

## Stroke Task Force Meeting Minutes

**Date:** Thursday, March 6, 2025

**Time:** 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

**Location:** Virtual via Microsoft Teams

### 1. Welcome and Introductions

- Attendance: Christine Greff, Dr. Suhas Bajgur, Tim Blasl, Mindy Cook, Holly Nissen, Chelsey Kuznia, Brannigan Hamrick, Haley Gilstad, Jerilyn Alexander, Sandy Kovar, Jessica Tank, Deserae Harstad, Nikki Mack, Melissa Johnson, Kerry Krikava, Kari Kuhn, Sheree Raynes

### 2. Approval of Minutes

- **Motion: Chelsea** Kuznia
- **Seconded:** Haley Gilstad
- **Outcome:** Minutes approved unanimously.

### 3. Updates

- **Sandy Kovar:**
  - Moving into Altru facility has reduced door-to-CT times by 3 ½ minutes
  - Preparing for Stroke Awareness Month in May
- **Holly Nissen:**
  - Prepping for Joint Commission visit
  - Save a Life Saturday was successful with the EMS crew (Sanford Ambulance) doing CPR hands-only and Stop the Bleed
  - First successful implant of Vivistim
  - Conducting a SCRN Certification Course, and other facility nurses are welcome.
  - Working with WSO to map out all stroke centers in North Dakota and Minnesota.
- **Chelsey Kuznia:**
  - Prep work for upcoming DNV Survey scheduled for March 13,14, and 15.
  - Participated in Save a Life Saturday at the mall and Giving Hearts Day at Northern Cass County High School.
  - Touched base with the VA and educated 26 nurses
  - Discussion regarding comfort level and need for increased efficiency with the transfer of stroke patients at the VA
- **Haley Gilstad:**
  - Prep work for DNV visit next week

- Working neurology team to decrease the rate of aspiration pneumonia
- Working on 2025 protocols
- **Brannigan Hamrick:**
  - Beginning prep for DNV visit at the end of April
  - Unmasking event at Stroke Support Group in February
  - The Corn Hole Stroke Awareness Tournament is scheduled for May 3<sup>rd</sup>. (3<sup>rd</sup> annual)
    - Held at Send-It in Mandan
- **Jerilyn Alexander:**
  - Joint Commission Stroke Survey window will open at the end of September.
  - Working on getting buy-in from leadership for assistance
  - Stroke alert volumes have gone up this year.
    - Awareness of the increase in younger stroke patients
  - Stroke Support Group continues to meet every month and is growing.
  - Working on education events for Stroke Awareness Month
- **Desi Harstad:**
  - In process of restructuring stroke committee
    - Looking for more focus and enthusiasm
- **Nicole Mack:**
  - On March 24<sup>th</sup>, Nicole will be full-time Quality Review and Infection Prevention Nurse.
  - Meeting with stroke and STEMI Task Force to get started on projects again.
- **EMS Unit Update: Christine Greff**
  - Senate Bill 2033 passed the Senate and is now in the House. Helping Ambulance Services in Distress to either maintain service or close in a controlled manner
  - Bill in the Legislature for hospital ambulances to get an exemption from becoming an ambulance district. Unfortunately, the bill failed.
    - Refer to NDCC 2327 for requirements regarding ambulance districts
    - Review of the EMS update newsletter that is located on the EMS Unit website. Each issue has had over 1,000 views
  - EMS conference is coming up April 3 – 5
    - The EMS Unit always has a booth at the conference
    - This year's booth will include a stroke 'escape ambulance'
  - EMS for Children continues to promote the PECC program (Pediatric Emergency Care Coordinators) – contact Chettie Greer with any questions ([cgreer@nd.gov](mailto:cgreer@nd.gov))
  - Trauma System – has implemented a new trauma registry and is going smoother than expected
  - Stroke - Christine and Haley attended 'You're the Cure' Day at the Capitol and visited with state legislators and received good feedback
  - Conference planner has been contracted and will be attending the next conference planning meeting

