



CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR THROMBECTOMY STROKE CENTERS



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Certification Requirements for Thrombectomy Stroke Centers, 2024 edition, or parts thereof, may only be reproduced for internal use by a facility seeking certification and is not to be distributed except to facility staff.

Pronouns used in this publication were chosen for ease of reading and are not intended to exclude additional gender references.

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Foreword

How We Work

Accreditation Commission for Health Care, Inc. (ACHC) offers healthcare organizations an objective, standards-based review of the services they provide using an educational approach. We support improvement in patient care and safety by sharing knowledge and expertise.

Our goal is to help each organization maximize its potential to improve outcomes for specific patient populations. The ACHC process supports customer success before, during, and after the on-site survey.

Each organization is assigned an Account Advisor to serve as the primary point of contact with our office. Your advisor will answer process and billing questions, provide helpful timeline and documentation resources, and serve as your contact when reporting changes within your program.

Clinical professionals experienced in Stroke Care Programs are available to answer questions and provide guidance. They are easily accessible by phone or email (certification@achc.org) to respond to questions about applicability of standards or interpretation of requirements, and will work with you post-survey to understand deficiencies identified by surveyors and how to develop an effective plan of correction.

Using the Manual

We recommend that you use this manual as a tool for on-going self-assessment of your program's adherence to the standards. This ensures that you are always ready for external review and avoids the need for a flurry of "ramp up" activities in anticipation of a survey. More importantly, periodic self-assessment supports a culture of quality with regard to your ability to render care, treatment, and services safely and effectively. At their core, these standards represent a validated risk-reduction strategy for your Stroke Program. Compliance with the standards will not prevent every adverse event but will diminish the likelihood of their occurrence.

Standards Format

The standards for Thrombectomy Stroke Certification are presented in three sections: Governance Functions, Clinical Functions, and Support Functions. Each standard includes four components:

- 1

STANDARD AND SCORING

This is the requirement, written broadly to acknowledge that organizations may find a variety of ways to achieve compliance and the scored evaluation of that compliance.
- 3

REQUIRED ELEMENTS

This amplification of the standard provides further detail about its intent and describes what is expected to demonstrate compliance.
- 4

SURVEY PROCEDURE

This identifies what ACHC Surveyors will review to assess compliance.

EXAMPLE

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| 01.00.01 LICENSURE (formerly 01.00.03) | | 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Not Compliant |
| <div>1 STANDARD</div> <p>The organization is appropriately licensed and Medicare-certified and/or accredited.</p> <div>3 REQUIRED ELEMENTS</div> <p>Licensure and accreditations/certifications are posted, if posting is required.</p> <p>Documentation on agency letterhead confirms the organization's current state license, Medicare certification, and other applicable accreditation(s). Laboratory accreditation and radiology accreditation are required.</p> <div>4 SURVEY PROCEDURE</div> <p>Source of evidence for compliance: Document Review</p> <p>Verify, at minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Current state license.Current Medicare and/or accreditation certificate | | Notes |

Scoring

Each standard is identified as Compliant or Not Compliant. Some standards may include an additional option of N/A (not applicable) based on the scope of services offered by the stroke center.

COMPLIANT indicates that there is evidence that the facility fully meets the requirement.

NOT COMPLIANT indicates there is less than full compliance with the requirement or no evidence of compliance with the requirement.

NOT APPLICABLE indicates that the standard does not apply to the facility being surveyed.

Reference to Days

Time frames indicated in “days,” refer to calendar days. When the time frame is limited, i.e., Monday through Friday, we will use the term “business days.”



Acknowledgments

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THROMBECTOMY STROKE CERTIFICATION STANDARDS

Thrombectomy Certification Standards Overview

| GOVERNANCE FUNCTIONS | CLINICAL FUNCTIONS | SUPPORT FUNCTIONS |
|---|--|---|
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Governance Functions: Strategic Direction

01.00.01 LICENSURE *(formerly 01.00.03)*

☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

STANDARD

The organization is appropriately licensed and Medicare-certified and/or accredited.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS

Licensure and other accreditations/certification are posted, if posting is required.

Documentation on agency letterhead confirms the organization's current state license, Medicare certification, and other applicable accreditation(s). Laboratory accreditation and radiology accreditation are required.

SURVEY PROCEDURE

Source of evidence for compliance: Document Review

Verify, at minimum:

- Current state license.
- Current Medicare and/or accreditation certificate
- Laboratory CLIA certificate of accreditation.
- Radiology certificate of accreditation.

Notes

01.00.02 TARGET POPULATION AND SERVICE DELIVERY

☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

STANDARD

Based on a community assessment, the Stroke Program's service area and target population are defined in writing.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS

A community assessment identifies the needs and prevalence of disease in the area for which the hospital provides stroke support services. Available resources in the area and the capabilities of other local and regional healthcare organizations are assessed. Limitations in resources are identified.

This assessment is used to identify the program's scope and to define the target population. The identified target population should align with the program's mission and reflect its focus and services.

Stroke awareness and wellness education is provided to the public based on community needs. The Thrombectomy Stroke Certification is promoted to the public.

Notes

SURVEY PROCEDURE

Source of evidence for compliance: **Interview and Document Review**

Verify, at minimum:

- Community needs assessment and area capabilities.
- Alignment of the needs assessment with the scope of services and target audience.
- Community information promoting services offered.

01.00.03 STRATEGIC PLAN *(new)*
☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant
STANDARD

A defined strategic plan supports the Stroke Program and the needs of the patient population.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS

The hospital outlines a plan for the Stroke Program that includes:

- Mission.
- Target population.
- Level of care, scope of services, and treatments available to support these.
- Core Stroke Program leaders (including, at least, a medical director and stroke coordinator) and team. Program leaders participate in:
 - » Developing the mission and scope of service.
 - » Designing the program to fit within the defined scope.
 - » Establishing patient care policies and protocols.
 - » Defining annual review of policies and protocols.
 - » Evaluating services provided.
 - » Area-wide (e.g., county-level) stroke council if one exists.
- Departments involved in the provision of stroke care.
- Strategic partnerships including, but not limited to:
 - » Services to support continuity of care (such as rehabilitation services and medical supply companies) and to optimize care and patient outcomes.

Notes

SURVEY PROCEDURE

Source of evidence for compliance: **Interview and Document Review**

Verify, at minimum:

- A written plan includes the required elements.

01.00.04 GOVERNANCE PLAN (formerly 01.00.01)

☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

| STANDARD | Notes |
|--|-------|
| <p>The leadership of the organization demonstrates its commitment to the program through support of certification.</p> | |
| <p>REQUIRED ELEMENTS</p> <p>Stroke certification is an optional achievement supported by the hospital's administration. Certification must reflect demonstrated support by leadership within the organization.</p> <p>The hospital's governing body formally adopts ACHC Standards for stroke certification. This may be in the form of a service line report or by board meeting minutes indicating approval of ACHC Thrombectomy Stroke Certification. This formal commitment is demonstrated at least every three years.</p> <p>An annual budget is approved for stroke certification that addresses costs of maintaining survey readiness and certification. The annual budget supports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Resources and equipment, including neurosurgery, if applicable.■ Staffing.■ Training. <p>An established organizational structure and reporting relationships for the Stroke Program are identified in an organization chart. Reporting responsibilities of the medical director and program coordinator are included.</p> <p>The program's medical staff is accountable to the governing body for the care of stroke patients. The medical staff oversees all stroke care practitioners through a peer review process.</p> | |
| <p>SURVEY PROCEDURE</p> <p>Source of evidence for compliance: Interview and Document Review</p> <p>Verify, at minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Written documentation of support for certification of the Stroke Program.■ An annual program budget.■ Defined reporting relationships for the program as indicated by an organization chart. | |

01.00.05 GRIEVANCE PROCESS (formerly 01.00.04)

☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

| STANDARD | Notes |
|--|-------|
| <p>The organization has a complaint and grievance process specific to the Stroke Program.</p> | |
| REQUIRED ELEMENTS | |
| <p>The organization must have an established process for the timely resolution of complaints and grievances. This may be part of a hospital-wide process, but stroke patients should be identifiable for tracking and trending program-related issues.</p> <p>The process ensures that complaints are managed effectively, and improvements are made when warranted.</p> <p>The process addresses complaints that receive immediate resolution and grievances, defined as complaints that cannot be resolved immediately and are postponed for later resolution, are referred to other staff for later resolution, require investigation, and/or require further action to achieve resolution.</p> <p>The process ensures, at least:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Staff access to complaint and grievance protocols.■ Communication of the complaint and grievance process to patients.■ Integration of grievances with the Stroke Program's QAPI plan. | |
| SURVEY PROCEDURE | |
| <p>Source of evidence for compliance: Interview and Document Review</p> <p>Verify, at minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ A complaint and grievance process addresses how complaints are triaged, escalated, resolved in a timely manner, and documented.■ Complaints and grievances are addressed in the Stroke Program QAPI plan.■ Accessibility of the grievance protocol.■ Evidence of an improvement made as a result of a complaint, if warranted. | |

Governance Functions: Credentialing

01.01.01 MEDICAL DIRECTOR

☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

STANDARD

The Stroke Program appoints a qualified physician who is credentialed and privileged by the hospital as its medical director. This individual provides continuous oversight for the program.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS

Clinical leadership is provided by the medical director, credentialed and privileged by the hospital, who is knowledgeable in stroke care, and who guides and advises the team. The medical director (or an identified designee) is available 24 hours every day of the year.

The hospital defines “available” by outlining time frames and methods of communication (by phone, in person) that facilitate compliance with stroke quality metrics and state regulations, where applicable. The medical director provides credibility and leadership to the Stroke Program through board certification in neurology, neurosurgery, neuroradiology, or emergency medicine, and at least one of the following:

- Completion of specialty training in cerebral vascular disease.
- Five years’ experience in the management of patients with cerebrovascular diseases.
- Additional criteria determined by the organization.

The medical director completes at least eight continuing medical education (CME) credits in stroke care each year. This should include attendance or a faculty role at one or more regional, national, or international specialty conferences or courses each year.

SURVEY PROCEDURE

Source of evidence for compliance: **Interview and Document Review**

Verify, at minimum:

- A medical director is appointed with fixed lines of authority and oversight responsibility for the program.
- Allocation of time and resources by the medical director is adequate to support the scope and complexity of services provided.
- A position description and credentialing documentation for the medical director reflect:
 - » Current licensure and appropriate credentialing.
 - » Eight or more CME credits applicable to the stroke program (scored under standard 03.00.03).
- An on-call schedule indicating medical director/designee coverage.
- Accessibility of the on-call schedule to staff.

Notes

01.01.02 MEDICAL STAFFING

☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

| STANDARD | Notes |
|--|-------|
| <p>The number and qualifications of credentialed, privileged medical staff are appropriate to the scope of services offered by the program.</p> | |
| REQUIRED ELEMENTS | |
| <p>The provision of high quality and efficient care is directly dependent upon the organization's degree of commitment to building the necessary infrastructure. The governing body has established and monitors protocols that ensure a qualified physician is on duty or on call at all times to provide medical care and onsite supervision when needed.</p> <p>EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ An adequate number of qualified providers are available to provide rapid diagnosis and treatment of acute stroke patients.■ The ED staff includes a physician experienced in the diagnosis and treatment of patients with ischemic stroke and intracerebral hemorrhage and the use of IV thrombolytic therapy. <p>PROVIDERS</p> <p>Medical Providers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Undertake annual education specifically related to diagnosis/assessment and management of acute stroke/cerebrovascular disease (may be CME/protocol/competency driven). Note: Refer to 03.00.03 Orientation and Education for requirements and scoring.■ Are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. All providers needed for services offered by the Stroke Program (surgeons, neurosurgeons, interventionalists) are onsite within 30 minutes. Physicians who can treat are available in house or via telemedicine within a time frame defined by the hospital to adequately meet stroke performance metrics, unless otherwise specified by state regulations.■ Have been oriented to stroke protocols.■ Have an on-call schedule that is accessible to all departmental staff and providers.■ Include additional credentialed physicians (based on services provided) who are accessible by phone and available 24 hours every day of the year. For example:<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Physician(s) with imaging experience in head computerized tomography and brain magnetic resonance imaging.» Diagnostic radiologist(s) (maybe via telemedicine).» Physician with cerebrovascular experience. | |

| REQUIRED ELEMENTS (CONTINUED) |
|--|
| <div><div>» Physicians with neurocritical care experience. This may include using, under supervision:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Fellows, residents, advanced practice nurses, and/ or physician assistants with education and expertise in neurocritical and cerebrovascular care (provided that the clinician meets the organization’s education and experience requirements and a physician with neurology and critical care experience is available by phone and onsite within a time frame defined by hospital policy).</div><div>» Neurosurgeon(s) with expertise in cerebrovascular surgery.</div><div>» Surgeon(s) with expertise in carotid endarterectomy.</div><div>» Anesthesia providers.</div><div>PROVIDER QUALIFICATIONS<p>Individual physicians, APRNs, PAs, and other applicable clinicians undergo a credentialing process (new appointments or reappointments) consistent with national standards and guidelines.</p><p>A separate credentials file is maintained for each individual applicant to ensure that credentialing is complete and that qualifications are relevant to the scope of services provided. The files contain:</p><ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Qualifications/experience/education.■ Documentation of relevant continuing education.■ Current licensure.■ Current National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) query.■ Documentation of periodic appraisal.■ Criminal history background check.■ Privileges based on the applicant’s credentials and training (including voluntary or involuntary reductions or limitations in scope of practice, if applicable).<p>For thrombectomies, each provider must be privileged to perform intra-arterial revascularization and meet minimum thrombectomy case requirements as defined by the Stroke Program. Case volume requirements are established based on evidence-based guidelines and outcome data. When case volumes are not met, other means of maintaining competency must be defined. If case volumes are otherwise specified in state regulations, these volume requirements must be met.</p></div></div> |

Notes

| SURVEY PROCEDURE | Notes |
|---|-------|
| <p>Source of evidence for compliance: Interview and Document Review</p> <p>Verify, at minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The call register and staffing documentation confirm that specialty physicians are on-duty or on-call at all times.■ The organization has staffing patterns in place that define the numbers of qualified providers required to provide patient care.■ Credentials files include all required elements.■ Provider case volumes meet identified thresholds. <p>Verify, through interviews:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Physicians have knowledge of/competency in:<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Stroke protocols and triage of acute stroke.» Assessment, diagnosis, and management of patients with acute stroke.» Treatment options for patients with stroke. | |

Governance Functions: Safe Environment

01.02.01 SAFE ENVIRONMENT AND INFECTION CONTROL

☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

STANDARD

The organization has an Infection Prevention and Control Program and a Safety Program.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS

The Stroke Program complies with and is incorporated into the facility-wide Infection Control and Safety Programs. The organization has adopted current, evidence-based guidelines for safety and infection control.

Patient care areas comply with and are incorporated into the organization-wide safety and infection control plans. Elements include:

- Safety of the physical environment.
- Compliance with life safety codes.
- Medical equipment management.
- Emergency supplies and back-up.
- Infection control.

SURVEY PROCEDURE

Source of evidence for compliance: **Observation, Interview, and Document Review**

Verify, at minimum:

- Safety and infection control protocols are available in-patient care areas.
- Compliance with protocols is observable.
- The infection control and safety needs of stroke patients are met.

Notes

Governance Functions: Social Responsibility

01.03.01 HEALTH PROMOTION

☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

STANDARD

The service provides at least one educational program to the public with a focus on prevention and recognition of stroke and the availability of treatment options and therapies.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS

The stroke center offers community education focusing on stroke prevention, symptom recognition, and care options.

Programs are provided at least once a year and evaluations are collected, analyzed, and used to improve public education.

SURVEY PROCEDURE

Source of evidence for compliance: **Interview and Document Review**

Verify, at minimum:

- The service provides one community education program each year.
- Program evaluations are collected and analyzed.
- Improvements were made following the evaluation review.

