Triage Nursing Intervention Improves Stroke Treatment Rate and Times for Walk-in Strokes

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INTRODUCTION
Our comprehensive stroke center provides community outreach and stroke education to patients, caregivers, and community members on the importance of calling 911 in the event of a stroke. However, approximately 1/3 of our center’s stroke alerts are walk-ins. With a walk-in stroke, rapid assessment is essential because the stroke response team has no information compared to information that otherwise would be provided by EMS. As such, our center developed a rapid assessment by the emergency department triage nurse, who can then activate a stroke alert.

PURPOSE
To assess whether the use of the rapid assessment improved door to stroke alert activation and door to needle (DTN).

METHODS
The change to rapid stroke assessment and stroke alert activation by triage nurses (rather than waiting for an emergency physician to assess and activate a stroke alert) was made in March 2018. Cases from one year prior to the intervention were compared to cases one year after implementation and to the current year. Differences in turnaround times (door to stroke alert activation, DTN, etc.) were calculated.

RESULTS

Figure 2. Stroke alerts before and after implementation of Rapid Stroke Assessment protocols

- Door to stroke alert time remained statistically unchanged after Rapid Stroke Assessment implementation (Figure 3A).
- Door to ED physician decreased by 3 min (n.s.) one year after implementation and 5 min (p<.05) in the current year (Figure 3B).
- Door to CT scan decreased by 6 min (n.s.) after implementation and 7 min (p<.01) in the current year (Figure 3C).
- Overall IV t-PA treatment rates remained consistent, however the door to needle (DTN) decreased by 23 min (p<.05) compared to the year prior to implementation and 26 min (p<.01) YTD (Figure 3D).

CONCLUSIONS
- A nursing driven initiative at Emergency Department triage was effective at improving stroke treatment rate and decreasing DTN for IV alteplase for walk-in stroke patients.
- While stroke alert activation has remained consistent, triage stroke assessment improved by 11% (p<.01) one year following implementation and 14% (p<.01) during the current year.

DISCLOSURES
There are no financial disclosures related to this study.