

Emerging Technology Gives More Minnesotans Access to Emergency Care Following Strokes

Using 'telestroke' technology, University of Minnesota Health, and Fairview Health Services physicians can diagnose, treat stroke from miles away

MINNEAPOLIS – Jan. 17, 2018 – For patients overcome by stroke, 'Telestroke' technology allows stroke specialists to evaluate the patient and plan treatment even when the doctors are miles away. University of Minnesota Health recently deployed this technology at Fairview Southdale Hospital and plans to roll out the technology at additional Fairview hospitals, including Fairview Ridges Hospital, as well as locations in northern Minnesota in coming months.

Speed is a critical factor in the successful treatment of stroke patients, and stroke symptoms can vary significantly from patient to patient. With Telestroke technology, neurologists can examine patients in real-time via video conferencing and review the results of brain-imaging tests conducted in a patient's local emergency department.

"The Telestroke program will allow us to standardize care for stroke and neurocritical care patients in our partner hospitals throughout Minnesota," said University of Minnesota Health neurologist Christopher Streib, MD. "Patients will receive the specialty stroke consultation that they need locally in their own community."

Instead of traditional telephone consults, patients also will now have access to face-to-face communication with their neurologist via video conferencing.

Telestroke technology consists of a sophisticated two-way audio and visual system, which allows neurologists to manipulate the video camera position remotely, and helps diagnosing stroke symptoms that may benefit from emergent treatment, including surgeries to dissolve blood clots causing the stroke and prevent devastating brain injury.

"This Telestroke program demonstrates Fairview's commitment to taking care delivery to the patient whenever feasible," said Fairview's chief medical officer Mark Welton, MD, MHCM.

University of Minnesota Health neurosurgeons, who specialize in procedures that eliminate the blood clot causing a stroke, will work closely with the Telestroke program as well.

In addition to Dr. Streib, the University of Minnesota Health Stroke Neurology team includes Mohammed Alkuwaiti, MD; Ben Miller, MD; Oladi Benthoo, MD; Kamakshi Lakshminarayan, MD; Mustapha Ezzeddine, MD, and Rwoof Ahmed Reshi, MD.

The neurology team will be working closely with University of Minnesota Health Neurosurgeon Andrew Grande, MD, FRCS, FAANS; Neurosurgeon Ramachandra Tummala, MD, FRCS, FAANS; and Neuroradiologist Bharathi Jagadeesan, MD. These experts specialize in procedures that eliminate the blood clot causing a stroke, with the goal of preventing a devastating brain injury.

"We have seen extraordinary recoveries for stroke patients when the appropriate surgeries are performed in a timely manner," said University of Minnesota Health neurosurgeon Ramachandra

Tummala, MD. “We look forward to working with the Telestroke program to expand this invaluable service to more Minnesotans.”

About Fairview Health Services

Fairview Health Services (fairview.org) is a Minneapolis-based nonprofit health system driven to heal, discover and educate for longer, healthier lives. Founded in 1906, Fairview provides exceptional care to patients and communities as one of the most comprehensive and geographically accessible systems in Minnesota. Through a close relationship with the University of Minnesota, Fairview offers access to breakthrough medical research and specialty expertise as part of a continuum of care that reaches all ages and health needs.

About University of Minnesota Health

University of Minnesota Health represents a collaboration between University of Minnesota Physicians, Fairview Health Services and University of Minnesota Medical Center. Working together, we provide exceptional care in a wide range of specialties at our hospitals, clinics and in community-based facilities throughout the region. Visit: www.mhealth.org.

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