

CASE STUDY:

TeleNeurology Providing Timely Stroke Care and Financial Return for a Large Teaching Health System



The Challenge

Guthrie Robert Packer Hospital, the flagship hospital for a regional 288-bed tertiary care and teaching health system serving North Central Pennsylvania and southern New York, faced challenges in delivering timely stroke care. Limited access to neurologists was causing delays in the administration of the thrombolytic agent, Alteplase, used for treating ischemic strokes. Without an accredited stroke center or a system-wide solution, patients experiencing stroke were frequently transferred to other hospitals – resulting in care delays and lost revenue.

The Solution

Guthrie Robert Packer Hospital partnered with Access TeleCare to implement a teleNeurology program, ensuring 24/7 access to expert stroke specialists. The program accelerated stroke evaluations, reduced unnecessary transfers, and improved Alteplase administration rates.

As with all Access TeleCare specialty telemedicine programs, the hospital had access to a dedicated pod of neurologists who worked with on-site teams on treatment protocols, rapid response, EMR documentation, and care transition planning.

The Result

Access TeleCare neurologists provide rapid, expert consultation from the moment stroke patients arrive, no matter the day or time, ensuring quick treatment decisions and intervention. This resulted in fewer outbound transfers, a significant increase in stroke volume, and a 98 percent return on investment for the hospital.

Within five years:

- Alteplase utilization among eligible patients increased from 17 percent to 51 percent.
- Administration of the drug within 60 minutes of the patient's arrival at the hospital improved from 33 percent to nearly 79 percent.

With teleNeurology fully integrated into the hospital's emergency department workflow, Guthrie Robert Packer Hospital also became a Joint Commission-certified Primary Stroke Center.

In addition, the success of the teleNeurology stroke program led to expanding Access TeleCare's teleNeurology services to covering emergent and routine neurological consults at four other hospitals within the system.

Key Outcomes



31% increase in stroke patients seen.



Threefold increase in Alteplase Administration



98% return of investment in teleNeurology program



79% of eligible patients received Alteplase within 60 minutes

"This type of partnership is critical in such a time-sensitive environment. TeleNeurology has improved patient care, increased Alteplase use, and kept more stroke patients within our system."