Notes

01.03.02 HEALTHCARE PARTNERSHIPS

☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

| STANDARD | Notes |
|--|-------|
| <p>The thrombectomy stroke center has established a partnership with one or more stroke ready, primary, and thrombectomy stroke centers or smaller community/remote area hospitals, and with a comprehensive stroke center with neurosurgical capabilities to support patients needing a higher level of care. When transferring patients out of this facility, the transfer must be to a stroke center of equal or higher level of stroke care.</p> | |
| <p>REQUIRED ELEMENTS</p> <p>Partnership agreements with comprehensive stroke centers and with primary and stroke-ready centers play a key role in timely diagnosis and intervention. In these settings, a stroke protocol can be activated to save time and enhance patient outcomes, for example, the initiation of an IV thrombolytic before patient transfer to a higher level of care.</p> <p>When developing agreements, the thrombectomy center defines time frames for transfer to and from other stroke centers to ensure patient needs are met. Defined time frames may vary based on clinical needs, triage, and clinical outcomes. Transfer protocols are part of the agreement and include standardized hand-offs to ensure clear and consistent communication between the sending and receiving hospital.</p> <p>Partnership is demonstrated by one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Collaboration in the development and annual review of patient care protocols.■ Collaboration in the development and annual review of education related to acute stroke management.■ Support with prompt diagnosis and treatment of stroke (which may be via telemedicine).■ Transfer of stroke patients when appropriate.■ Clinical communication between hospitals. | |
| <p>SURVEY PROCEDURE</p> <p>Source of evidence for compliance: Document Review</p> <p>Verify, at minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Minutes or other documentation of meetings with outside entities address the required elements.■ Medical records reflect neurology/neurosurgical consult.■ Patient transfers occurred within the defined time frame.■ The standardized hand-off process/information is available and consistent in all files reviewed. | |

Clinical Functions: Service Integration

02.00.01 EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

STANDARD

The emergency department is staffed with adequate numbers of qualified personnel to meet patient needs. Physicians and registered nurses are onsite 24 hours a day, seven days per week.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS

The treatment of stroke patients requires a multidisciplinary approach. The acute stroke team includes, at minimum, physicians and nurses who are available 24/7.

Emergency department physicians must be available to assess the patient 24/7 and at the bedside within 10 minutes or less, or in accordance with state requirements.

Facilities must develop, adopt, and adhere to care protocols aligned with nationally recognized standards of practice and consistent with all applicable state and federal regulations.

The emergency department has the capacity to continuously monitor the neurological and physiological status (oxygenation, respirations, blood pressure and heart rate/rhythm) of the patient.

The Thrombectomy Program has, at minimum, the following protocols in place:

- Ischemic stroke treatment protocols to address large vessel occlusions (LVO), eligibility criteria for treatment with thrombolytics, and measures to immediately control blood pressure.
- Intracranial hemorrhage (ICH) treatment protocols to immediately control blood pressure and reversal of coagulopathy to be started in the emergency department, when appropriate.
- Patient transfer protocols to a higher level of care, when appropriate. The patient transfer protocol is compliant with the Emergency Medical Treatment and Active Labor Act (EMTALA). A transfer agreement is expected with at least one healthcare organization that offers a higher level of care to stroke patients.
- Defined patient protocols to address critical care services that may be compromised if systems are not functioning properly.

The hospital has a policy and process that is in compliance with applicable state and local regulation for stroke patient diversion that includes:

- Diversion status updates to ensure the most current information is available for patient destination decisions.
- The name and title of the individual (administrator or medical director) who is authorized to complete a diversion request.

Notes

| REQUIRED ELEMENTS (CONTINUED) | Notes |
|---|-------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The Stroke Program defines circumstances that require stroke patient diversion, e.g., when the hospital is functioning under its internal disaster policy, or when essential diagnostic CT scanner(s) or MRI equipment are non-functional. The stroke center must notify the EMS agency's Stroke Program Manager directly regarding the nature of the failure or equipment issue, and the estimated length of the diversion. <p>Note: Emergency department saturation is not an acceptable rationale to request stroke diversion.</p> | |
| SURVEY PROCEDURE | |
| <p>Source of evidence for compliance: Observation, Interview, and Document Review</p> <p>Verify, at minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Staff/providers are knowledgeable regarding all protocols in the required elements.■ Required policies and protocols are in place and reflect nationally recognized guidelines.■ Staffing is adequate to meet the needs of patients.■ A transfer agreement is in place.■ Patient medical records reflect compliance with established protocols.■ Stroke care, including physiological and neurological monitoring, is consistent with protocols. | |

02.00.02 SPECIALTY UNIT: STROKE

☐ Compliant
 ☐ Not Compliant
 ☐ N/A

STANDARD

Notes

The program has a stroke unit established to provide continuity of care following the immediate, hyperacute phase of care and/or cerebrovascular disease.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS

The stroke unit may be a distinct unit of the hospital, or it may consist of designated beds. Door-to-stroke unit admission time is defined by the hospital and ensures patient care is not compromised if admission cannot be accomplished within this time frame. If there is a delay in admission to the stroke unit, protocols are initiated and followed to ensure continuity of care.

The multidisciplinary stroke team is defined by the program and includes all services required to meet the needs of the patients and the stroke performance measures. The acute stroke clinicians have training and expertise in managing patients with cerebrovascular disease.

A trained member of the stroke center team ensures the patient receives appropriate and efficient, protocol-driven care.

The stroke unit provides, at minimum:

- Defined admission, transfer, and discharge criteria.
- Written stroke care protocols, including physiological and neurological monitoring.
- Continuous telemetry monitoring for a minimum of 24 hours to detect cardiac arrhythmias.
- A staffing plan with personnel dedicated to management of stroke patients and the program.
- Personnel who have stroke specialty experience and education in diagnosis, assessment, and management of acute stroke and cerebrovascular disease.

SURVEY PROCEDURE

Source of evidence for compliance: **Observation, Interview, and Document Review**

Verify, at minimum:

- Staff education and training.
- Staff/providers are knowledgeable regarding all stroke treatment policies and protocols.
- Required policies and protocols are in place and reflect nationally recognized guidelines.
- Staffing is consistent with the staffing plan.
- Medical records reflect compliance with established protocols and admissions time frames.
- Management and care of stroke patients is consistent with protocols.

Note: This standard is scored N/A if the stroke unit is located within the intensive care unit (ICU).

02.00.03 SPECIALTY UNIT: INTENSIVE CARE

☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

STANDARD

The thrombectomy center has an intensive care unit (ICU) or designated ICU beds to provide continuity of care during and following the immediate, hyperacute phase of an acute stroke and/or cerebrovascular disease.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS

In addition to meeting the stroke unit requirements at 02.00.02, the ICU also has:

- A protocol to monitor and manage stroke beds for all patients requiring ICU care.
If stroke beds are not immediately available in the ICU, the protocol admits the stroke patient as soon as a bed is available.
 - » There is continuous assessment of patients against internal transfer criteria for the appropriate level of care. This process assists in triaging the availability of ICU beds for stroke patients requiring a higher level of care. This process does not require keeping beds empty in case of a stroke admission.
 - » Patients waiting for bed assignment must have appropriate care with a stroke trained nurse. Relevant stroke protocols are initiated and the neurocritical team must be involved.
- The ability to continuously monitor the neurological and physiological status (oxygenation, respirations, blood pressure and heart rate/rhythm) of the patient for a minimum of 24 hours and per protocol thereafter.
 - » Neurological monitoring equipment is available. Staff are trained and competent on the equipment.
- A written staffing plan defines the number of stroke-experienced intensive care nurses required based on the number and acuity of stroke and cerebrovascular disease patients.
- At minimum, patient management protocols in place for thrombolytic administration, intracranial hemorrhage care, post-thrombectomy care and post-neurosurgery care.
- Providers with expertise in neuro-critical care. This should include:
 - » Physician(s) with neuro-intensive care training/experience.
 - » Allied health practitioners with neuro-intensive care training/experience.

Note: Residents, APNs, and PAs must be under the direction of the neuro-specialized physician, in accordance with applicable federal and state regulations.

The Stroke Program defines the stroke and neurological education and training requirements for the ICU nurse to care for stroke and cerebrovascular disease patients.

Notes

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| <p>SURVEY PROCEDURE</p> <p>Source of evidence for compliance: Observation, Interview, and Document Review</p> <p>Verify, at minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Staff education and training. ■ Staff/providers are knowledgeable regarding all stroke care treatment policies and protocols. ■ Required policies and protocols are in place and reflect nationally recognized guidelines. ■ Leadership or responsible staff are knowledgeable about the stroke bed management process. ■ Staffing is consistent with the staffing plan. ■ Medical records reflect compliance with established protocols. ■ Management and care of stroke patients is consistent with protocols. | Notes |
|---|-------|

02.00.04 NEUROIMAGING
☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

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| <p>STANDARD</p> <p>The thrombectomy stroke center performs advanced imaging necessary to diagnose or rule out intracerebral stroke or hemorrhagic stroke 24 hours a day, seven days a week.</p> <p>REQUIRED ELEMENTS</p> <p>For acute stroke patients, rapid establishment of an accurate diagnosis is vital and requires brain-imaging studies.</p> <p>Neuroimaging services for acute stroke patients must always be readily available. All patients with suspected acute stroke receive emergency brain imaging on arrival before initiating any specific therapy to treat stroke. Initial imaging (CT or MRI) must be performed, interpreted, and communicated to the provider within 45 minutes or less to successfully meet defined performance metrics for the certification level. Timelines are defined and communicated to the individual(s) responsible for oversight of imaging services.</p> <p>Neuroimaging services available at the facility include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Multimodal CT and MRI. ■ Head and neck CTA. ■ Head and neck MRI, including DW-MRI. ■ Magnetic resonance angiography (MRA) (head and neck). ■ Catheter angiography. ■ Carotid duplex ultrasound. ■ Extracranial ultrasonography. ■ Transthoracic echocardiography (TTE). ■ Transesophageal echocardiography (TEE). | Notes |
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REQUIRED ELEMENTS (CONTINUED)

The director and staff of imaging services are educated, committed, and evaluated on services provided to support the Stroke Program. This may be reflected in an agreement or document that outlines services and time frames. The delivery and quality of neuroimaging services related to the Stroke Program is evaluated.

A qualified physician must interpret the neuroimage to form an accurate diagnosis. This physician may be a neurologist, radiologist, or another physician who has demonstrated experience with the interpretation of the head tomography scan or MRI. The qualified physician may be onsite or available through remote access, i.e., telemedicine.

Because the benefit of therapy is time dependent, administration of a thrombolytic in eligible patients should be given before obtaining a follow-up MRI, unless the MRI is the initial imaging modality.

For patients who meet the criteria for mechanical thrombectomy, noninvasive vessel imaging of the intracranial arteries is recommended during the initial imaging evaluation. Noninvasive vessel imaging should be obtained as quickly as possible, e.g., during thrombolytic administration.

For patients with suspected large vessel occlusion (LVO) who meet thrombectomy criteria, it is reasonable to proceed with computed tomographic angiography (CTA) before obtaining a serum creatinine concentration.

CT perfusion (CTP) or diffusion weighted (DW)-MRI with or without MRI perfusion are recommended for patients presenting with LVO within 24 hours of time last known well.

SURVEY PROCEDURE

Source of evidence for compliance: **Observation, Interview, and Document Review**

Verify, at minimum:

- The neuroimaging service agreement
- Imaging services are available 24/7 and interpreted by a qualified provider.
- Neuroimaging equipment is available at the facility.
- Medical records reflect neuroimaging studies performed and communicated to the provider within the required time frame.

Quality Measure Benchmark

Review the last 12 months of the stroke center’s data and verify that the quality measure benchmark is achieved for SM-15 Neuroimaging Studies.

Notes

02.00.05 LABORATORY SERVICES

☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

| STANDARD | Notes |
|---|-------|
| <p>The stroke program has timely access to laboratory services 24 hours a day, seven days a week.</p> | |
| <p>REQUIRED ELEMENTS</p> <p>For acute stroke patients, rapid establishment of an accurate diagnosis is vital and requires laboratory services.</p> <p>For all tests defined by the organization as stroke labs (blood glucose, at minimum), the laboratory has the capacity to perform, interpret, and communicate test results to the provider within 45 minutes, to meet the performance measures defined for this certification level.</p> <p>The laboratory director and staff are educated on, committed to, and evaluated on laboratory services provided to support the Stroke Program. This may be reflected in an agreement or document that identifies services and time frames. The delivery and quality of laboratory services related to the Stroke Program is evaluated.</p> <p>Lab services include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Point-of-care blood glucose for assessment of blood glucose prior to the initiation of thrombolytic therapy. <p>Note: Per American Heart Association/American Stroke Association (AHA/ASA) for any patient presenting with stroke related symptoms, point-of-care blood glucose must be performed. Results must be available prior to the initiation of thrombolytic therapy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ CBC.■ Metabolic profile.■ Troponin.■ Hemoglobin A1C.■ Lipid profile.■ International Normalized Ratio* (INR), Prothrombin Time (PT) and Partial Thromboplastin Time (PTT), if clinically indicated. <p><small>*If clinically indicated, other tests may be necessary. For example, international normalized ratio, activated partial thromboplastin time, and platelet count, may be necessary if there is suspicion of coagulopathy. Given the extremely low risk of unsuspected abnormal platelet counts or coagulation studies in a population, IV alteplase treatment should not be delayed while waiting for hematologic or coagulation testing if there is no reason to suspect an abnormal test.</small></p> | |
| <p>SURVEY PROCEDURE</p> <p>Source of evidence for compliance: Observation, Interview, and Document Review</p> <p>Verify, at minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The laboratory service agreement.■ Laboratory services are available 24/7.■ Medical records reflect that laboratory testing is completed within the required time frame. <p>Quality Measure Benchmark</p> <p>Review the last 12 months of the stroke center's data and verify that the quality measure benchmark is achieved for SM-14 Laboratory Result.</p> | |

02.00.06 MEDICATION MANAGEMENT
☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant
STANDARD

The hospital determines the type and quantities of drugs and special-order supplies to be available for the Stroke Program.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS

The stroke center has a required medications list which includes guidelines for use and management of intra-arterial fibrinolytics, thrombolytic therapy (IV), and anticoagulation reversal agents.

The medications listed are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The acute stroke response clinicians and pharmacy collaboratively develop a written protocol that describes:

- The type and quantity of thrombolytic drugs available immediately (determined by the acute stroke response team leaders).
- Drug storage/temperature controls.
- Physician orders for thrombolytics.
- Transport, delivery, and preparation of required medication.
- Return of unused product to vendor, if applicable.
- Pharmacy department oversight and control of all thrombolytics, regardless of storage location.

Minimally, the following hospital policies and nationally recognized guidelines are available in all areas that provide intravenous thrombolytic therapy for stroke patients:

- Patient eligibility criteria, contraindications/exclusions to thrombolytic therapy.
- Usual thrombolytic dose ranges/rate of infusion.
- Blood pressure management for hypertensive patients before thrombolytic therapy is initiated and throughout their hospitalization. Documentation supports any blood pressure management outside of hospital policy requirements.
- Treatment protocols for inadvertent overdose, drug-related hemorrhage, and medication errors.
- Special equipment/training required for thrombolytic administration and patient neurological and physiological monitoring before, during, and after medication administration.
- Documentation of reason when thrombolytic therapy is not administered to eligible ischemic stroke patients.

The stroke center protocols ensure treatment for thrombolytic-eligible patients in the fastest achievable time frame. The organization defines its goal for administration of IV thrombolytics in as timely and safe a manner as possible within 45 minutes of arrival in the emergency department. The hospital meets performance measures SM-12A and strives to meet SM-12B and SM-12C.

Notes

REQUIRED ELEMENTS (CONTINUED)

- Eligible stroke patients with mild but disabling stroke symptoms are treated within 4.5 hours of ischemic stroke symptom onset or the patient's time last known well or at baseline state.
- Patients eligible for thrombolytic therapy should receive thrombolytics even if mechanical thrombectomy is being considered.

Quality improvement initiatives related to medication management are used to safely increase treatment frequency with IV thrombolytics.

Refer to the Food and Drug Administration, the AHA/ASA, and other nationally recognized, published guidelines for best practice for the development of institutional policies.

Intracerebral Hemorrhage (ICH)

The organization develops patient care policies and protocols for the management of ICH patients including, but not limited to:

- Severe coagulation factor deficiency or severe thrombocytopenia.
- INR elevated due to Vitamin K antagonist (VKA).
- Hypertension treated initially and throughout hospitalization.

