has been in contact with AERO to discuss the changes that help with how patients are routed to Huntsville Hospital when they are on traumatic brain overload (TBO) and trauma surgeon overload (TSO). With the revision, when Huntsville Hospital is on TBO or TSO, they will continue to accept patients from the field but hospitals who want to transfer patients will have to speak to the on-call neurosurgeon (for TBO patients) or the on-call trauma surgeon (for trauma patients) to accept the patient for transfer.

Dr. Crawford added that the revised patient routing guidelines were developed and approved by the RAC and that the state office had no major problems with them. There were no questions from the members related to the report. A motion was made to approve the revised patient routing guidelines. The motion was seconded and approved with no opposition.

New Business - Regional Advisory Council Appointees

Dr. Crawford reported that the Alabama Hospital Association (AlaHA) and the State Health Officer appointees had been made for the Regional Advisory Council appointments which expire September 30, 2021. The Medical Association of the State of Alabama (MASA) appointment information is expected soon.

Trauma System Update

Dr. Kerby reported that recently scheduled trauma site visits to Level I and Level II trauma centers were put on hold, due to the ongoing issues with COVID-19 response. The visits would remain on a temporary hold until hospitals can direct their attention towards a trauma site visit.

Dr. Kerby added that the trauma rules were still in the process of being updated and more information would be provided at the next STHSAC meeting.

Rescue Stop/Accelerated Transfers

Dr. Crawford reported that work on the Rescue Stop and Accelerated Transfer process for trauma patients is ongoing. Dr. Kerby is leading the effort by working with trauma surgeons across the state to incorporate their commentary into the process. More information should be available at the next STHSAC meeting.

Trauma Funding Update

Dr. Crawford reported that trauma funding work continues. There is ongoing communication with different people within the department, the Governor's Office, trauma surgeons, and others to discuss the best framework for trauma funding.

Dr. Harris commented that sustainable and substantial funding for the trauma system is a big priority.

Stroke Rules Status

Dr. Crawford commented that the Stroke Rules process is on hold. Some changes had been made and the rules would go back out for public comment soon. More information could be available at the next STHSAC meeting.

Stroke Site Visits

Dr. Crawford commented that stroke center site visits, like trauma site visits, had been put on hold due to COVID-19.

Severity Based Stroke Triage

Dr. Crawford provided information about the implementation of the Emergency Medical Stroke Assessment (EMSA) stroke scale. EMS Providers are being trained on the scale now. Effective October 1, 2021, the Alabama Trauma Communication Center (ATCC) will begin asking EMS personnel EMSA information for suspected stroke patients. Due to COVID-19, it is unknown when the EMSA score would be used for patient routing.

He continued that changes in stroke system routing were implemented in December of last year due to the inability to transfer stroke patients from a Level III stroke center to a Level II or Level I stroke center. That change worked well and eventually routing went back to normal. The change was recently reinstated due to surge in COVID cases and it is working well.

Dr. Harris asked for a general hospital update to see how things were going, and Mr. Spillers from Huntsville Hospital provided an update.

Cardiac System

Dr. Crawford reported that there had been a couple of preliminary meetings with stakeholders for the cardiac system. He commented we are a long way from implementing a cardiac system, but work will continue.

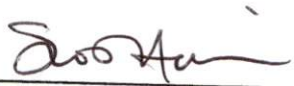
Acute Health Systems (AHS) Report

Michael Minor was unable to present the AHS report; therefore, Dr. Crawford presented the report as distributed. Dr. Crawford applauded the EMS Regions and hospitals for the increase in percentages of returned feedback forms to the ATCC. There were no questions about the report.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for December 14, 2021.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:25 a.m.



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



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