



# **The Impact of Designated Stroke Centers: The European and American Experiences**

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## **Learning Objectives**

- Discuss why Stroke Centers were developed.
- Review the evidence that Stroke Centers improve the outcome of stroke patients.
- Discuss the position of various emergency medicine organizations on the designation of Stroke Centers.

## **Background**

As stroke therapy has advanced, the study of general ways to improve outcomes in stroke patients has also advanced. These studies lead to the organization of the Brain Attack Coalition which developed specific guidelines for the comprehensive care of stroke patients. Ultimately, the concept of Primary Stroke Center designation was developed with specific guidelines for the treatment of patients from EMS communication and training, through discharge planning and counseling.

Dr. Bunney will discuss the development of stroke centers and their influence on stroke patient outcome. He will also discuss concerns that emergency medicine organizations have regarding the development of stroke centers and their potential negative impact on hospitals and the EMS system.

## **Key Clinical Questions**

- Do stroke centers improve outcomes for ischemic stroke patients? What about hemorrhagic stroke patients?
- What is an EM physicians role in a stroke center?
- Why are there concerns about stroke center designation?