

Health Awareness

Telestroke—Going The Distance To Improve Access To Stroke Care

(NAPSA)—When it comes to treating a stroke victim, immediate medical attention plays a significant role in reducing the patient's risk of serious long-term disability and even death.

In some areas of the United States, finding appropriate stroke care can be a challenge, as more than 75 percent of U.S. counties do not have hospitals that are equipped to treat stroke patients. However, advancements in telemedicine (the remote delivery of health care services) provide the promise of improved access to health care, especially in areas where there are geographical barriers and reduced resources. Telestroke (the use of telemedicine specifically for stroke care) can be used to narrow the gap in access to expert stroke care and may improve overall stroke management.

What Is Telestroke?

Telestroke enables neurologists at Certified Stroke Centers to remotely evaluate people who've had acute strokes and make diagnoses and treatment recommendations to emergency medicine doctors at other sites. Doctors communicate using digital video cameras, Internet telecommunications, robotic telepresence, smartphones, tablets and other technology. Telestroke networks provide the potential to greatly extend the reach of stroke systems of care into rural, remote and underserved regions.

The need for more widespread, organized expert stroke care is evidenced by the substantial burden that stroke imposes on patients and society:

- Stroke is the fifth-leading cause of death in the United States and a leading cause of long-term disability.

- Every year, approximately 795,000 people in the United States have a stroke.

- Immediate medical attention may limit the effects of stroke, so it is imperative that people call 9-1-1 at the first sign of stroke.

Luckily, telestroke units can provide sustained high-quality stroke

TELESTROKE CAN HELP IMPROVE ACCESS TO SPECIALTY STROKE CARE



OVER 75% OF US COUNTIES lack a hospital with neurological services capable of treating stroke TM

care to more regions throughout the country, including rural and underserved areas.

Knowing the signs

Did you know that one in every three Americans does not know any of the warning signs of stroke? Recognizing the signs and acting immediately could be the difference between making a recovery and living with long-term disability.

- If you suspect that you or someone you know is experiencing a stroke, there's a four-letter acronym, "F.A.S.T.," which corresponds to a test that can be used as a quick screening tool:

- **F=FACE**, loss of function on one side of your face, which may look like drooping

- **A=ARMS**, sudden weakness on one side, which may mean you can't hold the arm up

- **S=SPEECH**, like slurred speech

- **T=TIME**, time to call 9-1-1.

If the person shows any of these symptoms, please call 9-1-1 and get to the hospital immediately.

Learn More

For more information about stroke, visit www.strokeawareness.com/strokecall911.

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