SURVEY PROCEDURE

Source of evidence for compliance: **Observation, Interview, and Document Review**

Verify, at minimum:

- The list of required medications available to the Thrombectomy Program and that medications are available or delivered in a timely manner 24/7.
- Required patient care protocols and policies are developed collaboratively with pharmacy and acute stroke clinicians to align with nationally recognized guidelines.
- Medical records are consistent with facility policies, protocols, and nationally recognized guidelines.
- The pharmacy maintains oversight of all drugs.

Quality Measure Benchmark

Review the last 12 months of the Stroke Program's data and verify that quality measure benchmarks are achieved for:

- SM-4 Thrombolytic Therapy within 4.5 hours
- SM-12A Door-to-Needle Time 60 Minutes
- SM-12B Door-to-Needle Time 45 Minutes
- SM-12C Door-to-Needle Time 30 Minutes

Notes

02.00.07 SURGICAL STAFFING

☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

STANDARD

The Stroke Program is appropriately staffed to perform a defined minimum number of stroke and cerebrovascular procedures.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS

If neurosurgical services are provided, the thrombectomy center has a written policy that outlines neurointerventional staffing coverage, including support personnel and, if applicable, neurosurgical staffing and support personnel coverage. This policy is approved by the neurosurgeon(s) and the leadership of the stroke center. For thrombectomies, staffing includes a nurse and a technician trained in the procedure.

A call schedule, based on services provided, for neurosurgery and neurointerventional radiology is available to all departments, providers, and staff involved in stroke care. Neurosurgeons, neurointerventionalists, surgical and interventional qualified support personnel are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, along with equipment and supplies to provide stroke and cerebrovascular care. Surgical and interventional staff must be onsite within 30 minutes of the identified emergency.

To maintain proficiency, annual case volume requirements per provider should minimally include thrombectomies.

The goal of a thrombectomy procedure is reperfusion as early as possible within the therapeutic window. When appropriate, mechanical thrombectomy should not be delayed for thrombolytic administration and should be performed for acute ischemic stroke (AIS) patients with large vessel occlusion (LVO) within 24 hours of time last known well.

Case volume requirements should align with evidence-based guidelines and outcome data. When case volumes are unmet, other means of maintaining competency must be defined. If case volume requirements are otherwise specified in state regulation, these volumes must be met.

Notes

| SURVEY PROCEDURE | Notes |
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| <p>Source of evidence for compliance: Observation, Interview, and Document Review</p> <p>Verify, at minimum, based on scope of services provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Written policy and its approval for neurosurgical and neurointerventional coverage.■ Neurosurgery and neurointerventional call schedule.■ Neurosurgeon, neurointerventionalist, and qualified support personnel are available 24/7.■ Staffing is appropriate for surgical and interventional procedures.■ Medical records reflect procedural time frames consistent with policies/protocols.■ Case volume requirements are met. <p>Quality Measure Benchmark</p> <p>Review the last 12 months of the stroke center’s data and verify that the quality measure benchmark is achieved for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ SMA-8 Thrombolysis in Cerebral Infarction■ SMA-9 Door-to-Skin Puncture Time■ SMA-11 Timeliness of Reperfusion From Hospital Arrival■ SMA-12 Timeliness of Reperfusion From Skin Puncture■ SPG 1A Door to First Pass or Device Time (Direct ED Arrival)■ SPG 1B Door to First Pass or Device Time (Hospital Transfer) | |

02.00.08 STROKE SURGICAL AND INTERVENTIONAL CARE
☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant
STANDARD

Care for stroke patients meets nationally recognized guidelines for preoperative, intraoperative, and postoperative care.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS

A preoperative assessment, as appropriate to the medical needs of the patient, is documented. A history and physical is completed preoperatively, in accordance with the organization's policy.

The patient's informed consent specifically addresses the stroke surgical procedure to be performed.

There is documentation of a time-out that includes confirmation of patient identity, the procedure to be performed, the correct site for the procedure, and any implants or special equipment.

The policies and protocols are consistent with nationally recognized guidelines for stroke surgical and interventional procedures including, if indicated:

- Criteria for mechanical thrombectomy procedures.
- Management of thrombectomy patients.
- Prophylactic antibiotic administration (N/A for thrombectomy patients).
- Hair removal (N/A for thrombectomy patients).
- Perioperative glucose control measures.

Surgery conforms to nationally recognized standards of care.

- There is an aseptic environment.
- There is adequate space in pre- and post-anesthesia areas and in the surgical suites to provide care.
- Only authorized personnel are permitted in the surgical areas.
- Appropriate sterilization procedures are used for instruments and supplies.
- Immediate use sterilization is not used for the convenience of staff.
- A provider postoperative note is immediately documented.

Patients undergoing stroke specific procedures must have appropriate care before, during, and after the procedure. Procedural assessments are performed in accordance with hospital policy and include physiological and neurological monitoring, assessment of pedal or radial pulses, where applicable, and surgical site assessment.

The policies and procedures address the hand-off process between surgery and:

- The provider responsible for continuing care.
- The receiving unit (for example, a post anesthesia care unit or intensive care unit).

Notes

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| <p>SURVEY PROCEDURE</p> <p>Source of evidence for compliance: Observation, Interview, and Document Review</p> <p>Verify, at minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Policies align with nationally recognized guidelines. ■ Medical records include required documentation. ■ The following items are observable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Appropriate staffing with scrub and circulating nurses. » The time-out process is completed in accordance with all required elements and hospital policy. » Sterile technique and aseptic environment are maintained. » Access to surgical areas is restricted to appropriate personnel. ■ Medical records reflect time frames for pre- and post-procedural assessments are consistent with policies/protocols. | Notes |
|---|-------|

02.00.09 ANESTHESIA SERVICES
☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

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|---|-------|
| <p>STANDARD</p> <p>Processes are in place for patients receiving anesthesia/analgesia for stroke.</p> <p>REQUIRED ELEMENTS</p> <p>For cases requiring anesthesia, anesthesiologists are readily available.</p> <p>Pre- and postoperative anesthesia assessments are completed per hospital policy. The anesthesia care is documented, and the preoperative assessment identifies the ASA class. Post-anesthesia assessment includes neurological assessments, vital signs, respiratory and cardiac status.</p> <p>Intraoperative documentation follows hospital policy, and includes at least:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Name, dosage, route and time of administration of drugs and anesthesia agents. ■ Time based documentation of vital signs, oxygenation, ventilation parameters. ■ Documentation of complications and adverse reactions, if any. <p>SURVEY PROCEDURE</p> <p>Source of evidence for compliance: Interview and Document Review</p> <p>Verify, at minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pre-anesthesia, intraoperative and postoperative documentation is consistent with required elements and hospital policy. | Notes |
|---|-------|

02.00.10 CONTRACTED TELEMEDICINE SERVICES

☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

| STANDARD | Notes |
|---|-------|
| <p>Specialty consultation through contracted telemedicine services is through a credentialed and privileged provider.</p> | |
| REQUIRED ELEMENTS | |
| <p>Services contracted through telemedicine in accordance with state regulation can assist in recommending treatment when onsite expertise is not available.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Teleradiology systems can offer rapid imaging interpretation in patients with suspected acute stroke to support timely IV thrombolytic administration.■ Telestroke services can triage patients with acute stroke. Consultation with a neurologist, neurosurgeon, or neuro-interventionalist privileged to diagnose and treat stroke must be within the time frame defined by policy. Telemedicine physicians must be credentialed and privileged at the healthcare organization. If the remote healthcare organization is across state lines, the medical staff may need licensure in both states. <p>When contracted telemedicine is used, the written agreement defines the availability of the service to cover any hours that the hospital does not provide onsite staffing so that resulting coverage is 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and results are ready within the time frames defined by the hospital to meet the quality measure benchmarks.</p> <p>Training is provided, at minimum, during orientation for personnel involved with telemedicine technology at the patient location.</p> | |
| SURVEY PROCEDURE | |
| <p>Source of evidence for compliance: Interview, Observation, and Document Review</p> <p>Verify, at minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The contract agreement provides for appropriate coverage and actual coverage is consistent with the agreement.■ Credential files include:<ul style="list-style-type: none">» License to practice medicine in the location of the Stroke Program.» Appropriate credentialing and privileging by the healthcare organization.■ Medical records reflect that telemedicine services are completed within the time frames outlined in the organization's protocol.■ Training on telemedicine technology is provided on orientation. | |

Clinical Functions: Standards of Care

02.01.01 PATIENT RIGHTS *(formerly 02.01.03)*

☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

| STANDARD | Notes |
|--|-------|
| The patient or their representative is notified of their rights. | |
| REQUIRED ELEMENTS | |
| <p>The hospital patient's rights policies and procedures are in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations.</p> <p>At minimum, patients have the right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Communication in a language or manner the patient can understand. Interpreter services are provided as the need is identified.■ Formulate and implement advanced directives.■ Full information regarding services and treatment options available.■ Information regarding risks associated with treatment options and consequences of non-compliance with recommended treatment options.■ Consent and withdraw consent for treatment. <p>Patient rights and responsibilities policies are available to staff.</p> | |
| SURVEY PROCEDURE | |
| Source of evidence for compliance: Interview and Document Review | |
| Verify, at minimum: | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Required policies are established.■ Medical records are consistent with policy.■ Patients understand their rights and treatment options. | |

Clinical Functions: Delivery of Care

02.02.01 POLICIES, PROTOCOLS, AND GUIDELINES

☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

STANDARD

Policies, protocols, and guidelines are current, and evidence based.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS

Policies, protocols and clinical practice guidelines are based on nationally recognized standards of practice, such as the Brain Attack Coalition and/or AHA/ASA guidelines, reviewed annually, and resource references are available to staff.

The stroke medical director participates in policy, protocol development and annual review. [Note: Scored at 01.00.03.]

Policy and protocol development includes representatives from the pharmacy, radiology, laboratory, emergency, and physical rehabilitation departments, and the stroke unit, and ICU as applicable based on the structure of the hospital's Thrombectomy Program.

Patient care protocols address assessment, management, and monitoring of patients. Protocols include the use of an evidence-based, nationally recognized assessment tool (e.g., the National Institutes of Health Stroke Scale).

Patient care protocols address, as applicable:

- TIA.
- Ischemic stroke.
- Carotid stenosis.
- Mechanical thrombectomy.
- Aneurysmal coiling and clipping.
- Hemorrhagic stroke (intracerebral and subarachnoid hemorrhage).
- Ventriculostomy devices.
- Malignant ischemic stroke with craniectomy.
- Criteria for and administration of IV thrombolytic therapy.

Patient hand-off and transfer protocols and procedures ensure safe and efficient patient care within and between departments and hospitals. Protocols for interhospital transfer are established and approved so that timely patient transfers can be accomplished at all hours, in the least amount of time.

Notes

SURVEY PROCEDURE

Source of evidence for compliance: Interview and Document Review

Verify, at minimum:

- All required stroke policies and protocols are:
 - » Developed using nationally recognized guidelines in collaboration with a multidisciplinary team.
 - » Reviewed annually.
 - » Available to Program staff.

02.02.02 PATIENT ASSESSMENT

☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

STANDARD

Assessments are based on current, evidence-based practice guidelines and include time frames, where applicable.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS

Hospital policy defines the assessment elements and time frames for acute stroke patients, in alignment with standards of practice and evidence-based guidelines. Consideration is given to the right patient, right clinician, right assessment, and right time frame.

Assessments are performed by personnel with expertise in the management of acute stroke. When appropriate, and with the consent of the patient (when able), a family member or representative of the patient's choice is involved in the assessment process.

Patients are assessed and monitored for signs of neurological deterioration after stroke using an evidence based standardized neurological assessment tool, such as:

- National Institutes of Health Stroke Scale (NIHSS). Applied, at minimum, on admission and post administration of a thrombolytic.
- Glasgow Coma Scale (GCS) or other baseline severity score used as part of the initial evaluation of patients with intracerebral hemorrhage.

Physiological and neurological assessment, monitoring, and management includes:

- Baseline electrocardiogram assessment (recommended but should not delay initiation of IV thrombolytic).
- Airway support and ventilatory assistance for the treatment of patients with decreased consciousness or who have bulbar dysfunction that causes compromise of the airway.
- Supplemental oxygen provided to maintain oxygen saturation >94%, as medically indicated
- Correction of hypotension and hypovolemia to maintain systemic perfusion levels necessary to support organ function.
- Early treatment of hypertension when required by comorbid conditions.
- Management of hyperglycemia and hypoglycemia.

Notes

REQUIRED ELEMENTS (CONTINUED)

Dysphagia screening is performed before the patient eats, drinks, or receives any oral medications using a hospital-approved dysphagia screening tool. If a patient fails initial dysphagia screening, a speech pathologist performs a swallow evaluation and provides a recommendation.

Skin assessments are performed in accordance with hospital policy to monitor for skin breakdown.

A discharge risk (rehabilitation/case management) assessment is performed at the time of admission.

SURVEY PROCEDURE

Source of evidence for compliance: **Document Review**

Verify, at minimum:

- The use of evidence based, standardized, assessment tools.
- Patient assessments are documented per protocol and include all required elements.

Quality Measure Benchmark

Review the last twelve months of the stroke center 's data and verify that the quality measure benchmark is achieved for:

- SM-11 Dysphagia Screening
- SMA-1 NIHSS for Ischemic Stroke

Notes

02.02.03 PLAN OF CARE

☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

STANDARD

Each patient has a comprehensive, integrated, multidisciplinary plan of care, which is developed from the initial patient assessments. The individualized plan of care addresses strategies to prevent related complications.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS

The plan of care is multidisciplinary and includes all treatments/ protocols relating to the care of the patient, including supportive care, treatment, and outcomes of any acute complications. The plan of care is initiated within the time frames established by the hospital and is updated whenever there are notable changes in patient condition.

For example, care of the stroke patient includes prevention of secondary complications such as infection, aspiration, airway obstruction, seizures, hypertension, deep vein thrombosis, and cardiac arrhythmias.

The plan of care includes:

- Antiplatelet therapy administered to patients with acute ischemic stroke (AIS) or transient ischemic attack (TIA) within 48 hours after onset unless contraindicated.
- In immobile patients without contraindications, intermittent compression devices are used beginning the day of hospital admission to reduce the risk of DVT, including patients with ICH. Elastic compression stockings are not used.
- Early range of motion activities with monitoring and safety measures as soon as possible with advancement, unless medically contraindicated.
- For patients with AIS with atrial fibrillation/flutter, oral anticoagulation is initiated by day 14 after the onset of neurological symptoms unless contraindicated, or prescribed at time of discharge, whichever comes first.
- Antithrombotic therapy administered by end of day 2 and prescribed at discharge, unless contraindicated.
- Intensive statin therapy is prescribed at discharge, unless medically contraindicated.
- Monitoring for complications, including hemorrhagic transformation, during and after thrombolytic therapy administration.

Seizures are treated as when they occur with other acute neurological conditions, and anti-seizure drugs are selected based on specific patient signs, symptoms, and type of seizure.

Multidisciplinary care of stroke patients means the following must be assessed and treated as applicable, based on nationally-recognized guidelines:

- Cardiac monitoring is performed for at least 24 hours to screen for atrial fibrillation and other potentially serious cardiac arrhythmias that would necessitate emergency cardiac interventions.
- Physiological and neurological monitoring is required for at least 24 hours and until physiologically and neurologically stable.

