



Stroke Patient Systems of Care: What Systems and Methodologies Exist Nationally that Optimize the Care of Stroke Patients?

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Learning Objectives

- Establish the key concepts that guide the decision making in the diagnosis and treatment of acute ischemic stroke patients.
- Evaluate stroke care systems, the role of tertiary and stroke centers, prehospital triage, and ED patient transfer in the management of acute ischemic stroke patients.
- Discuss which attributes of successful stroke care systems enhance outcome, such that they can be replicated in other systems and institutions for stroke patient benefit.

Background

Advanced stroke diagnostics and therapeutics are available both in JCAHO designated stroke centers and tertiary centers. Stroke care systems utilize triage and transfer protocols and cutting edge technologies in order to optimize the initial evaluation and subsequent management of acute ischemic stroke patients. How stroke center designation, management protocols, and technologies such as robotics and telemedicine enhance patient outcome in 2007 needs to be fully understood.

Key Clinical Questions

- What is the current status of primary stroke center designation?
- What is the current status of tertiary stroke center designation?
- What regional or national stroke systems currently exist?
- What networks for evaluation, consultation, and transfer exist?
- How are telemedicine systems utilized in these stroke systems?
- What research protocols are utilized by these stroke care systems?
- How do these stroke care systems relate to the newly formed NETT?
- Do these systems treat ischemic and hemorrhagic stroke patients?
- What are the documented benefits and outcome enhancements for stroke patients who are treated in these systems?