

Saint Mary's Hospital, Rochester is the only **Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO)** certified Stroke Center in SE Minnesota. However, for some of our area ambulances the closest certified Stroke Centers may be located in the Metro area or La Crosse. SE EMS has been asked to remind the area ambulances that Saint Mary's hospital has now extended their **Brain Attack Pager out to 6 hrs** rather than the previous three hours.

- How does this affect me as an area pre-hospital provider?

Upon calling report to ECC (Emergency Communications Center) dispatcher in Rochester, announce that you are transporting a possible Emergency Stroke Patient for ALL patients with symptom onset of ≤ 6 hours.

- What if I am not sure if the diagnosis of stroke is correct?

DO NOT be hesitant to call it a stroke and request brain attack/stroke pager to be activated. If any one of the 3 findings on your Cincinnati Stroke Scale is abnormal you have a 72% chance of correctly diagnosing a stroke. Upon arrival to ED and the physician decides it is not a stroke we simply dismiss the stroke team.

- Why are we extending this to 6 hours when r-TPA (thrombolytic) can only be administered intravenous within the first 3 hours?

The *intravenous* form of thrombolysis CAN ONLY be given within 3 hours however, there may be other treatments available for patients >3 hr and <8 hr. It was felt some potential candidates for these other therapies may not be captured in a timely fashion

- What are these other therapies?

MERCI (Mechanical Embolus Removal in Cerebral Ischemia) device and/or cerebral intra-arterial r-TPA. This corkscrew-shaped device enables the clinician to remove clots blocking the cerebral artery under direct fluoroscopy. Cerebral Intra-arterial r-TPA may be administered in very small amount via a cerebral angiogram. Both procedures require a neuro-radiologist specially trained in these procedures.

If you have any concerns or comments regarding these changes please contact the SEEMS office at 507-536-9333