Notes

| REQUIRED ELEMENTS (CONTINUED) | Notes |
|--|-------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Glucose is monitored and hypoglycemia and hyperglycemia are treated.■ Sources of hyperthermia (temperature greater than 38 degrees C) are identified and treated.■ Oral hygiene protocols are implemented to reduce the risk of pneumonia, as indicated.■ Enteral (oral or tube fed) diet is started as soon as possible, but no later than seven days after admission for acute stroke patients.■ Nutritional supplements are provided to patients who are malnourished or at risk of malnourishment.■ Patients with AIS are managed according to the current ACC/AHA cholesterol guidelines, which include lifestyle modification, dietary recommendations, and medication management.■ Nicotine replacement therapy is initiated when applicable. <p>Risk factors are identified and strategies for reducing risks are initiated. The medical record reflects that these risks and treatment strategies/decisions not to treat are discussed with the patient. Risk factors may include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Comorbidities.■ Fall risk.■ Hospital acquired pressure ulcer injuries■ Hypertension.■ Hyperlipidemia.■ Diabetes.■ Atrial fibrillation.■ Obesity.■ Diet and exercise.■ Obstructive sleep apnea (OSA).■ Alcohol use and/or smoking/vaping. | |

| <div data-bbox="154 153 1118 197">SURVEY PROCEDURE</div> <p data-bbox="154 220 984 247">Source of evidence for compliance: Interview and Document Review</p> <p data-bbox="154 264 391 291">Verify, at minimum:</p> <ul data-bbox="173 310 1105 661" style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="173 310 1105 338">■ The medical record indicates:<ul data-bbox="232 359 1105 661" style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="232 359 1105 422">» A plan of care was initiated and updated when appropriate, consistent with policies/protocols/guidelines.<li data-bbox="232 438 1105 501">» Strategies to prevent related complications are implemented, as appropriate, and documented.<li data-bbox="232 518 1105 581">» All applicable elements are assessed and treated based on nationally recognized guidelines.<li data-bbox="232 598 1105 661">» The patient and/or their representative, as applicable, was included in the plan of care. <p data-bbox="154 680 505 707">Quality Measure Benchmark</p> <p data-bbox="154 724 1036 787">Review the last twelve months of the stroke center’s data and verify that the quality measure benchmarks are achieved for.</p> <ul data-bbox="173 806 889 1020" style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="173 806 889 833">■ SM-1 Venous Thromboembolism (VTE) Prophylaxis<li data-bbox="173 850 889 877">■ SM-2 Discharged on Antithrombotic Therapy<li data-bbox="173 894 889 921">■ SM-3 Anticoagulation Therapy for Atrial Fibrillation /Flutter<li data-bbox="173 938 889 966">■ SM-5 Antithrombotic Therapy by End of Day 2<li data-bbox="173 982 889 1010">■ SM-6 Discharged on Statin Medication <th data-bbox="1156 113 1481 2003"><p data-bbox="1195 153 1268 180">Notes</p></th> | <p data-bbox="1195 153 1268 180">Notes</p> |
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02.02.04 REHABILITATION

☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

| STANDARD | Notes |
|--|-------|
| <p>The patient's rehabilitation needs are evaluated, and therapy services are available to be incorporated into the plan of care.</p> <p>REQUIRED ELEMENTS</p> <p>Studies demonstrate that initiation of rehabilitation within 48 hours contributes to improved functional outcomes in patients diagnosed with acute stroke. The following therapy services are available for treatment of patients seven days a week when needed, at an intensity commensurate with anticipated benefit and tolerance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Physical therapy.■ Speech/language therapy.■ Occupational therapy.■ Other, as clinically indicated. <p>The following specialties are made available as needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Social worker.■ Psychologist.■ Other, as clinically indicated. <p>Patient care protocols outline the sequence and timeline for the initial physical therapy, speech therapy, and occupational therapy evaluations. The physical therapist performs the patient's initial physical rehabilitation and as per clinical needs assessment, includes occupational, speech or language therapy.</p> <p>All patients are assessed for rehabilitation services for their activities of daily living, communication abilities, and functional mobility prior to discharge. A Modified Rankin Score is assessed for patients who received an intravenous or intraarterial thrombolytic. These findings are incorporated into the patient's discharge plan.</p> <p>SURVEY PROCEDURE</p> <p>Source of evidence for compliance: Observation and Document Review</p> <p>Verify, at minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Policies and protocols include all required elements.■ Staffing is consistent with the required therapies.■ Medical record documentation indicates rehabilitation needs were assessed and met consistent with policies and protocols.■ Specialty service providers are available as needed. <p>Quality Measure Benchmark</p> <p>Review the last twelve months of the stroke center's data and verify that the quality measure benchmark is achieved for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ SM-10 Assessed for Rehabilitation■ SMA-10 Modified Rankin at Discharge | |

02.02.05 DISCHARGE COORDINATION

☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

| STANDARD | Notes |
|--|-------|
| <p>The discharge plan is initiated as soon as possible after admission. As changes in the patient's condition and needs evolve, the discharge plan is reassessed and updated to address those changes, including consideration of functional status, cognitive ability, and family support.</p> | |
| REQUIRED ELEMENTS | |
| <p>Patients must be evaluated for their readiness for discharge. Consideration is given to their ability to receive required on-going care in the pre-hospital environment, or they must be offered a range of options to consider for post-hospital care. Where possible, the patient and/or their representative is involved in this discussion.</p> <p>The discharge plan is continuously updated based on changes in the patient's needs.</p> <p>Discharge evaluation includes the assessment for rehabilitative services, social issues, depression and anxiety.</p> <p>The patient's and/or their representative's verbalized understanding of the discharge instructions is assessed and documented in the patient record.</p> <p>The hospital is responsible for making appointments with the appropriate provider for follow-up clinical visits and tests after hospitalization. These appointments must be communicated, in writing, to the patient/patient representative at the time of discharge.</p> <p>Internal/external referrals may include (but are not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Outpatient therapy/services such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy.■ Home care services.■ Acute rehabilitation/vocational rehabilitation.■ Community support groups and associations.■ Mental/behavioral health services.■ Skilled nursing/sub-acute care.■ Palliative care.■ Respite care.■ Primary care provider for specialty care assessment and monitoring. <p>Discharge planning policy defines the follow-up process and time frame. Follow up phone calls are made to the patient after discharge. The calls are made by a qualified staff member (e.g., RN) with the experience, knowledge, and training to recognize potential medical issues.</p> | |

| | |
|--|-------|
| <div data-bbox="149 155 386 182" data-label="Section-Header">SURVEY PROCEDURE</div> <p>Source of evidence for compliance: Interview and Document Review</p> <p>Verify, at minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The medical record includes a discharge plan created on admission and updated as needed. ■ Discharge-related documentation is consistent with requirements and protocols/policies. ■ The patient/patient representative was included in the discharge planning process and informed of their choices. | Notes |
|--|-------|

02.02.06 PATIENT AND PATIENT REPRESENTATIVE EDUCATION

☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

| | |
|---|-------|
| <div data-bbox="149 718 276 743" data-label="Section-Header">STANDARD</div> <p>The patient care protocols incorporate education for the patient and/or their representative through each phase of care.</p> <div data-bbox="149 873 389 898" data-label="Section-Header">REQUIRED ELEMENTS</div> <p>Stroke education material is provided to patients and documented in the medical record. For situations that inhibit adequate or appropriate patient education, documentation of reason(s) must be evident in the patient's record. When appropriate, the patient representative should receive all required education.</p> <p>Current evidence-based education includes (but is not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Warning signs, symptoms, and response, including calling 911. ■ Recognizing and managing complications. ■ Post-discharge instructions and follow-up appointments. ■ Medications prescribed at discharge and importance of adherence. ■ Risk factors and lifestyle modifications based on individual patient's need, including tobacco use cessation, if applicable. ■ Community support groups. <div data-bbox="149 1520 386 1545" data-label="Section-Header">SURVEY PROCEDURE</div> <p>Source of evidence for compliance: Interview and Document Review</p> <p>Verify, at minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Protocols address patient education requirements. ■ Education materials provided to patient/representative. ■ Medical record documentation is consistent with policies and protocols. ■ Patient/representative understanding of education provided. <p>Quality Measure Benchmark</p> <p>Review the last twelve months of the stroke center's data and verify that the quality measure benchmark is achieved for SM-8 Stroke Education.</p> | Notes |
|---|-------|

Clinical Functions: Responsive Care Systems

02.03.01 EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (EMS)

☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

STANDARD

The Stroke Program has established a relationship with the community emergency medical services.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS

Emergency medical services play a key role in the timely recognition, treatment, transfer, and outcomes of stroke patients. EMS providers establish lines of communication with the hospital to provide them with early notification of incoming patients with symptoms of stroke.

Regional systems of stroke care should be developed and identify Comprehensive, Thrombectomy, Primary, and Stroke Ready Programs to and among which rapid transport can be arranged when needed.

A document of cooperation between the Stroke Program and the EMS is in place. This document addresses:

- The written plan for transporting and receiving patients with stroke symptoms via the EMS system. (Refer to applicable state limitations on transit notifications.)
- A priority system for the rapid dispatch of EMS ambulances and crew in response to stroke patients, to minimize transport times.
- Interagency collaboration for development and review of clinical guidelines relative to evaluation, identification, and initial EMS management of patients presenting with symptoms of acute stroke.
- Adoption of a prehospital stroke assessment form such as the National Institutes of Health Stroke Scale, the Los Angeles Prehospital Stroke Screen (LAPSS), or the Cincinnati Prehospital Stroke Scale.
- Transportation to the closest healthcare facility capable of administering thrombolytics when stroke is suspected, or a positive stroke assessment made.
- Criteria for the hospital to be on diversion and unable to accept patients.
- Communication with the stroke center to alert and activate the emergency department/stroke team for incoming patients.
- Management of patients while in transit from one facility to another, post-thrombolytic administration.

The thrombectomy stroke center offers EMS stroke training at least once a year. Training may be co-sponsored with other healthcare organizations in the community. Training includes, but is not limited to:

- Identification of stroke patients using a standardized assessment tool.
- Conditions that mimic acute stroke symptoms and management of acute care needs while in transit.
- Clinical communication between the EMS and the hospital emergency department regarding potential stroke patients and ETA.

Notes

| REQUIRED ELEMENTS (CONTINUED) | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Thrombolytic eligibility, such as last time known well (LTKW) within the last 4.5 hours, CT scan negative for bleed, diagnosis of ischemic stroke by physician. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Management of patients in transit during or post-thrombolytic administration which includes, but is not limited to, neuro checks for changes in neurological status and vital sign assessment. |

SURVEY PROCEDURE

Source of evidence for compliance: **Observation and Document Review**

Verify, at minimum:

- Documentation of cooperation for all required elements.
- Collaboration on the development and review of clinical guidelines and education.
- One EMS educational activity is conducted and evaluated every year.
- EMS provides prehospital notification to the hospital of a suspected stroke patient.
- Assessment and care provided during transport is consistent with written transport plan/document of cooperation.
- Medical records document that a pre-hospital stroke assessment tool is used and the LTKW is documented by first responders, including EMS.

Notes

02.03.02 CLINICAL DETERIORATION

☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

| STANDARD | Notes |
|--|-------|
| <p>The Stroke Program establishes a system for recognizing and managing clinical deterioration in patients.</p> | |
| REQUIRED ELEMENTS | |
| <p>Patients whose clinical symptoms are deteriorating are identified and timely action is taken to escalate care needs.</p> <p>A written policy or protocol is developed, and staff are trained to recognize and manage clinical deterioration in patients. The policy/protocol includes, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Signs, symptoms, and elements of deterioration, including neurological changes.■ Neurological and physiological parameters including heart rate/rhythm, blood pressure, oxygenation, respirations, temperature, and blood glucose.■ Process to activate the rapid response team.■ Patient monitoring including who, what, how, frequency, and type of monitoring. The process for recording and responding to changes accordingly must be included.■ Transfer process for escalation of care needs (internal and external transfers). | |
| SURVEY PROCEDURE | |
| <p>Source of evidence for compliance: Interview and Document Review</p> <p>Verify, at minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Written policy and protocol(s) for recognition and management of clinical deterioration include all required elements.■ Staff knowledge of policy and protocol(s). | |

02.03.03 RAPID STROKE RESPONSE SYSTEM

☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

STANDARD

The program has a rapid stroke response team that is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS

The acute stroke response team members are identified by the hospital but at minimum should include a physician and a nurse.

A written policy defines:

- A list of rapid response stroke team members, their role (according to scope of practice), and their level of accessibility (bedside or telephone) including on-call and staffing requirements.
- The process for activating a stroke code. The stroke alert window should be such that the patient can receive acute interventions as soon as possible, and up until 24 hours since last time known well (LTKW), in order to treat large vessel occlusion (LVO) stroke patients.
- The method used for team notification, e.g., pagers, overhead alert, phones.
- The time frames defined for physician and stroke team arrival to a rapid stroke response code. Time frames align with evidence-based guidelines and outcomes, unless otherwise specified by state regulation. Inpatient physicians may respond by telemedicine or phone call.

Hospitals can adjust the response times for the physician and stroke team to meet door-to-needle (DTN) times. The AHA Target: Stroke Phase III Suggested Time Interval Goals for door to physician and stroke team are:

- » 30 minute DTN Goal: (SM-12-C)
 - Door-to-physician ≤2.5 minutes
 - Door-to-stroke team ≤5 minutes
- » 45 minute DTN GOAL: (SM-12B)
 - Door-to-physician ≤5 minutes
 - Door-to-stroke team ≤10 minutes
- » 60 minute DTN GOAL: (SM-12A)
 - Door-to-physician ≤10 minutes
 - Door-to-stroke team ≤15 minutes

- Patient care processes.
- Consultation with a neurologist, neurosurgeon, or neuro-interventionalist privileged to diagnose and treat stroke (may include telemedicine access) within the hospital's defined time frames for acute stroke rapid response activation to meet the stroke performance metrics.

Note: This standard is intended to address those patients who present to the hospital with symptoms of acute stroke and in-house patients for whom the acute stroke response team is called to assess and intervene.

Notes

| <div data-bbox="152 159 1118 201">SURVEY PROCEDURE</div> <p data-bbox="152 226 1016 254">Source of evidence for compliance: Observation and Document Review</p> <p data-bbox="152 273 391 300">Verify, at minimum:</p> <ul data-bbox="172 319 1066 510" style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="172 319 745 346">■ Written policies include all required elements.<li data-bbox="172 365 998 426">■ Medical record documentation is consistent with requirements and consistent with policies/protocols.<li data-bbox="172 445 1066 510">■ Personnel files of the rapid response team members reflect qualifications consistent with facility protocols or job descriptions. <p data-bbox="152 527 503 554">Quality Measure Benchmark</p> <p data-bbox="152 571 1034 632">Review the last twelve months of the stroke center's data and verify that the quality measure benchmark is achieved for SM-13 Stroke Team Arrival.</p> | <p data-bbox="1195 155 1268 182">Notes</p> |
|---|--|
|---|--|

Support Functions: Staffing Infrastructure

03.00.01 NURSES, ADVANCED PRACTICE NURSES, AND PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS

☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

| STANDARD | Notes |
|--|-------|
| <p>The thrombectomy center has nurses, advanced practice nurses, and physician assistants appropriate to the scope of services offered.</p> | |
| REQUIRED ELEMENTS | |
| <p>A supportive staffing infrastructure is demonstrated through the availability of an adequate number of qualified staff to provide rapid diagnosis and treatment of patients. Hospital and stroke specific protocols identify core staffing needs to support patient care. Patient needs and the nursing staff to meet those needs are continuously evaluated. Staffing schedules reflect the number and qualifications of staff adequate to meet variations in volume, complexity, and intensity of services across all departments delivering stroke care.</p> <p>Note: Refer to staffing plan requirements in the following standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 02.00.01 Emergency department ■ 02.00.02 Specialty unit: Stroke ■ 02.00.03 Specialty unit: Intensive care ■ 02.00.07 Surgical staffing <p>Nursing staff are competent (as applicable to services provided) in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Hemodynamic assessment and monitoring. ■ Neurologic assessment and monitoring. ■ Nursing care of patients receiving thrombolytic therapy. ■ Use of and management of intravenous vasopressor, antihypertensive, and positive inotropic agents. ■ Management of intracranial pressure. ■ Respiratory management using invasive and non-invasive ventilation. ■ Malignant ischemic stroke with craniectomy. ■ Management of hemorrhagic stroke (intracerebral and subarachnoid hemorrhage). ■ Ventriculostomy devices. ■ Thrombolytic preparation. <p>Nursing personnel files include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Qualifications/experience/education. ■ Documentation of relevant continuing education. ■ Current licensure, where applicable. ■ Job description. | |

REQUIRED ELEMENTS (CONTINUED)

- Criminal history background check, based on hospital policy and applicable laws.
- Annual appraisal and evaluation of competencies.

Advanced practice nurses and physician assistants privileged by the hospital offer (when applicable):

- Consultation and support for care delivery, including assessments and management of care.
- Participation in the development and delivery of education for clinicians.

