

The Get Ahead of Stroke Campaign

The Society of NeuroInterventional Surgery (SNIS) launched the Get Ahead of Stroke campaign in May 2016 to help more patients survive stroke by improving stroke policies and raising awareness across the country. Specifically, the campaign is working to update protocols so that stroke severity is triaged in the field and patients suspected of emergent large vessel occlusions are transported directly to a level 1 stroke center, where they can receive life-saving neuroendovascular stroke surgery.

In a little more than a year, the campaign—which was named most impactful in 2017 by the National Stroke Association—has made significant progress toward achieving these goals, resulting in greater public awareness and engagement on stroke as well as improved public policies in several states.

In October 2017, the campaign launched a mobile app to help first responders quickly triage and transport patients to stroke centers equipped to treat severe strokes. The app, Stroke Scales for EMS, is designed to help first responders determine the severity of a stroke in emergency situations and, in cases of severe stroke, transport patients to neuroendovascular-ready stroke facilities. It includes five common stroke severity scales: LAMS, RACE, CPSSS, FAST-ED, and VAN. The app is available for free download on the iOS App Store and Google Play.

“Ever since the 2015 trials that proved the efficacy of neuroendovascular stroke surgery, SNIS has been committed to spreading the word about this treatment so that more patients can survive stroke,” said Blaise Baxter, MD, a neurointerventional radiologist and the President of the Society of NeuroInterventional Surgery. “We are pleased at the support the campaign has received from first responders, physicians, lawmakers and many others this past year, and are encouraged to continue our work improving systems of stroke care for everyone.”

The campaign has worked to improve policies at the state level by introducing legislation or rules in several states. Their efforts have resulted in a rule passed by the Arizona Department of Health on emergency medical services stroke triage and a joint resolution passed unanimously by the Colorado Legislature supporting stroke system of care improvements. The campaign is also engaging with policymakers and health department officials in Massachusetts and Tennessee and is supporting local efforts in Texas and Virginia to update stroke guidelines.

In addition to legislative activity and awareness events, the campaign has created and shared compelling stroke survivor story videos, placed numerous op-eds in national and local media, and developed educational resources for patients and first responders. The campaign has also reached a wide audience through its online presence, with its hashtag #SurviveStroke reaching more than 2 million people. To learn more about the Get Ahead of Stroke campaign, visit www.getaheadofstroke.org. ■

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