



## NEWS RELEASE

### ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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## Southeast Regional Pilot Acute Stroke System: A success story

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Alabama Department of Public Health and the Office of Emergency Medical Services along with Alabama hospitals would like to reflect on the successful initiation and completion of the first six months of operation of the Southeast Regional Pilot Acute Stroke System (SRPASS).

SRPASS was established to serve patients in 18 southeast Alabama counties (Autauga, Barbour, Bullock, Butler, Coffee, Covington, Crenshaw, Dale, Elmore, Geneva, Henry, Houston, Lee, Lowndes, Macon, Montgomery, Pike and Russell). To date, 1,260 patients have been serviced by the system as a whole.

Stroke is the leading cause of serious long-term disability and the fourth leading cause of death in the United States. Patients who are having a stroke need to be quickly evaluated at a hospital, just like patients who are having a heart attack.

Operation of the stroke system is similar to the Alabama Trauma System, which relies on voluntary participation by hospitals. Hospitals have been inspected and designated for the level of services they can provide, and each hospital will self-determine when it is available to take a stroke patient.

Stroke system patient routing is coordinated by a single high-tech communication center, the ATCC, which coordinates patient transport to the appropriate facility and facilitates transfer of patients that require a higher level of care after initial treatment. The SRPASS relies heavily on the resources and participation of hospitals, emergency medical service personnel, and coordination by the ATCC.

Telemedicine is used to facilitate rapid identification and treatment of stroke patients in many of the Level III hospitals, including Andalusia Regional Hospital, Baptist Medical Center East, Community Hospital of Tallassee, East Alabama Medical Center, Medical Center Barbour, Mizell Memorial Hospital, Prattville Baptist Hospital and Southeast Alabama Medical Center. ADPH plans to start rolling out a statewide stroke system of care that will help ensure that patients experiencing stroke symptoms are transported to the closest hospital with the appropriate resources to care for them.