Note: For APRN and PA credentialing file requirements see standard 01.01.02 Medical Staffing.

SURVEY PROCEDURE

Source of evidence for compliance: **Observation, Interview, and Document Review**

Verify, at minimum:

- Staffing protocols and schedules are in place and correlate to the number and acuity for stroke patients.
- Through review of assignment mechanisms and interviews with managers and staff that staffing protocols are implemented and followed.
- Personnel files indicating appropriate licensure, credentials, and qualifications for staff delivering stroke care.
- Nurse personnel files include all required elements.

Notes

03.00.02 ANCILLARY/SUPPORT SERVICES
☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant
STANDARD

The ancillary/support staffing of the Stroke Program is appropriate to the scope of services offered.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS

A supportive infrastructure is demonstrated through the availability of qualified ancillary/supporting staff in adequate numbers to treat patients within the appropriate time frames.

The ancillary/support staff is knowledgeable in management and care of acute stroke/cerebrovascular disease specialty practices and techniques.

Ancillary/support staff includes:

- Laboratory and radiology technicians.
- Endovascular technicians.
- Rehabilitation professionals (physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech/language pathologists), contracted or employed.
- Others, e.g., social workers, case managers (who may be social workers or employed nurses).

All ancillary/support staff participating in assessment, care, and treatment of acute stroke patients, require:

- Current licensure, as applicable.
- Documented qualification/experience/education.
- Orientation to the organization and its stroke policies and protocols.
- Job description.
- Criminal history background check, based on hospital policy and applicable laws.
- Annual performance appraisal and evaluation of competencies.
- Education specific to acute stroke/cerebrovascular disease. (See standard 03.00.03)

SURVEY PROCEDURE

Source of evidence for compliance: **Observation, Interview, and Document Review**

Verify, at minimum:

- Employee records for Stroke Program staff include all required items.
- Staff education and competencies in Stroke Program protocols.
- Staffing ensures availability and accessibility according to the requirements.

Notes

03.00.03 ORIENTATION AND EDUCATION

☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

STANDARD

Education needs are identified by the Stroke Program and incorporated into an annual education calendar.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS

The professional staff, including physicians, fellows, nurses, physician assistants, and ancillary/support staff, receive annual education in order to remain current with advancements in the treatment of acute stroke.

- Education must be specifically related to diagnosis/assessment and management of acute stroke/cerebrovascular disease (may be protocol/competency driven or otherwise specified by the Stroke Program).

Note: Specialty education credit is NOT given for Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support training.

- Physicians are educated in IV thrombolytic protocols including indication, monitoring and education for patient/patient representative.
- Annual competency in National Institutes of Health Stroke Scale (NIHSS) must be incorporated into the education program for those performing the NIHSS assessment. Providers and nurses who do not perform the NIHSS assessment receive annual education.
- Applicable staff have orientation and training to ensure competence in neurosurgical or neurointerventional care and procedures.
- The hospital monitors staff education and competency.
 - » At least 80% of staff in each category must have completed the education requirements.

| Team role | CME/CEU or equivalent hours |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Stroke Program medical director | 8 |
| Identified core Stroke Program leaders | 8 |
| All acute stroke rapid response team members | 8 |
| Doctors, nurses and physician assistants who work in: ED/stroke unit/neuro-ICU/stroke step-down/endovascular laboratory | 8 |
| Other ancillary/support staff who manage stroke patient care (PT, OT, speech therapy, case management, social work) | 2 |
| Endovascular technicians | 1 |
| Laboratory and radiology technicians | Orientation to Stroke Protocols |

Notes

| SURVEY PROCEDURE | Notes |
|--|-------|
| <p>Source of evidence for compliance: Interview and Document Review</p> <p>Verify, at minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Identified educational needs.■ Education program content meets the requirements.■ Annual calendar of education activities.■ Physician education on thrombolytic protocols.■ Personnel/credential files reflect completion of required annual stroke education and CME/CEU requirements. <p>Note: Education documented as scheduled, that has not yet occurred, may be considered when assessing compliance.</p> | |

Support Functions: Integrated QAPI and Risk Management System

03.01.01 QUALITY AND PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT

☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

STANDARD

An ongoing, effective quality plan is in place to monitor and manage clinical risks and quality improvement activities specific to the Stroke Program.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS

A process is in place to identify, measure, analyze, and track quality indicators, medical errors, and adverse events in the care of acute stroke patients. Each incident is an opportunity for education and learning for the individual and area of involvement.

This process includes development and review of an annual stroke QAPI plan that addresses:

- Progress towards internal and external benchmarks.
- Progress towards at least two patient care QI activities.
- Stroke measures and indicators.
- Adverse events/outcomes.
- Compliance with care protocols.
- Stroke patient satisfaction, complaint, and grievances.
- Outcomes from the peer review process, if quality improvement needs are identified.
- Evaluation of contracted services that support the Stroke Program.

The thrombectomy stroke center has a multidisciplinary stroke QAPI committee. The program assigns the committee leader and membership. The scope and functions of the QAPI committee are defined in writing and there is a reporting/accountability mechanism linked to the hospital-wide QAPI plan.

- This committee reviews and monitors stroke care quality benchmarks, indicators, evidence-based practices and outcomes. Gaps in care and performance measures below benchmarks are identified and specific interventions are initiated to address these issues.
- Meeting participants include the Stroke Program medical and clinical directors, prehospital care providers, stroke care coordinators (when possible), stroke/provider educators, neurologists, ED physicians and personnel, and others including neurointerventionists or endovascular neurosurgery team members, as applicable to services provided.

Notes

| REQUIRED ELEMENTS (CONTINUED) |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Meetings are held quarterly, at minimum.■ Meeting minutes and an attendance roster are maintained and available for review.■ Minutes reflect review, analysis, trending, and actions taken for performance measures meeting benchmark. <p>The Stroke Program selects at least two quality improvement (QI) activities each year that focus on improving patient care, improving outcomes, and/or minimizing delays in care. Corrective actions taken as a result of the QI activities are evaluated for effectiveness. When re-measurement indicates the corrective actions have not met the desired result, additional corrective actions and re-measurement occur until the desired result is achieved.</p> |

| SURVEY PROCEDURE |
|---|
| <p>Source of evidence for compliance: Interview and Document Review</p> <p>Verify, at minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ An annual QAPI plan with established internal and external benchmarks for comparison is approved by the stroke QAPI committee.■ The stroke QAPI committee meets quarterly and demonstrates review of data to identify performance that falls below the benchmark. Plans are implemented to improve performance to meet the required benchmarks.■ The committee selects at least two improvement activities each year.■ The plan addresses all quality data elements listed and reflects action taken to improve performance where indicated.■ A process for reviewing the care of stroke patients and a formal process and structure for peer review are in place. <p>Note: Stroke measures and indicators that fall below the benchmark are scored under the applicable standard.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ If a measure falls out as an isolated event, it is not cited.■ If a measure falls out three months in a row, or more than four months in a year, it is cited under the related standard.■ If the stroke program is unable to sustain improvement three or more quarters in a row above the benchmark, it is cited under both the related standard and 03.01.01. <p>Exclusion: Improvement must be sustainable. If it is maintained up to three consecutive quarters prior to the onsite visit, the hospital will not be cited as non-compliant for the related standard or 03.01.01, i.e., both standards are scored as compliant.</p> |

Notes

03.01.02 DATA COLLECTION

☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

| STANDARD | Notes |
|---|-------|
| <p>There is a clinical data management process in place.</p> <p>REQUIRED ELEMENTS</p> <p>The program demonstrates that care provided for patients meets the standards of practice and hospital policy for care of acute stroke.</p> <p>A clinical data management/utilization review process defines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Type of data collected, including but not limited to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Complication rates, as applicable to services provided, e.g.:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Placement of intracranial pressure transducer.○ Placement of ventriculostomy.» Infection rates.» Mortality rates from interventional procedures.» Adverse events.■ How data are collected.■ How data are analyzed.■ How data are reported.■ How the data are used to improve patient care. <p>Stroke data are aggregated, trended, and analyzed to identify opportunities to improve complication rates, post procedure stroke mortality rates, and adverse events. There is a process in place to provide timely feedback and recommendations for improvement</p> <p>Corrective actions are documented and reviewed to measure sustainability.</p> <p>SURVEY PROCEDURE</p> <p>Source of evidence for compliance: Interview and Document Review</p> <p>Verify, at minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ There is a data management/utilization review process in place.■ Meeting minutes and quality reports indicate data collection, trending, analysis, reporting, and actions taken if needed. <p>Quality Measure Benchmark</p> <p>Review the last 12 months of the stroke center’s data and verify that the quality measure benchmark is achieved for SMA-5 Hemorrhagic Transformation (Overall Rate).</p> | |

03.01.03 CLINICAL MEASURES

☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

STANDARD

The Stroke Program collects data on performance measures and indicators that are incorporated into the QAPI plan and submitted to ACHC.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS

Thrombectomy Stroke Center Performance Measures (see pages 60-83).

| | | | |
|--------|---|--------|---|
| SM-1 | VTE Prophylaxis | SM-13 | Stroke Team Arrival |
| SM-2 | Antithrombotics at Discharge | SM-14 | Laboratory Result |
| SM-3 | Anticoagulant Therapy Atrial Fibrillation/Flutter | SM-15 | Neuroimaging Studies |
| SM-4 | Thrombolytic Therapy within 4.5 hours | SMA-1 | NIHSS for Ischemic Stroke |
| SM-5 | Antithrombotic Therapy by End of Day 2 | SMA-5 | Hemorrhagic Transformation (overall rate) |
| SM-6 | Discharge on Statin Medication | SMA-8 | Thrombolysis in Cerebral Infarction (TICI) |
| SM-8 | Stroke Education | SMA-9 | Door-to-Skin Puncture Time |
| SM-10 | Rehabilitation Assessment | SMA-10 | Modified Rankin at Discharge |
| SM-11 | Dysphagia screening | SMA-11 | Timeliness of Reperfusion from Hospital Arrival |
| SM-12A | Door-to-Needle Time, 60 minutes | SMA-12 | Timeliness of Reperfusion from Skin Puncture |
| SM-12B | Door-to-Needle Time, 45 Minutes | SPG-1A | Door-to-First Pass/Device Time, 90 Minutes for Direct ED Arrival |
| SM-12C | Door-to-Needle Time, 30 Minutes | SPG-1B | Door-to-First pass/Device Time, 60 minutes for Hospital Transfers |

Note: If the hospital submits data to GWTG/PCR, it may submit the GWTG/PCR report plus the number of stroke patients per month to ACHC in place of the ACHC data tool.

SURVEY PROCEDURE

Source of evidence for compliance: Interview and Document Review

Verify, at minimum:

- Clinical measures are collected as required.

Note: If the hospital collects and submits all required data, this standard is scored as compliant regardless of specific results.

Notes

Support Functions: Information Management

03.02.01 PATIENT REGISTRY

☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

STANDARD

A registry of all patients who are evaluated and diagnosed with an ischemic stroke, hemorrhagic stroke, or TIA is maintained.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS

A registry of patients is available that includes, but is not limited to:

- Patient identifier.
- Diagnosis.

The Stroke Program documents and tracks at least:

- Time of the initial call from EMS (or other source) of imminent arrival of a patient with acute stroke symptoms.
- Time the acute stroke response team alert was activated (or time of triage if patient presents to the emergency department).
- Time the first acute stroke response team member arrived at the bedside.
- Stroke assessment score (e.g., NIHSS)
- Treatments administered.
- Response to/outcome of treatment including complications.

SURVEY PROCEDURE

Source of evidence for compliance: **Document Review**

Verify, at minimum:

- The registry and other supporting documents address the required elements.

Notes

03.02.02 MEDICAL RECORDS

☐ Compliant ☐ Not Compliant

| STANDARD | Notes |
|--|-------|
| <p>Medical records containing all relevant information regarding patient care are retained and securely stored.</p> | |
| REQUIRED ELEMENTS | |
| <p>“Medical records” includes written documents, computerized electronic information, radiology film and scans, laboratory reports, videos, audio recordings, and other forms of information regarding the condition of a patient.</p> <p>Medical records are retained in compliance with internal policies and regulatory authority requirements.</p> <p>Legible, complete medical records reflect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Dated and timed orders.■ Content required by hospital policy.■ Compliance with policy for security and retention. | |
| SURVEY PROCEDURE | |
| <p>Source of evidence for compliance: Document Review</p> <p>Verify, at minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ A medical record policy is in place.■ Medical records are stored appropriately and securely.■ Medical records reflect required content. | |

Thrombectomy Center Performance Measures

| SM-1 | VENOUS THROMBOEMBOLISM (VTE) PROPHYLAXIS |
|-----------------------|--|
| OTHER IDENTIFIER | GWTG: AHASTR7 |
| BENCHMARK | 85% |
| BACKGROUND | <p>For patients diagnosed with ischemic stroke, ICH or nontraumatic SAH.</p> <p>The measure identifies the percentage who received VTE prophylaxis (including sequential compression stockings and early mobilization), anticoagulant medications (if indicated) the day of/day after admission, or who have documentation regarding contraindication.</p> |
| NUMERATOR INCLUSION | Patients with ischemic stroke, ICH or nontraumatic SAH who received VTE prophylaxis within the day or/day after admission or whose record notes a contraindication. |
| DENOMINATOR INCLUSION | Ischemic stroke, ICH, and nontraumatic SAH patients. |
| EXCLUSIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Patients with Comfort Measures Only documented on the day of or day after hospital arrival. ■ Patients transferred to another facility or who left against medical advice (AMA). ■ Patients admitted for elective carotid intervention. ■ Patients enrolled in clinical trials. ■ Patients under the age of 18. ■ Patients with contraindications to VTE. ■ Patients receiving oral factor Xa. ■ Patients not admitted as inpatients. |
| DATA SOURCE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ED documentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Log of chief complaints » Time of patient presentation » Time of stroke team arrival, discharge diagnoses ■ Progress notes ■ Medication administration record ■ Onset of symptoms for inpatients ■ Neuroimaging results ■ Documented contraindications to administration (if applicable) ■ Documented VTE prophylaxis initiated the day of or the day after inpatient admission ■ Transfer forms |

| SM-2 | ANTITHROMBOTICS AT DISCHARGE |
|-----------------------|--|
| OTHER IDENTIFIER | GWTG: AHASTR2 |
| BENCHMARK | 85% |
| BACKGROUND | <p>For patients diagnosed with ischemic stroke or TIA.</p> <p>This measure identifies the percentage prescribed antithrombotic therapy (anti-platelet and anticoagulants) at hospital discharge.</p> <p>Note: Anticoagulants at doses to prevent venous thromboembolism are insufficient antithrombotic therapy to prevent recurrent ischemic stroke or TIA.</p> |
| NUMERATOR INCLUSION | Patients with ischemic stroke or TIA who were prescribed antithrombotic therapy at hospital discharge. |
| DENOMINATOR INCLUSION | Ischemic stroke and TIA patients |
| EXCLUSIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Patients with a documented reason for not receiving antithrombotic therapy at discharge. ■ Patients transferred to another facility, who left AMA, or who expired. ■ Patients admitted for elective carotid intervention. ■ Patients enrolled in clinical trials. ■ Patients under the age of 18. ■ Patients documented for Comfort Measures Only. ■ Patients discharged to home hospice or to a healthcare facility for hospice care. ■ Patients not admitted as inpatients. |
| DATA SOURCE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Admission data ■ Discharge diagnosis ■ Discharge data ■ Neuroimaging results ■ Documented contraindications to administration (if applicable) ■ Documented prescription for antithrombotic at discharge |

