

APPROVED
08.04.26

Georgia Committee for Trauma Excellence (GCTE)

April 30, 2026

2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

[Meeting Recording and Attachments Link](#)

Lynn Grant, Fairview Park Hospital

GCTE Chair

EXECUTIVE MEMBERS PRESENT	REPRESENTING
Becky Gaskins, <i>Vice Chair</i>	Grady
Emily Russell, <i>Education</i>	Grady
Kellie Rowker, <i>Pediatric</i>	Children's Healthcare of Atlanta
Rayma Stephens/Ashley Bullington, <i>Performance Improvement</i>	Northside Gwinnett Hospital/Crisp Regional Hospital
Kelli Vaughn, <i>Registry</i>	J.D. Archbold Memorial Hospital
Kristal Smith/Justin Keeton, <i>Injury Prevention</i>	Atrium Health Navicent/Piedmont Henry

ATTENDEES		
FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	ORGANIZATION
Nicole	Sundholm	AdventHealth Redmond
Kristal	Smith	Atrium EMS
Jill	Bowman	Atrium Health Floyd
Katie	Hasty	Atrium Health Floyd
Matthew	Orouke	Atrium Health Floyd
Melissa	Parris	Atrium Health Floyd
Kristen	Phillips	Atrium Health Floyd Polk Medical Center
Dawn	Truett	Atrium Health Floyd Polk Medical Center
Jessica	Davis	Atrium Health Navicent
Maria Francis	Johnson	Atrium Health Navicent
Patricia	Judd	Atrium Health Navicent
Hunter	Logue	Atrium Health Navicent
Brenna	McClure	Atrium Health Navicent
Susan	Murphy	Atrium Health Navicent
Alicia	Cochran	Children's Healthcare of Atlanta
Susanne	Edwards	Children's Healthcare of Atlanta
Kellie	Rowker	Children's Healthcare of Atlanta

ATTENDEES		
Echo	Standley	Children's Healthcare of Atlanta
Rebecca	Butler	Coffee Regional Medical Center
Anna	Roberson	Coffee Regional Medical Center
Christi	Griner	Colquitt Regional Medical Center
Ashley	Bullington	Crisp Regional Hospital
Laura	Lunsford	Doctors Hospital of Augusta
Danlin	Luo	DPH OEMST
Marie	Probst	DPH OEMST
Stacee	Smith	DPH OEMST
Brianna	Teel	Effingham Health System
Brooke J.	Marsh	Emanuel Medical Center
Gail	Thornton	Emanuel Medical Center
Ben	Doyle	Fairview Park Hospital
Tyler	Bryant	Georgia Trauma Foundation
Jessi	Astrella	Grady
Courtney	Baker	Grady
Miranda	Baras	Grady
Michael	Bentley	Grady
Samantha	Buchanan	Grady
Andrea	Costanzo	Grady
Teri	Craig	Grady
Joy	Eleby	Grady
Jennifer	Freeman	Grady
Rebecca	Gaskins	Grady
Krystal	Harper	Grady
Leslie	Miller	Grady
Leslie	Miller	Grady
Erin	Moorcones	Grady
Leigh	Pack	Grady
Sarah	Parker	Grady
Emily	Page	Grady
Emily	Russell	Grady
Angela	Sanabria	Grady
Kelli	Scott	Grady
Maria	Silva	Grady
Roger	Smith	Grady

ATTENDEES		
Alan	So	Grady
Tanga	Spann	Grady
Ashley	Steele	Grady
Barbara	Thomas	Grady
Alana	Valadez	Grady
Pamela	Van Ness	Grady
Pamela	Vanderberg	Grady
Elizabeth	Williams-Woods	Grady
Brian	Dorriety	GTC
Gina	Solomon	GTC
Kim	Brown	Hamilton Medical Center
Farrah	Parker	JMS Burn Center at Doctors Hospital
Janet	Mueller	JMS Burn Center at Wellstar Cobb Hospital
Mary Beth	Goodwin	John D. Archbold Memorial Hospital
Kelli	Vaughn	John D. Archbold Memorial Hospital
Jessica	Frame	Liberty Regional Medical Center
Tammie	Russell	Liberty Regional Medical Center
James "Tracy"	Burnsed	Memorial Health University Medical Center
Tommy	Langenfeld	Memorial Health University Medical Center
Whitney	Williamson	Memorial Health University Medical Center
Caitlyn	Walsh	Memorial Satilla Health
Christie	Mathis	Morgan Medical Center
Carol	Gerrin	Northeast Georgia Medical Center
Linda	Greene	Northeast Georgia Medical Center
Courtney	Herrin	Northeast Georgia Medical Center
Blanca	Hinojosa	Northeast Georgia Medical Center
Jenna	Howell	Northeast Georgia Medical Center
Morgan	Krause	Northeast Georgia Medical Center
Janice	Labbe	Northeast Georgia Medical Center
Jessica	Mantooth	Northeast Georgia Medical Center
Kathy	McDaniel	Northeast Georgia Medical Center
Crystal	Orrick	Northeast Georgia Medical Center
Walter	Wiley	Northeast Georgia Medical Center
Laura	Wolf	Northeast Georgia Medical Center
Nadirah	Burgess	Northside Hospital Gwinnett
Abby	Darroux	Northside Hospital Gwinnett

