

Collaboration with EMS through Stroke Case Conference

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Background:

SHMC is a certified Primary Stroke Center (PSC) through Det Norske Veritas (DNV). After a recent DNV survey, it was identified that the PSC could improve its communication to Emergency Medical Services (EMS). The current feedback process was sporadic and often addressed door to needle time. The EMS Chief shared that this feedback was not perceived as helpful. There was a monthly Stroke Case Conference that was attended by Neurologists and Hospitalists in which stroke cases were discussed. This was a peer protected venue.

Objective:

To improve communication between EMS and the stroke team so that relevant prehospital data be incorporated into the evaluation of stroke cases by having EMS attend Stroke Case Conference.

Methods:

Approval from Medical Staff Services was obtained. A pre-existing Confidentiality Agreement used for students was utilized. The first case that was reviewed by the expanded attendance was a “success story” in which everything went right. This allowed for a pleasant nonconfrontational environment. The EMS Chief facilitated attendance by the responding paramedics. The case was reviewed from the 911 call through hospital discharge. The actual 911 calls to the dispatch center and the EMS report to the Emergency Department were played. Positive feedback was given to the new attendees.

Results:

EMS is now a “regular” attendee to Stroke Case Conference. “Old time members” love listening to the actual 911 and EMS calls. There has been some difficulty in timely identification of stroke cases to be discussed and allowing adequate notification of EMS to assure their participation. More difficult cases have been reviewed and process improvement opportunities identified.

Conclusion:

EMS can successfully be incorporated into the existing Stroke Case Conference with overall benefit to the stroke program through improved communication between EMS and the stroke team.