| SM-3 | ANTICOAGULATION THERAPY FOR ATRIAL FIBRILLATION/FLUTTER |
|-----------------------|--|
| OTHER IDENTIFIER | CWTG: AHASTR1, AHASTR73 |
| BENCHMARK | 85% |
| BACKGROUND | <p>For patients diagnosed with ischemic stroke or TIA.</p> <p>When a clinical diagnosis of atrial fibrillation/flutter or persistent or paroxysmal Afib/flutter is present on this admission, this measure identifies the percentage prescribed anticoagulation therapy at hospital discharge.</p> |
| NUMERATOR INCLUSION | All eligible ischemic stroke or TIA patients who received a prescription for an anticoagulant at time of discharge. |
| DENOMINATOR INCLUSION | Ischemic stroke or TIA patients with atrial fibrillation/flutter. |
| EXCLUSIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Patients with a documented contraindication to anticoagulation therapy at discharge. ■ Patients transferred to another facility, who left AMA, or who expired. ■ Patients admitted for elective carotid intervention. ■ Patients enrolled in clinical trials. ■ Patients under the age of 18. ■ Patients documented for Comfort Measures Only. ■ Patients discharged to home hospice or to a health care facility for hospice care. ■ Patients not admitted as inpatients. |
| DATA SOURCE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Admission data ■ Hospitalization data (EKG report, Holter monitor report, rhythm strip with documented interpretation of atrial fibrillation/flutter, transfer sheet) ■ Discharge data ■ ED documentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Log of chief complaints » Time of patient presentation » Time of stroke team arrival, discharge diagnoses ■ Documented onset of symptomology of inpatients ■ Neuroimaging results ■ Documented contraindications to administration (if applicable) ■ Documented prescription for anticoagulant at discharge |

| SM-4 | THROMBOLYTIC THERAPY WITHIN 4.5 HOURS |
|-----------------------|--|
| OTHER IDENTIFIER | CWTG: AHASTR5, AHASTR79 |
| BENCHMARK | 85% |
| BACKGROUND | <p>For patients diagnosed with acute ischemic stroke.</p> <p>This measure identifies the percentage who arrive at this hospital within 3.5 hours (210 minutes) of time last known well and for whom IV thrombolytic therapy was initiated within 4.5 hours (270 minutes) of time last known well or admitted inpatients whose symptoms were discovered within 3.5 hours (210 minutes) and for whom IV thrombolytic therapy was initiated at this hospital within 4.5 hours of time last known well.</p> |
| NUMERATOR INCLUSION | Acute ischemic stroke patients for whom IV thrombolytic was initiated at this hospital within 4.5 hours (270 minutes) of time last known well. |
| DENOMINATOR INCLUSION | ED arrivals of patients with acute ischemic stroke whose time of arrival is within 3.5 hours (210 minutes) of time last known well and inpatient stroke alerts with symptoms discovered within 3.5 hours (210 minutes) of time last known well. |
| EXCLUSIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Time last known well is greater than 3.5 hours from arrival in the emergency department or inpatient stroke alert. ■ Patients with a documented reason for extending or not initiating IV thrombolytic. ■ Patients transferred to another facility or who left AMA. ■ Patients admitted for elective carotid intervention. ■ Patients enrolled in clinical trials. ■ Patients under the age of 18. |
| DATA SOURCE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ED documentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Log of chief complaints » Time of symptom onset » Time of patient presentation » Time of stroke team arrival, discharge diagnoses ■ Progress notes ■ Onset of symptoms for inpatients ■ Neuroimaging results ■ Documented contraindications to administration ■ Documented time of initiation of thrombolytic |

| SM-5 | ANTITHROMBOTIC THERAPY BY END OF DAY 2 |
|-----------------------|--|
| OTHER IDENTIFIER | GWTG: AHASTR3, AHASTR76 |
| BENCHMARK | 85% |
| BACKGROUND | <p>For patients diagnosed with ischemic stroke or TIA.</p> <p>This measure identifies the percentage administered antithrombotic therapy by the end of hospital day 2.</p> <p>Note: Antithrombotic therapy is defined as medication which includes antiplatelets and anticoagulants used in the treatment of ischemic stroke.</p> |
| NUMERATOR INCLUSION | <p>Ischemic stroke and TIA patients who received antithrombotic therapy administered by end of hospital day 2.</p> <p>Note: Count arrival date as hospital day 1. If antithrombotic therapy was administered by 11:59 p.m. on hospital day 2, select yes for this data element.</p> |
| DENOMINATOR INCLUSION | Patients diagnosed with acute ischemic stroke or TIA. |
| EXCLUSIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Patients with a documented contraindication to antithrombotic therapy by end of hospital day 2. ■ Patients with IV or IA thrombolytic therapy administered at this hospital or within 24 hours prior to arrival. ■ Patients transferred to another facility or who left AMA. ■ Patients admitted for elective carotid intervention. ■ Patients enrolled in clinical trials. ■ Patients under the age of 18. ■ Patients documented for Comfort Measures Only on day of or day after arrival (for ED admission) or onset of symptoms (for inpatients). ■ Patients discharged prior to end of hospital day 2. ■ Patients not admitted as inpatient. |
| DATA SOURCE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Admission data ■ ED documentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Log of chief complaints » Time of patient presentation » Time of stroke team arrival, discharge diagnoses ■ Progress notes ■ Medication administration record ■ Medication reconciliation form ■ Onset of symptoms for inpatients ■ Neuroimaging results ■ Documented contraindications to administration (if applicable) ■ Documented time of initiation of thrombolytic |

| SM-6 | DISCHARGE ON STATIN MEDICATION |
|-----------------------|--|
| OTHER IDENTIFIER | GWTC: AHASTR45 |
| BENCHMARK | 85% |
| BACKGROUND | <p>For patients diagnosed with acute ischemic stroke or TIA. This measure identifies the percentage who are prescribed statin medication at hospital discharge.</p> <p>Note: Intensive statin medication is included at discharge for patients with clinical ASCVD who are judged to be very high risk and who are on maximally tolerated LDL-C lowering therapy with LDL-C 70 mg/dL or higher, or a non-HDL-C level of 100 mg/dL or higher. For patients age 75 or younger with clinical ASCVD, high intensity statin therapy is initiated or continued with the aim of achieving a 50% or greater reduction in LDL-C levels. In patients with clinical ASCVD in whom high-intensity statin therapy is contraindicated or who experience statin-associated side effects, moderate-intensity statin therapy should be initiated or continued. If a statin medication is not ordered at discharge, a reason is documented.</p> |
| NUMERATOR INCLUSION | Ischemic stroke and TIA patients prescribed statin medication at hospital discharge. |
| DENOMINATOR INCLUSION | Ischemic stroke and TIA patients |
| EXCLUSIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Patients with allergies to statin medications. ■ Patients with a documented contraindication to statin medication. ■ Patients admitted for elective carotid intervention. ■ Patients transferred to another facility, who left AMA, or who expired. ■ Patients enrolled in clinical trials. ■ Patients under the age of 18. ■ Patients documented for Comfort Measures Only. ■ Patients discharged to home hospice or to a health care facility for hospice care. ■ Patients not admitted as an inpatient. |
| DATA SOURCE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Admission data ■ Consultant notes ■ Emergency department record ■ History and physical ■ Progress notes ■ Physician orders ■ Discharge summary ■ After visit summary ■ Medication reconciliation form ■ Documented contraindications or statin-associated side effects to administration ■ Documented statin prescription at time of discharge |

| SM-8 | STROKE EDUCATION |
|-----------------------|---|
| OTHER IDENTIFIER | GWTC: AHASTR12, AHASTR87 |
| BENCHMARK | 85% |
| BACKGROUND | <p>For patients diagnosed with acute ischemic stroke, ICH, nontraumatic SAH, or TIA (and their caregivers).</p> <p>This measure identifies the percentage who received educational materials during the hospital stay covering activation of an emergency medical system, need for follow-up after discharge, medications prescribed at discharge, risk factors for stroke, and warning signs and symptoms of stroke.</p> |
| NUMERATOR INCLUSION | <p>Ischemic stroke, ICH, nontraumatic SAH, or TIA patients with documentation that they or their caregivers were given educational material inclusive of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Seeking emergency help (EMS). 2. Medical follow-up after discharge. 3. Medications prescribed. 4. Risk factors for stroke 5. Stroke warning signs and symptoms. |
| DENOMINATOR INCLUSION | All ischemic stroke, ICH, nontraumatic SAH, and TIA patients discharged to home. |
| EXCLUSIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Patients admitted for elective carotid intervention. ■ Patients transferred to another facility or who left AMA. ■ Patients enrolled in clinical trials. ■ Patients under the age of 18. ■ Patients documented for Comfort Measures Only. ■ Patient not admitted as inpatient. |
| DATA SOURCE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Admission Data ■ Nursing notes, including discharge note. ■ Progress note ■ Neuroimaging results ■ Discharge diagnosis ■ Discharge summary ■ Discharge instructions ■ Education record ■ Home health referral form |

| SM-10 | REHABILITATION ASSESSMENT |
|-----------------------|---|
| OTHER IDENTIFIER | GWTG: AHASTR11, AHASTR84 |
| BENCHMARK | 85% |
| BACKGROUND | <p>For patients diagnosed with acute ischemic stroke, ICH, or nontraumatic SAH. This measure identifies the percentage who were assessed for appropriate rehabilitation services.</p> <p>Note: Initial physical rehabilitation must be conducted by a physical therapist, and as per clinical need assessments, includes occupational therapy or speech and language therapy.</p> |
| NUMERATOR INCLUSION | Ischemic stroke, ICH or nontraumatic SAH patients assessed for rehabilitation services. |
| DENOMINATOR INCLUSION | Ischemic stroke, ICH or nontraumatic SAH patients. |
| EXCLUSIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Patients admitted for elective carotid intervention. ■ Patients transferred to another facility, who left AMA, or who expired. ■ Patients documented for Comfort Measures Only. ■ Patients enrolled in clinical trials. ■ Patients under the age of 18. ■ Patients discharged to home hospice or to a healthcare facility for hospice care. ■ Patients not admitted as inpatient. |
| DATA SOURCE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Admission data ■ Consultation note ■ Progress note ■ Therapy notes ■ Discharge diagnosis ■ Discharge summary ■ Rehabilitation record ■ Neuroimaging results ■ Documentation that initial physical rehabilitation evaluation was completed by a member of the rehabilitation team (MD/DO/APRN/PA/KT/PT/OT/SLP/PsychD) |

| SM-11 | DYSPHAGIA SCREENING |
|-----------------------|---|
| OTHER IDENTIFIER | GWTC: AHASTR8, AHASTR75 |
| BENCHMARK | 85% |
| BACKGROUND | <p>For patients diagnosed with acute ischemic stroke, ICH, and nontraumatic SAH.</p> <p>This measure identifies the percentage who received dysphagia screening using an evidence-based bedside testing protocol approved by the hospital prior to receiving anything by mouth.</p> <p>Note: The dysphagia screen may be performed by RN.</p> |
| NUMERATOR INCLUSION | Patients who received dysphagia screening before receiving anything by mouth. |
| DENOMINATOR INCLUSION | All patients with acute ischemic stroke, ICH, and nontraumatic SAH. |
| EXCLUSIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ TIA patients excluded if clinically indicated. ■ Patients who did not receive anything by mouth throughout the hospital stay. ■ Patients admitted for elective carotid intervention. ■ Patients who left AMA. ■ Patients enrolled in clinical trials. ■ Patients under the age of 18. ■ Patients not admitted as inpatient. |
| DATA SOURCE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Admission data ■ ED documentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Log of chief complaints » Time of symptom onset » Time of patient presentation » Time of stroke team arrival ■ Onset of symptoms in inpatients ■ Neuroimaging results ■ Documented dysphagia screening completed prior to taking anything by mouth ■ Discharge diagnosis ■ Medication administration record ■ Hospitalization data ■ Speech pathologist consultation or progress note ■ Intake/output records |

| SM-12A | DOOR-TO-NEEDLE TIME, 60 MINUTES |
|-----------------------|---|
| OTHER IDENTIFIER | GWTG: AHASTR13 |
| BENCHMARK | 85% |
| BACKGROUND | <p>For acute ischemic stroke patients.</p> <p>This measure identifies the percentage who received IV thrombolytics during the hospital stay with a time from hospital arrival to initiation of therapy (door-to-needle) of 60 minutes or less.</p> <p><i>Disposition status: ED</i></p> |
| NUMERATOR INCLUSION | Acute ischemic stroke patients for whom intravenous thrombolytic therapy was initiated within 60 minutes of hospital arrival. |
| DENOMINATOR INCLUSION | All acute ischemic stroke patients who received intravenous thrombolytic therapy. |
| EXCLUSIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Patients whose stroke occurred after hospital arrival. ■ Patients transferred from an inpatient or outpatient department of another facility. ■ Patients who did not receive thrombolytic therapy within 60 minutes and had a reason for delay documented by a physician/advanced practice nurse/physician assistant such as social, religious, or initial refusal, hypertension requiring aggressive control with intravenous medications, inability to confirm patient eligibility, or further diagnostic evaluation to confirm stroke for patients with hypoglycemia (blood glucose <50); seizures, or major metabolic disorders, or management of concomitant emergent/acute conditions such as cardiopulmonary arrest, respiratory failure requiring intubation), or investigational or experimental protocol for thrombolysis. ■ Patients enrolled in clinical trials. ■ Patients less than 18 years of age. |
| DATA SOURCE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Discharges with principal diagnosis code for acute ischemic stroke ■ Emergency department record ■ Progress notes ■ Medication administration records ■ IV flow sheets ■ Neuroimaging results ■ Documented contraindications to administration ■ Documented time of initiation of thrombolytic |

| SM-12B | DOOR-TO-NEEDLE TIME, 45 MINUTES |
|-----------------------|---|
| OTHER IDENTIFIER | GWTG: AHASTR49 |
| BENCHMARK | 75% |
| BACKGROUND | <p>For acute ischemic stroke patients.</p> <p>This measure identifies the percentage who received IV thrombolytics during the hospital stay with a time from hospital arrival to initiation of therapy (door-to-needle) of 45 minutes or less.</p> <p><i>Disposition status: ED</i></p> |
| NUMERATOR INCLUSION | Acute ischemic stroke patients for whom intravenous thrombolytic therapy was initiated within 45 minutes of hospital arrival. |
| DENOMINATOR INCLUSION | All acute ischemic stroke patients who received intravenous thrombolytic therapy. |
| EXCLUSIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Patients whose stroke occurred after hospital arrival. ■ Patients transferred from an inpatient or outpatient department of another facility. ■ Patients who did not receive thrombolytic therapy within 45 minutes and had a reason for delay documented by a physician/advanced practice nurse/physician assistant such as social, religious, or initial refusal, hypertension requiring aggressive control with intravenous medications, inability to confirm patient eligibility, or further diagnostic evaluation to confirm stroke for patients with hypoglycemia (blood glucose <50); seizures, or major metabolic disorders, or management of concomitant emergent/acute conditions such as cardiopulmonary arrest, respiratory failure requiring intubation), or investigational or experimental protocol for thrombolysis. ■ Patients enrolled in clinical trials. ■ Patients less than 18 years of age. |
| DATA SOURCE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Discharges with principal diagnosis code for acute ischemic stroke ■ Emergency department record ■ Progress Notes ■ Medication Administration Records ■ IV flow sheets ■ Neuroimaging results ■ Documented contraindications to administration ■ Documented time of initiation of thrombolytic |