- Contract duties were reviewed
- Cardiac – advisory committee is reorganizing to enhance effectiveness (Contact Christine or Chris Price with any questions)
  - Cardiac hospital designation program (modeled after the stroke designation program) is slowly taking shape

#### 4. Task Force Business

- Membership updates:
  - Southwest Representative vacancy: Outreach is ongoing.
    - If you have any recommendations, let Christine know
- Bylaws: An individual will be elected to serve a 1-year term of service with the option to be re-elected to serve two consecutive years. Also, some minor grammatical corrections have been made. This will be visited at the last meeting of the year.
  - **Motion made by Holly Nissen:** change the bylaws to read that a quorum vote of all members is needed to pass proposed amendments
  - No opposition/no further discussion
  - Motion passed
- Stroke Center Compliance: Looking for discussion and recommendations from the task force
  - Hospital Issues with 24/7 CT coverage.
    - Discussion of advantages of maintaining open communication with the Department, the pros and cons to pulling a designation due to one missing piece, and how much time to allow for fixing lapses while taking into consideration the efforts to find a solution
    - Possible 30-day, 90-day, 180-day warnings to promote a solution in a timely manner
    - Possibility of cross-training existing staff.
    - Possible use of a 'soft-hold' with a time-frame and re-designation plan
    - Include EMS and EMS education in the plan
    - Look at possible virtual options
    - Christine will put a draft policy together, and discussion will continue at the next meeting.
  - Hospitals not contributing to the stroke registry.
    - A facility that hasn't contributed to the stroke at least since 2020
      - They had an action plan that they did not follow
      - Christine has reached out on multiple levels with no response
      - With the efforts that have already been put forth and the time that has gone by, the task force is supportive of taking action now
        - Allowed by Century Code to 'drop in' to any facility at any time
- Registry reimbursement grants

- Many hospitals have not submitted requests yet and are due by June 30
- Reach out to Deb Dutchuk for assistance
- The reimbursement process and communication were discussed
  - Include Christine if having difficulty
- Get prepared for Site Visits.
  - Can site visits be more efficient?
    - Possibly separate facility tour and chart review
    - Possibly more prior preparation and more follow-up later
  - Suggestion for task force members to review the site visit reports prior to the meetings, rather than spending so much time reading the report during the meeting
  - Plan for full site visits to be done in person, while follow-ups are done virtually
  - Christine will do some checking on the reimbursement process for site visits
- Goal Setting – discussion of the care plan for the stroke system and ideas for short and/or long-term goals for this year
  - EMS outreach and education (as discussed in this meeting)
  - Implementation of mobile stroke units
    - Dr Bajgur shared some insight on mobile stroke units and expressed the need for financial analysis and needs analysis for location, etc.
    - Dr Bajgur will do some checking with his contacts
  - Reach out to contacts regarding new stroke kits and Tenecteplase
    - **Motion made by Haley Gilstad:** Task force recommends that the state recommend Tenecteplase in the treatment of acute ischemic stroke
    - Second: Dr Bajgur
    - No opposition/no further discussion
    - Motion Passed
  - Possible outreach to vulnerable communities
    - Long Term Care Association would have contacts
  - Discussion of the status of previous goals – Christine will update the care plan

## 5. Conference Discussion

- Theme & Key Topics
  - The winning theme from the conference planning survey: Transforming stroke care: Innovations, Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery'
  - Open speakers up to other disciplines than physicians or nurses, i.e., PT, OT, speech, pharmacy, etc.
  - Suggestions from the survey after last year's conference were reviewed and discussed, along with brainstorming of topic ideas for speakers to choose from. Logistics and timelines were discussed for submission of presentations, agenda finalization, and application for education credits

## 6. 2025 Performance Improvement

- Review and discussion of current quality measures
  - Mindy presented the current numbers for ND vs the national benchmark to assist with discussion of 2025 numbers
  - Christine will update and share for further discussion

## 7. Other Discussion

- Call for assistance from the World Stroke Organization
  - Creating a list of all stroke centers in the world
  - Holly may be reaching out for assistance throughout the next year

## 8. Adjournment

### **Next Meeting:**

**Date:** Thursday, June 5, 2025

**Time:** 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM