

**NEW YORK**  
state department of  
**HEALTH**

Howard A. Zucker, M.D., J.D.  
Acting Commissioner of Health

Sue Kelly  
Executive Deputy Commissioner

September 12, 2014

Dear EMS Agency Leadership:

In 2004, the Department began building a statewide system for the effective treatment of stroke patients. Those efforts partnered the Department's Cardiac Services and Stroke Program, the Bureau of EMS and Trauma Systems, and the State Emergency Medical Advisory Committee (SEMAC) to establish a uniform protocol so that EMS providers can make early identification of stroke patients, and to designate Stroke Center hospitals to which EMS would transport those patients. This system has made a tremendous difference in the timely treatment and outcome for stroke patients. For continued success, however, any system must be continually evaluated through quality improvement efforts to assure the system that was built continues to work as expected.

The key to successful treatment of stroke patients is always time. The earlier a stroke is identified and communicated, the earlier treatment can be initiated. To that end, the Stroke Program is again partnering with the Bureau of EMS to evaluate (1) is the identification of a stroke patient being effectively communicated (does the EMS provider report and does the hospital staff receive the information), and (2) does the information reported by EMS cause the hospital to activate its Stroke Team/Protocols.

We want to emphasize that this is a quality – not punitive – initiative. The processes for identifying and reporting a stroke patient, and subsequently activating the Stroke Team/Protocol, have long been in place. We are looking to see if those processes are actually effective as designed, and where improvements can be made on both the EMS and hospital sides to make treatment of stroke patients as timely as possible.

To help better understand this quality initiative, the Stroke Program (with assistance from the hospital associations and support from the Bureau of EMS) will be hosting two statewide presentations for the EMS community. The first will occur in-person on September 22, 2014 and be targeted downstate (details attached). The second will occur via webinar on October 9, 2014 and be targeted to both upstate and downstate. Registration information for this webinar will be forwarded soon.

We encourage your agency's participation and sharing the information gained with all your providers. For questions, please contact Michael Tayler at: [MICHAEL.TAYLER@HEALTH.NY.GOV](mailto:MICHAEL.TAYLER@HEALTH.NY.GOV).

Sincerely,



Lee Burns, Director  
Bureau of EMS & Trauma Systems



September 22, 2014

## October 9 Webinar on New EMS Measures for NYS Designated Stroke Centers

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- HANYS will host a webinar with DOH on Thursday, October 9, at 1 p.m. to discuss the new emergency medical services (EMS) measures and reporting requirements for New York State Designated Stroke Centers.
  - We ask that stroke coordinators and other stroke care providers hold specific questions regarding stroke designation for the October 20 follow-up meeting (see below), which will focus on that topic.
  - Pre-hospital care providers, stroke care providers, and stroke coordinators are encouraged to register for this important program.
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The webinar will be held:

**Date:** Thursday, October 9

**Time:** 1 - 2 p.m.

**Speaker:** Anna Colello, Esq., Director of Regulatory Compliance for the Cardiac Services Program, New York State Department of Health (DOH).

**Registration:** [http://www.hanys.org/events/?event\\_id=969](http://www.hanys.org/events/?event_id=969)

Designated Stroke Centers in New York State will begin collecting data on these new measures in January 2015 and will report data to DOH in 2016. The new stroke center reporting requirements include:

- Was a pre-hospital stroke screen performed?
- What was the time of the onset of symptoms (last known well)?

- Did the stroke center receive pre-notification for the presumptive stroke patient?
- Did the pre-notification contain pre-hospital stroke screen findings and “last known well” status?
- Was the designated stroke hospital’s team activated before patient arrival?

DOH is also planning a follow-up webinar on October 20 to educate all Designated Stroke Centers in New York State on the new reporting requirements. HANYS will provide additional details and a registration link as soon as it is available.

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**To:**

Stroke Coordinators