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| SM-12C | Door-to-Needle Time, 30 Minutes |
| OTHER IDENTIFIER | GWTG: AHASTR48 |
| BENCHMARK | 50% |
| BACKGROUND | <p>For acute ischemic stroke patients.</p> <p>This measure identifies the percentage who received IV thrombolytics during the hospital stay with a time from hospital arrival to initiation of therapy (door-to-needle) of 30 minutes or less.</p> <p><i>Disposition status: ED</i></p> |
| NUMERATOR INCLUSION | Acute ischemic stroke patients for whom intravenous thrombolytic therapy was initiated in 30 minutes of hospital arrival. |
| DENOMINATOR INCLUSION | All acute ischemic stroke patients who received intravenous thrombolytic therapy. |
| EXCLUSIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Patients whose stroke occurred after hospital arrival. ■ Patients transferred from an inpatient or outpatient department of another facility. ■ Patients who did not receive thrombolytic therapy within 30 minutes and had a reason for delay documented by a physician/advanced practice nurse/physician assistant such as social, religious, or initial refusal, hypertension requiring aggressive control with intravenous medications, inability to confirm patient eligibility, or further diagnostic evaluation to confirm stroke for patients with hypoglycemia (blood glucose <50); seizures, or major metabolic disorders, or management of concomitant emergent/acute conditions such as cardiopulmonary arrest, respiratory failure requiring intubation), or investigational or experimental protocol for thrombolysis. ■ Patients enrolled in clinical trials. ■ Patients less than 18 years of age. |
| DATA SOURCE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Discharges with principal diagnosis code for acute ischemic stroke ■ Emergency department record ■ Progress notes ■ Medication administration records ■ IV flow sheets ■ Neuroimaging results ■ Documented contraindications to administration ■ Documented time of initiation of thrombolytic |

| SM-13 | STROKE TEAM ARRIVAL |
|-----------------------|---|
| BENCHMARK | 85% |
| BACKGROUND | <p>For patients diagnosed with acute ischemic stroke, ICH, nontraumatic SAH, and TIA.</p> <p>This measure identifies the percentage for whom the time between presentation of stroke symptoms (in the ED) or onset of symptoms (for inpatients) and the arrival of the stroke team to the bedside is within the time frame defined by the hospital to adequately meet stroke performance metrics..</p> <p><i>Disposition status: ED, OBS, Inpatient</i></p> |
| NUMERATOR INCLUSION | Ischemic stroke, ICH, nontraumatic SAH, and TIA patients for whom the stroke team responded to the bedside within the time frame defined by the hospital for ED arrivals or for inpatient onset of symptoms. |
| DENOMINATOR INCLUSION | Patients with a primary discharge diagnosis of ischemic stroke, ICH or nontraumatic SAH, or TIA who either present to the ED with acute stroke symptoms or are inpatients who develop clinical stroke symptoms during hospitalization. |
| EXCLUSIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Cancellation of stroke code. ■ Patients who do not meet criteria as per hospital protocols. ■ Patients who left AMA. ■ Patients under the age of 18. |
| DATA SOURCE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Admission data ■ Stroke alert data ■ ED documentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Log of chief complaints » Onset of symptoms » Time of patient presentation » Time of stroke team arrival, discharge diagnoses ■ Documented onset of symptoms in inpatients ■ Neuroimaging results |

| SM-14 | LABORATORY RESULT |
|-----------------------|---|
| BENCHMARK | 85% |
| BACKGROUND | <p>For patients with a primary discharge diagnosis of ischemic stroke, hemorrhagic stroke or TIA.</p> <p>This measure identifies the percentage for whom stroke lab testing turnaround times (TAT)* were within 45 minutes of ED arrival or onset of inpatient symptoms.</p> <p><i>Disposition status: ED, OBS, Inpatient</i></p> <p>*The lab TAT metrics are for: point of care glucose testing; INR, PT, PTT (if indicated), and other labs as per stroke protocol/physician order.</p> |
| NUMERATOR INCLUSION | Ischemic stroke, hemorrhagic stroke, and TIA patients whose stroke laboratory testing was completed within 45 minutes of arrival in the ED or onset of symptoms for inpatients. |
| DENOMINATOR INCLUSION | Patients with primary discharge diagnosis of ischemic stroke, hemorrhagic stroke or TIA who present to the ED with acute stroke symptoms or develop clinical stroke symptoms as inpatients. |
| EXCLUSIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Laboratory results indicating cell lysis/other erroneous results. ■ Patients who do not meet criteria of stroke symptoms as per hospital protocols. ■ Patients who left AMA, discontinued care, or who expired. ■ Patients under the age of 18. |
| DATA SOURCE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ambulance/EMS record ■ ED documentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Log of chief complaints » Onset of symptoms » Time of patient presentation » Time of stroke team arrival ■ Documented onset of symptoms for inpatients ■ Neuroimaging results ■ Laboratory orders and results ■ Nursing flow sheet ■ Nursing assessment ■ Discharge diagnosis ■ Transfer sheet |

| SM-15 | NEUROIMAGING STUDIES |
|-----------------------|---|
| BENCHMARK | 85% |
| BACKGROUND | <p>For patients with a discharge diagnosis of ischemic hemorrhagic, hemorrhagic stroke or TIA.</p> <p>This measure identifies the percentage for whom neuroimaging (CT scan or MRI) turnaround time (TAT) is within 45 minutes of arrival exhibiting or presenting with acute stroke symptoms (as defined by hospital protocols).</p> <p><i>Disposition status: ED, OBS, Inpatient</i></p> |
| NUMERATOR INCLUSION | Ischemic stroke, hemorrhagic stroke or TIA patients with neuroimaging (CT scan or MRI) completed within 45 minutes of arrival in ED or inpatient onset of symptoms. |
| DENOMINATOR INCLUSION | Patients with primary discharge diagnosis of ischemic stroke, hemorrhagic stroke or TIA who either present to the ED with acute stroke symptoms or develop clinical stroke symptoms as inpatients. |
| EXCLUSIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Patients who do not meet criteria of stroke symptoms as per hospital protocols. ■ Patients who left AMA, discontinued care, or who expired. ■ Patients under the age of 18. |
| DATA SOURCE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Consultation orders/notes; time of transfer (if applicable) ■ ED documentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Log of chief complaints » Onset of symptoms » Time of patient presentation » Time of stroke team arrival, discharge diagnoses ■ Onset of symptoms for inpatients and neuroimaging results ■ Documented contraindications to administration |

| SMA-1 | NIHSS FOR ISCHEMIC STROKE |
|-----------------------|--|
| OTHER IDENTIFIER | GWTG: AHASTR10, AHASTR82 |
| BENCHMARK | 85% |
| BACKGROUND | <p>For acute ischemic stroke patients.</p> <p>This measure identifies the percentage for whom an initial National Institutes of Health Stroke Scale (NIHSS) score is documented in the medical record before any acute recanalization therapy (i.e., IV thrombolytic or IA thrombolytic (tPA) therapy, or mechanical endovascular reperfusion therapy) for patients who undergo recanalization therapy or, documented within 12 hours of ED arrival for patients who do not undergo recanalization therapy.</p> <p><i>Disposition status: ED, OBS, Inpatient</i></p> |
| NUMERATOR INCLUSION | Ischemic stroke patients with their NIHSS score documented in the medical record prior to any acute recanalization therapy (in patients undergoing recanalization therapy) or within 12 hours of hospital arrival for patients who do not undergo recanalization therapy. |
| DENOMINATOR INCLUSION | Ischemic stroke patients. |
| EXCLUSIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Patients admitted for elective carotid intervention. ■ Patients who do not have recanalization therapy and are discharged within 12 hours of arrival at the hospital. ■ Patients documented for Comfort Measures Only. ■ Patients less than 18 years of age. |
| DATA SOURCE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Consultation notes ■ Emergency department record ■ History and physical ■ Admission note ■ Nursing assessment ■ Nursing flow sheet ■ Progress notes |

| SMA-5 | HEMORRHAGIC TRANSFORMATION (OVERALL RATE) |
|-----------------------|---|
| BENCHMARK | To be defined by the hospital. |
| BACKGROUND | <p>For ischemic stroke patients.</p> <p>This measure identifies the percentage who develop a symptomatic intracranial hemorrhage (i.e., clinical deterioration ≥ 4 point increase on NIHSS and brain image finding of parenchymal hematoma, or subarachnoid or intraventricular hemorrhage) within (\leq) 36 hours after the onset of treatment with IV or IA thrombolytic (tPA) therapy, or a mechanical endovascular reperfusion procedure (i.e., mechanical endovascular thrombectomy with a clot retrieval device).</p> <p><i>Disposition status: ED, OBS, Inpatient</i></p> |
| NUMERATOR INCLUSION | Ischemic stroke patients who develop a symptomatic intracranial hemorrhage within 36 hours of initiating treatment with IV tPA therapy, IA tPA therapy, or mechanical endovascular reperfusion therapy. |
| DENOMINATOR INCLUSION | Ischemic stroke patients treated with IV or IA tPA therapy or who undergo mechanical endovascular reperfusion therapy. |
| EXCLUSIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Patients admitted for elective carotid intervention. ■ Patients transferred to this hospital following treatment with IV or IA thrombolytic (tPA) therapy or mechanical endovascular reperfusion therapy initiated prior to arrival. ■ Patients who hemorrhage prior to the onset of tPA treatment or mechanical endovascular reperfusion therapy. ■ Patients undergoing investigational or experimental protocols for thrombolysis. ■ Patients less than 18 years of age. |
| DATA SOURCE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Admission data ■ Hospitalization data ■ Radiology reports ■ Brain imaging reports ■ Diagnostic test reports ■ Discharge data |

| SMA-8 | THROMBOLYSIS IN CEREBRAL INFARCTION (TICI) |
|-----------------------|---|
| OTHER IDENTIFIER | GWTG: AHASTR211 |
| BENCHMARK | 85% |
| BACKGROUND | <p>For patients diagnosed with acute ischemic stroke.</p> <p>This measure the percentage with a post-treatment reperfusion grade of TICI 2b or higher in the vascular territory beyond the target arterial occlusion at the end of mechanical endovascular reperfusion therapy.</p> <p>Note: TICI reperfusion grade scoring ranges from 0 to 3, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 No/minimal perfusion. 1 Perfusion past the initial occlusion, but no distal branch filling. 2a Perfusion with incomplete or slow distal branch filling (<50%). 2b Partial reperfusion in ≥50% of the occluded artery territory. 3 Essentially complete perfusion with filling of all distal branches. <p>Reperfusion past the target arterial occlusion and into the distal arterial bed and terminal branches, in conjunction with recanalization of the target arterial occlusion, demonstrates flow restoration or revascularization.</p> |
| NUMERATOR INCLUSION | Ischemic stroke patients with a post-treatment reperfusion grade of TICI 2b or higher. |
| DENOMINATOR INCLUSION | Ischemic stroke patients treated with mechanical endovascular reperfusion therapy. |
| EXCLUSIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Patients not admitted as inpatient. ■ Patients admitted for elective carotid intervention. ■ Patients less than 18 years of age. |
| DATA SOURCE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Consultation note ■ Diagnostic test reports ■ Procedure notes/reports ■ Discharge summary ■ Operative notes/reports |

| SMA-9 | DOOR-TO-SKIN PUNCTURE TIME |
|-----------------------|--|
| OTHER IDENTIFIER | GWTG: AHASTR109 |
| BENCHMARK | To be defined by the hospital. |
| BACKGROUND | <p>For patients diagnosed with acute ischemic stroke.</p> <p>This measure identifies the percentage for whom the time from hospital arrival to the time of skin puncture to access the artery selected (e.g., brachial, carotid, femoral, radial) for endovascular treatment (EVT) (i.e. mechanical embolectomy devices) is within 90 minutes.</p> |
| NUMERATOR INCLUSION | Acute ischemic stroke patients for whom arterial puncture time is ≤90 minutes of hospital arrival. |
| DENOMINATOR INCLUSION | Acute ischemic stroke patients who received mechanical endovascular reperfusion therapy during the hospital admission. |
| EXCLUSIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Patients admitted for elective carotid intervention. ■ Patients whose stroke occurred after hospital arrival. ■ Patients who have an initial NIHSS less than 6. ■ Patients who have a delayed endovascular rescue procedure (more than 8 hours after hospital arrival). ■ Patients less than 18 years of age. ■ Patients not admitted as inpatient. |
| DATA SOURCE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Consultation notes ■ Procedure notes/reports ■ Operative notes/reports ■ Diagnostic test reports ■ Progress notes |

| SMA-10 | MODIFIED RANKIN AT DISCHARGE |
|-----------------------|--|
| BENCHMARK | 85% |
| BACKGROUND | <p>For patients diagnosed with acute ischemic stroke.</p> <p>This measure identifies the percentage with a modified Rankin Score (mRS) at discharge after treatment with intravenous (IV) thrombolytic therapy only or mechanical endovascular reperfusion therapy with or without IV/IA thrombolytic.</p> |
| NUMERATOR INCLUSION | Ischemic stroke patients with a mRS score at discharge. |
| DENOMINATOR INCLUSION | Ischemic stroke patients treated with IV or IA thrombolytic therapy or who undergo mechanical endovascular reperfusion therapy. |
| EXCLUSIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Patients not admitted as inpatient. . ■ Patients admitted for elective carotid intervention. ■ Patients who expire during the hospital stay. ■ Patients less than 18 years of age. |
| DATA SOURCE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Admission data ■ Hospitalization data ■ Discharge data |

| SMA-11 | TIMELINESS OF REPERFUSION FROM HOSPITAL ARRIVAL |
|-----------------------|--|
| OTHER IDENTIFIER | GWTG: AHASTR112 |
| BENCHMARK | To be defined by the hospital. |
| BACKGROUND | <p>For patients diagnosed with acute ischemic stroke with large vessel occlusion in the internal carotid artery (ICA) or ICA terminus, middle cerebral artery (MCA) M1 or M2, basilar artery.</p> <p>This measure identifies the percentage who receive mechanical endovascular reperfusion therapy and achieve TIC1 2b or higher within 120 minutes of hospital arrival.</p> |
| NUMERATOR INCLUSION | Ischemic stroke patients treated with mechanical endovascular reperfusion treatment for large vessel occlusion and who achieve TIC1 2b or higher for the primary vessel occlusion within 120 minutes of hospital arrival. |
| DENOMINATOR INCLUSION | Ischemic stroke patients treated with mechanical endovascular reperfusion treatment for large vessel occlusion. |
| EXCLUSIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Patients admitted for elective carotid intervention. ■ Patients with primary cerebral occlusion that is not a large vessel occlusion (LVO). ■ Patients whose stroke occurred after hospital arrival. ■ Patients who have an Initial NIHSS less than 6. ■ Patients who have delayed mechanical endovascular reperfusion treatment more than 8 hours after hospital arrival. ■ Patients less than 18 years of age. ■ Patients not admitted as inpatient. |
| DATA SOURCE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Consultation notes ■ Procedure notes/reports ■ Operative notes/reports ■ Diagnostic test reports ■ Progress notes ■ Medication administration record |

| SMA-12 | TIMELINESS OF REPERFUSION FROM SKIN PUNCTURE |
|-----------------------|---|
| BENCHMARK | To be defined by the hospital. |
| BACKGROUND | <p>For patients diagnosed with acute ischemic stroke with large vessel occlusion in the internal carotid artery (ICA) or ICA terminus, middle cerebral artery (MCA) M1 or M2, basilar artery.</p> <p>This measure identifies the percentage who receive mechanical endovascular reperfusion therapy and achieve TIC1 2B or higher within 60 minutes of skin puncture.</p> |
| NUMERATOR INCLUSION | Ischemic stroke patients treated with mechanical endovascular reperfusion treatment for large vessel occlusion and who achieve TIC1 2B or higher for the primary vessel occlusion within 60 minutes from time of skin puncture. |
| DENOMINATOR INCLUSION | Ischemic stroke patients treated with mechanical endovascular reperfusion treatment for large vessel occlusion. |
| EXCLUSIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Patients admitted for elective carotid intervention. ■ Patients with primary cerebral occlusion that is not a large vessel occlusion (LVO). ■ Patients whose stroke occurred after hospital arrival. ■ Patients who arrived at the hospital more than 6 hours after time last known well. ■ Patients whose date/time of arrival or date/time last known well are unknown/blank. ■ Patients enrolled in a clinical trial. ■ Patients who have mechanical endovascular reperfusion treatment more than 8 hours after hospital arrival. ■ Patients not admitted as inpatient. |
| DATA SOURCE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Consultation notes ■ Procedure notes/reports ■ Operative notes/reports ■ Diagnostic test reports ■ Progress notes ■ Medication administration record |

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| SPG-1A | DOOR-TO-FIRST PASS OR DOOR-TO-DEVICE TIME, 90 MINUTES FOR DIRECT ED ARRIVAL |
| OTHER IDENTIFIER | GWTG: AHASTR115 |
| BENCHMARK | 50% |
| BACKGROUND | <p>For patients diagnosed with acute ischemic stroke presenting directly to the ED.</p> <p>This measure identifies the percentage who, arriving within 24 hours of time last known well or symptom discovery, receive mechanical endovascular reperfusion therapy and for whom the first pass (i.e., deployment) of the device is less than 90 minutes after arrival.</p> |
| NUMERATOR INCLUSION | Ischemic stroke patients presenting directly to the emergency department within 24 hours of time last known well with a first pass or device time less than or equal to 90 minutes. |
| DENOMINATOR INCLUSION | All direct ED acute ischemic stroke patients who undergo mechanical endovascular reperfusion procedures having arrived within 24 hours of time last known well or discovery of symptoms. |
| EXCLUSIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Patients admitted for elective carotid intervention. ■ Patients whose stroke occurred after hospital arrival. ■ Patient with delayed endovascular rescue procedure later than 24 hours after hospital arrival. ■ Patients enrolled in clinical trials. ■ Patients less than 18 years of age. ■ Patient whose date/time of arrival or date/time of last known well are unknown/blank. ■ Patient not admitted as inpatient. |
| DATA SOURCE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Consultation notes ■ Procedure notes ■ Operative notes ■ Diagnostic test reports ■ Progress notes |

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| SPG-1B | DOOR-TO-FIRST PASS OR DOOR-TO-DEVICE TIME, 60 MINUTES FOR HOSPITAL TRANSFERS |
| OTHER IDENTIFIER | GWTG: AHASTR115 |
| BENCHMARK | 50% |
| BACKGROUND | <p>For patients diagnosed with acute ischemic stroke transferring from another facility (a hospital/mobile stroke unit/freestanding ED).</p> <p>This measure identifies the percentage who arriving within 24 hours of time last known well or symptom discovery, receive mechanical endovascular reperfusion therapy and for whom the first pass (i.e., deployment) of the device is less than or equal to 60 minutes after arrival.</p> |
| NUMERATOR INCLUSION | Ischemic stroke patients transferring to the hospital within 24 hours of time last known well with a first pass or device time less than or equal to 60 minutes. |
| DENOMINATOR INCLUSION | All transferred acute ischemic stroke patients who undergo mechanical endovascular reperfusion procedures after transfer in from an outside hospital/mobile stroke unit (or freestanding ED) with acute ischemic stroke who arrived within 24 hours of time last known well or discovery of symptoms. |
| EXCLUSIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Patients admitted for elective carotid intervention. ■ Patients whose stroke occurred after hospital arrival. ■ Patient with delayed endovascular rescue procedure later than 24 hours after hospital arrival. ■ Patients enrolled in clinical trials. ■ Patients less than 18 years of age. ■ Patient whose date/time of arrival or date/time of last known well are unknown/blank. ■ Patient not admitted as inpatient. |
| DATA SOURCE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Consultation notes ■ Procedure notes ■ Operative notes ■ Diagnostic test reports ■ Progress notes |



RESOURCES

Glossary

Because accepted terminology may vary, this glossary of terms and abbreviations has been compiled to furnish users of this publication with a resource to facilitate clear communication of the intent of the requirements.

