



Stroke Systems of Care – Making the Case

Burden of Stroke

- An estimated 700,000 U.S. residents have a new or recurrent stroke each year, and about 163,000 of them die.
- An estimated 5.4 million Americans are stroke survivors and stroke is a leading cause of serious, long-term disability, according to statistics compiled by the American Heart Association.

Defining the Stroke System of Care

- A stroke system approach involves the coordination of stroke care along the entire continuum, from primordial and primary prevention through rehabilitation and recovery.
- The essential components of a coordinated system of stroke care have been outlined by the American Stroke Association's Task Force on the Development of Stroke Systems in the document entitled Recommendations for the Establishment of Stroke Systems of Care and include the following:
 - Primordial and Primary Prevention
 - Notification and Response of Emergency Medical Services for Stroke
 - Acute Treatment for Stroke
 - Sub-Acute Stroke Care and Secondary Prevention for Stroke
 - Rehabilitation of Stroke Patients
 - Continuous Quality Improvement Initiatives

Why the Stroke System of Care Approach Is The Standard

- **De-Fragmentation** - A stroke system of care would provide each patient seamless transitions from one stage of care to the next with the highest quality at each step, including the ability to overcome boundaries that might interfere with stroke care. Stroke expertise and support can be delivered in all communities through a systems approach and coordination (including telemedicine) to overcome the boundaries of time and distance.
- **Time Sensitive Action** - A stroke system of care will improve each link in the chain of survival and recovery in preventing and treating stroke by assuring patients have access to the most advanced treatment in health care facilities that are best equipped to deal with the critical and time-sensitive needs of stroke patients.
- **Leveraging Opportunities** – A coordinated system of care driven by all healthcare providers in the stroke team will promote greater efficiency of care as well as the most effective application of acute treatment, secondary prevention and rehabilitation.
- **Improving Outcomes** - The development of stroke systems of care can significantly increase the proportion of patients who receive improved stroke care. Dedicated stroke units can reduce a patient's risk of death by 40%. Ultimately, if every state exemplified the components of the model for stroke care, as set forth in the Recommendations for the Establishment of Stroke Systems of Care, the result could facilitate significant progress toward a 25% reduction in coronary heart disease, stroke and risk.