

Minutes of the Alabama Trauma System (ATS)

QA/QI Workgroup Meeting

August 28, 2012, 10:00 a.m., Room 744

Call in Information 1-800-491-4634

In attendance: Sarah Nafziger, M.D., Choona Lang, Verla Thomas, Robin Moore, MisChele White, Leslie Morgan, Allan Pace, Denise Louthain, Glenn Davis, Alex Franklin, Spencer Howard

By Phone: Joe Acker, Andrew Lee, David Garmon, Michael Minor

Absent: William Crawford, M.D., Richard Gonzalez, M.D., Dennis Blair, Geni Smith, Jeremy White, Mark Jackson

Choona Lang opened the meeting with a welcome.

Alabama Trauma System (ATS) Manual and ATS Plan Update

Dr. Nafziger informed the Workgroup that the Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) will be finishing up these projects due to the recently increased workload on regional offices. Ms. Lang will update the Workgroup as the process goes forward.

Trauma Registry Criteria

Ms. Thomas updated the Workgroup on her progress of identifying the barriers that keep the five NTRACS trauma centers from entering patients who are treated and discharged from the emergency room (ER) into the Alabama Trauma Registry (ATR) per trauma system rules. Ms. Thomas reports that currently 76 percent of trauma centers are complying with entering trauma and head and spinal injury patients into the ATR.

Ms. Thomas found that NTRACS trauma centers were not entering this data because the National Trauma Database (NTDB) does not require it, and entering this data would skew the data uploaded to the NTDB. After further research, it was found that creating a field to enter this data, and selecting the NTRACS “exclude” function when uploading to NTDB may alleviate the problem. Most of the NTRACS trauma centers are working now to add the extra field and change procedures to increase compliance in entering this data. Ms. Lang added that this issue will be presented to the Statewide Trauma and Health Systems Advisory Council (STHSAC) Review Subcommittee for recommendation on whether a trauma rule change may be necessary.

ATS QA/QI Plan Review

Ms. Lang encouraged the Workgroup to review the QA/QI process and submit any suggested changes. She stated that a QI inquiry is only a flag that the issue needs to be processed. Most level A inquiries are handled by the regional offices and are only forwarded to the OEMS when they cannot be resolved. All level B inquiries are handled by the OEMS. Mr. Pace suggested that having all regions use a standard follow-up form may cut down on confusion. Mr. Franklin

offered to forward a copy of the QI follow-up tool used by Region One to be adjusted for OEMS use. Mr. Acker also requested that the regional offices remind those who have received QI inquiries of the process and that the Alabama Trauma Communications Center (ATCC) is not responsible for making these QI inquiries. Mr. Pace suggested that more education from the regions would assist in clearing up any confusion on how to comply with ATS QI protocol. Ms. Lang requested that each region review the ATCC QI form and submit suggestions on how to make it clearer and more user-friendly. Mr. Acker also suggested that regional directors be aware that EMS providers often work across regional lines and including the appropriate regional staff will increase communication and eliminate some confusion.

Southeast Regional Pilot Acute Stroke System (SRPASS) Update

Ms. Lang informed the group on the progress of the SRPASS system activation. The plan presented to the Region Five Regional Advisory Council (RAC) and was accepted. Language is being reviewed for clarity on the neurological requirements in the draft plan and the plan will soon be presented to the STHSAC. It is estimated that 10-15 stroke centers will be in the system.

Due to budget cuts, finding funding for the computers needed in Region Five is being researched. Several regions acquired trauma system computers intended for Region Five when the ATS plan was not adopted in that region. The possibility of refunding the cost of those computer systems to Region Five was discussed. A trauma computer system costs approximately \$2,000.00 for hardware and \$2,000.00 for programs, installation, and licensing.

Regional Discussion

Region One

Mr. Franklin reported that Huntsville Hospital doctors have requested that an undiscoverable statement be added to all QI forms. Ms. Lang reported that Brian Hale in the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) legal department did not feel that adding that statement to each and every form was necessary. It was agreed to allow Huntsville legal department and ADPHs legal department to discuss the matter.

Mr. Franklin also reported that ATS training materials have been updated and he is currently working to review ATS training with all Region One trauma centers. The updated ATS training materials are being reviewed now.

Region Two

Mr. Pace reported that Gadsden Regional Medical Center has had a patient care report printer issue fixed by Mr. Minor. Mr. Pace attended the Northwest Georgia Trauma System Meeting at which all bordering states were represented. Registration for Region Two's annual EMS Conference that will be held at the Talladega Speed Dome is still open. Volunteer Fire Department personnel are being allowed to attend this event through trauma center sponsorships.

Region Three

Mr. Acker reported that his office has four open QI issues that are in the process of being resolved. Currently, that region is training air units because there has been difficulty in getting the units to call ATCC staff so that the receiving hospital can be prepared for patient arrival. Michael Minor alerted the Workgroup that detailed reports are not working and he expects that issue to be resolved by the beginning of next week. Highland, Parkway, and Monroe County hospitals are experiencing computer issues and will need equipment repair. Lakeland Hospital is having an issue too but is confident it is due to construction and will resolve the issue themselves. D.W. McMillan is experiencing printer problems and this problem will be resolved during the visit to Monroe County.

Region Four

Mr. Lee reported only minor QI issues. Region Four is updating ATS training curriculum and will soon be retraining trauma centers. Participation in these training sessions is mandatory and is also available on DVD. Mr. Lee also told the Workgroup that he will soon be meeting with Dr. Crawford to update the transfer process portion of ATS regional training curriculum. Ms. Lang also added that Mr. Lee, with the assistance of Ms. Holly Waller and Ms. Geni Smith, are connecting trauma managers in an effort to increase networking and communication. Mr. Lee hopes to include EMS Directors as well. These meetings will start in November.

Region Six

Mr. Garmon reported that most QI issues have been resolved and were due to lack of education and documentation. Region Six is considering offering an ATS refresher course to trauma centers. In addition, the annual EMS Conference will be held September 6-7, 2012, and registration is almost full.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for September 25, 2012 at 11:00 a.m.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.