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| Acute Hemorrhagic Stroke | A non-traumatic intracerebral hemorrhage, subarachnoid hemorrhage, or hemorrhagic infarction. |
| Acute Ischemic Stroke | A measurable neurological deficit of sudden onset, presumed secondary to focal cerebral ischemia, and not otherwise attributable to intracerebral hemorrhage (ICH) or another disease process. Cerebrovascular disorder caused by deprivation of blood flow to an area of the brain, generally as a result of thrombosis, embolism, or reduced blood pressure. |
| Acute Myocardial Infarction (AMI) | Death of heart muscle resulting from insufficient blood supply to the heart. |
| Allied Health Assistant | Non-physicians qualified by special training and frequently by licensure who work in the health care field usually in supporting roles. |
| Angioplasty | Reconstruction of blood vessels damaged by disease or injury. |
| Antithrombotic Therapy | Pharmacologic agents (oral or parenteral) preventing or interfering with the formation of thrombi or blood coagulation. |
| Atherosclerosis | Common disorder characterized by yellowish plaques of cholesterol, other lipids, and cellular debris in the inner layers of the walls of arteries. |
| Atrial Fibrillation | Cardiac arrhythmia characterized by disorganized electrical activity in the atria accompanied by an irregular ventricular response that is usually rapid. The atria quiver instead of pumping in an organized fashion, resulting in compromised ventricular filling and reduced stroke volume. Stasis of left atrial flow increases the risk of stroke. |
| Atrial Flutter | Type of atrial tachycardia characterized by contraction rates between 230/min and 380/min. |
| Benchmark | A goal based on practice measures. |
| Brain Attack Coalition (BAC) | The Brain Attack Coalition is a multidisciplinary organization that includes most major medical organizations involved with stroke care assembled to establish guidance about the formation and operation of stroke centers. |
| Caregiver/Patient Representative | A patient's family member or any other person who will be responsible for care of the patient after discharge. |

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| Clinical Process Measure | Data designed to evaluate the processes or outcomes of care associated with the delivery of clinical services; to allow for intra- and inter-organizational comparisons to be used to continuously improve patient health outcomes. Measures may focus on the appropriateness of clinical decision making and implementation of these decisions. They must be condition specific, procedure specific, or address important functions of patient care (e.g., medication use, infection control, patient assessment, etc.). |
| Competency | The ability to adequately perform an assigned task or function. |
| Comprehensive Stroke Center | <p>According to the Brain Attack Coalition, a Comprehensive Stroke Center “would provide complete care to patients experiencing the most complex strokes that require specialized testing and other interventions. Such comprehensive stroke centers typically would include tertiary care medical centers and hospitals with the infrastructure and personnel necessary to perform highly technical procedures and provide all needed levels of care.” Source: Alberts, Mark J., et al., “Recommendations for the Establishment of Primary Stroke Centers,” JAMA, June 21, 2000, Vol. 283, No. 23, 3102-3109.</p> <p>In 2005, the Brain Attack Coalition further defined the Comprehensive Stroke Center as “A facility or system with the necessary personnel, infrastructure, expertise, and programs to diagnose and treat stroke patients who require a high intensity of medical and surgical care, specialized tests, or interventional therapies. The types of patients who might use and benefit from a CSC include (but are not limited to) patients with large ischemic strokes or hemorrhagic strokes, those with strokes from unusual etiologies or requiring specialized testing or therapies, or those requiring multispecialty management. Additional functions of a CSC would be to act as a resource center for other facilities in their region, such as PSCs. This might include providing expertise about managing particular cases, offering guidance for triage of patients, making diagnostic tests or treatments available to patients treated initially at a PSC, and being an educational resource for other hospitals and health care professionals in a city or region.”</p> <p>Source: Alberts, MJ, et al, “Recommendations for Comprehensive Stroke Centers – A Consensus Statement from the Brain Attack Coalition,” Stroke, July 2005, 1597-1618.</p> |
| Consultant | A second physician called by an attending physician to examine a patient and discuss a case. |
| Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) | Ongoing interdisciplinary commitment to strive for improvement in systems in order in order to provide quality healthcare that meets or exceeds patient/customer expectations. |
| Data: Collection | The act or process of capturing primary data from a single or number of sources. Also called data gathering. |
| Data: Denominator | The lower part of a fraction used to calculate a rate, proportion, or ratio. Also the population for a rate-based measure. |
| Data: Entry | The process by which data are transcribed or transferred into an electronic format. |

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| Data: Quality | The accuracy and completeness of measure data on performance in the context of the analytic purposes for which they will be used. |
| Data: Numerator | The upper portion of a fraction used to calculate a rate, proportion, or ratio. |
| Department | An organizational entity of the hospital or its medical staff. |
| Diagnosis | A physician's technical description of the disease afflicting a patient. |
| Document of Co-operation | A formalized agreement between a hospital and the Emergency Medical System (EMS) that addresses a written plan for transporting and receiving stroke patients. Note: this may already be mandated by state law. |
| Primary Diagnosis | The physician's description of the disease or illness chiefly responsible for the patient seeking medical care (Principal) or for being hospitalized. |
| Discharge Diagnosis | The physician's final, recorded diagnosis. |
| Elective Carotid Endarterectomy | Surgical procedure performed by choice, involving excision of atheromatous segments of the endothelium and tunica media of the carotid artery, leaving a smooth tissue lining and facilitating blood flow through the vessel; surgery done to prevent stroke. |
| Elective Carotid Intervention | Surgery (e.g., carotid endarterectomy) and other procedures (e.g., carotid angioplasty, stenting) involving the carotid artery, performed due to the patient's choice. |
| Electrocardiogram (ECG) | A graphic tracing of the heart's electrical impulses. |
| Emergency Department (ED) | A portion of the hospital where emergency diagnosis and treatment of illness or injury is provided. |
| Emergency Medical System (EMS) | Network of services coordinated to provide aid and medical assistance from primary response to definitive care, involving personnel trained in the rescue, stabilization, transportation, and advanced treatment of traumatic or medical emergencies. |
| Governing Body | The individual agency, group or corporation, appointed, elected, or otherwise designated, in which is vested the ultimate responsibility and authority for the conduct of the institution. |
| Health Care Facility | An organization that directly provides or supplies health care service. |
| Heart Failure (HF) | A clinical syndrome characterized by signs and symptoms resulting from disturbances in cardiac output or from increased venous pressure, including fatigue, shortness of breath, or leg swelling. |
| Hospital Arrival, Time of | For patients presenting to the Emergency Department, the "hospital arrival" time is the time the patient arrives in the Emergency Department, not the time of hospital admission. This term is used for the purpose of determining patient eligibility for thrombolytic therapy. For consistency with data collection, the time the patient arrives at the hospital is used with multiple QAPI process indicators. |
| Hospital Inpatient | A hospital patient who is provided with room, board, and continuous general nursing service. |
| Hospital Patient | An individual receiving hospital based or coordinated medical services for which the hospital is responsible. |

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| Intensive Care Unit (ICU) | A department of a hospital with a designated nursing and medical team, who have training and expertise in neurocritical care. |
| Intracerebral Hemorrhage (ICH) | Non-traumatic abrupt onset of headache or altered level of consciousness and/or focal neurological deficit that is associated with a focal collection of blood within the brain parenchyma on CT scan and is not due to trauma or hemorrhagic conversion of a cerebral infarction. |
| IV Thrombolytic Therapy | Intravenous administration of a thrombolytic agent, such as tissue plasminogen activator (TPA), to dissolve an arterial clot. |
| Low-Density Lipoprotein (LDL) | Plasma protein provided by the liver, carrying relatively more cholesterol and triglycerides than protein. The high cholesterol content may account for its greater atherogenic potential. Also known as “bad cholesterol.” |
| Medical Director | A physician who is formally delegated with the responsibility and authority to maintain proper standards of medical care and to plan for continuance and improvement of medical care within a defined program, department, or facility. |
| Medical Services | Services performed at the direction of a physician on behalf of patients by physicians, dentists, nurses, and other professional personnel. |
| Medical Staff | A formal organization of physicians delegated with the authority and responsibility to maintain proper standards of medical care and to plan for continuance and improvement of medical care. |
| National Hospital Inpatient & Quality Measure | A standardized performance measure that meets the Centers for Medicare Medicaid Services evaluation criteria, has precisely defined specifications, can be uniformly embedded in extant systems, has standardized data collection protocols to permit uniform implementation by health care organizations and permit comparisons of health care organization performance over time through the establishment of a national comparative data base. |
| Nursing Care | The process of assessing, planning, evaluating, and reevaluating the care of a patient/client's physical, social, mental, and emotional condition to achieve the optimum state of their health in accordance with the physician's orders. |
| Nursing Services | Service providing curative, rehabilitative, and preventative aspects of nursing care to patients. |
| Occupational Therapist | <p>An individual who</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Is a graduate of an occupational therapy curriculum accredited jointly by the Committee on Allied Health Education and Accreditation of the American Medical Association and the American Occupational Therapy Association; or (b) Is eligible for the National Registration Examination of the American Occupational Therapy Association; or (c) Has 2 years of appropriate experience as an occupational therapist, and has achieved a satisfactory grade on a proficiency examination conducted, approved, or sponsored by the U.S. Public Health Service, except that such determinations of proficiency do not apply with respect to persons initially licensed by the state or seeking initial qualification as an occupational therapist after December 31, 1977. |

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| PACU | Post Anesthesia Care Unit |
| Patient | A person who receives health care service from a health care provider. |
| Peer Review | Concurrent or retrospective review by practicing physicians or other health professionals of the quality and efficiency of patient care practices or services ordered or performed by other physicians or other health professionals. |
| Physician | A graduate of an accredited and appropriately recognized osteopathic or allopathic college of medicine (DO/MD) and who is licensed in the state to practice. |
| Physical Therapist | <p>An individual licensed by the state in which s/he practiced and who has graduated from a physical therapy curriculum approved by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The American Physical Therapy Association 2) The committee on Allied Health Education and Accreditation of the American Association 3) The Council on Medical Education of the American Medical Association and the American Physical Therapy Association. |
| Primary Stroke Center | <p>According to the Brain Attack Coalition, the Primary Stroke Center “stabilizes and provides emergency care for patients with acute stroke. Such centers would then either transfer the patient to a comprehensive stroke center or could admit the patient and provide further care depending on the patient’s needs and the center’s capabilities...[The Primary Stroke Center’s] emergency department should be able to offer approved therapies to appropriately selected patients whether the stroke is ischemic or hemorrhagic.”</p> <p>Source: Alberts, Mark J., et al., “Recommendations for the Establishment of Primary Stroke Centers,” JAMA, June 21, 2000, Vol. 283, No. 23, 3102-3109.</p> |
| Process | An series of events, activities, actions, mechanisms, or steps that transform inputs into outputs. |
| Professional Staff | A formal organization of professional health personnel that includes one or more physicians which is delegated with the authority and responsibility to maintain proper standards of medical care and/or health related care and to plan for continuance and improvement of that medical care. |
| Protocol | A document that describes the correct conduct and procedures to be followed in formal situations. Protocols may include: policies; order sets; care plan/pathway; or procedures as determined by the healthcare organization. |
| Quality Assessment Performance Improvement (QAPI) | A multi-disciplinary approach to measuring, assessing and improving outcomes. |
| Radiologist | A physician who is qualified by education and experience in radiology. |
| Reperfusion | Reestablishing blood flow in an obstructed coronary artery. It may be accomplished with thrombolytic therapy or percutaneous coronary intervention. |

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| Speech Language Pathologist | <p>A person who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Meets the education and experience requirements for a Certificate or Clinical Competence (in speech pathology or audiology) granted by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association; or (b) Meets the educational requirements for certification and is in the process of accumulating the supervised experience required for certification. |
| Statin | A class of pharmaceutical agents that modify LDL-cholesterol by blocking the action of an enzyme in the liver which is needed to synthesize cholesterol, thereby decreasing the level of cholesterol circulating in the blood; HMG-CoA reductase inhibitors. |
| Stent | Rod or threadlike device for supporting tubular structures during surgical anastomosis or for holding arteries open during percutaneous angioplasty. |
| Stroke | See definitions for Acute Ischemic Stroke and Acute Hemorrhagic Stroke. |
| Stroke Ready Center | Stroke Ready Centers provide timely access to stroke care but may not be able to meet all the criteria specified in Primary and Comprehensive levels. However, the Stroke Ready Center designation serves as a notice to the community EMS that the hospital is prepared to meet the initial needs of stroke patients. |
| Stroke Unit | A specific unit or section of the unit in which stroke patients are admitted and acute stroke clinicians are rostered. |
| Subarachnoid Hemorrhage (SAH) | Non-traumatic abrupt onset of headache or altered level of consciousness that is associated with blood in the subarachnoid space on CT or a clinical history and exam consistent with SAH (sudden onset of severe headache or altered level of consciousness) with xanthochromia and many red blood cells in the cerebrospinal fluid. |
| Symptom Onset, Time of | This term is the time the patient was last known to be without symptoms. The term is used for the purpose of determining patient eligibility for tissue plasminogen activator (tPA) therapy. The term is also used with QAPI data collection. If patient awoke with symptoms, symptom onset time is defined as when the patient went to sleep or was last known to be awake without symptoms. |
| Telemedicine | Ability to provide remote diagnosis. |
| Time Last Known Well | Time at which the patient was last known to be without the signs and symptoms of the current stroke or at his or her prior baseline. Variation may exist if the signs and symptoms are not witnessed. |
| Tissue Plasminogen Activator (tPA) | Clot-dissolving substance produced naturally by cells in the walls of blood vessels, and also manufactured synthetically. TPA activates plasminogen to dissolve clots and is used therapeutically to open occluded arteries. |
| Validation | The process by which the integrity and accuracy of data are established. Validation processes can occur immediately after a data item is collected or after a complete set of data are collected. |
| Venous Thromboembolism (VTE) | A term that includes deep vein thrombosis and/or pulmonary embolism. |