ATTENDEES		
Dana	Davis	Northside Hospital Gwinnett
Stephanie	Franceschi Negron	Northside Hospital Gwinnett
Tracy	Harris	Northside Hospital Gwinnett
Sarah	Holcombe	Northside Hospital Gwinnett
Colleen	Horne	Northside Hospital Gwinnett
Kim	Smith	Northside Hospital Gwinnett
Rayma	Stephens	Northside Hospital Gwinnett
Terri	White	Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital
Ana	Delgado	Piedmont Athens Regional
Heather	Morgan	Piedmont Athens Regional
Shannon	Thomas	Piedmont Athens Regional
Brett	Buehner	Piedmont Augusta Hospital
Jon	Horsager	Piedmont Augusta Hospital
Karen	Barrett	Piedmont Cartersville
Jerry	McMillan	Piedmont Cartersville
Kaleigh	Stallard	Piedmont Cartersville
Amy	Stephens	Piedmont Cartersville
Jan	Tidwell	Piedmont Cartersville
Karneshiha	Curry	Piedmont Columbus
Marilyn	Dunlap	Piedmont Columbus
Mary	Jameson	Piedmont Columbus
Tamara	Patterson	Piedmont Columbus
Shalonda	Wright	Piedmont Columbus
Abigail	Frank	Piedmont Henry
Lizbeth	Jones	Piedmont Henry
Justin	Keeton	Piedmont Henry
Jason	Radford	Piedmont Henry
Marylynn	Sullivan	Piedmont Henry
Courtney	Adams	Piedmont Newton
Erica	Walker	Piedmont Newton
Lisa	Thomas	Piedmont Walton
James	Polston	Piedmont Walton Hospital
Kimberly	Reusmann	Piedmont Walton Hospital
Steve	Elmgren	RTAC3 / Grady
Emily	Brown	SGMC Health
Janann	Dunnavant	SGMC Health

ATTENDEES		
Desiree	Lacy	SGMC Health
Kailey	Paulson	SGMC Health
Stephanie	Greenstein	Wellstar
Duane	Mitchell	Wellstar
Kelsie	Wanty	Wellstar
Cindy	Hanks	Wellstar Cobb
Tayler	Jagues	Wellstar Cobb
Shelby	Lemon	Wellstar Cobb
Cristina	Soto-Olvera	Wellstar Cobb
Austin	Thomas	Wellstar Cobb
Nadine	Lynch-Mascoe	Wellstar Cobb Burn Program
Adalynn	Rath	Wellstar Douglas Medical Center
Erica	Walsh	Wellstar Douglas Medical Center
Dana	Bouse	Wellstar Kennestone
Megan	Dawson	Wellstar Kennestone
Danielle	Johnson	Wellstar Kennestone
Karen	Johnson	Wellstar Kennestone
Amy	Kattner	Wellstar Kennestone
Jamie	Van Ness	Wellstar Kennestone
Taitiana	Woods	Wellstar Kennestone
Anna	Haynes	Wellstar MCG
Shelby	Adams	Wellstar MCG Health
Raqeal	Beard	Wellstar MCG Health
Ashley	Faircloth	Wellstar MCG Health
Dawn	Faircloth	Wellstar MCG Health
Sandra	Lowe	Wellstar MCG Health
Adrian	Ruiz	Wellstar MCG Health
Agnieszka	Sellers	Wellstar MCG Health
Patricia	Smith	Wellstar MCG Health
Shajuana	Taylor	Wellstar MCG Health
Elizabeth	Folse	Wellstar North Fulton Hospital
Rhonda	Jones	Wellstar North Fulton Hospital
Michelle	Jordan	Wellstar Paulding Medical Center
Heather	Loftus	Wellstar Spalding Medical Center
Vaughn	Tejedor	Wellstar Spalding Medical Center
Rachel	Hand	Wellstar West Ga Medical Center

ATTENDEES		
Cameron Melissa	Grimes-Ayres Hungerford	Wellstar West Georgia Medical Center Winn Army Community Hospital

TOPIC	DISCUSSION
Call to Order/Approval Mins Intro of New Members	Becky Gaskins, Committee Vice Chair, called the meeting of the Georgia Committee for Trauma Excellence (GCTE), a committee of the Georgia Trauma Commission (GTC), to order at 2:00 pm. After quorum was established, Becky requested a motion to approve the February 19, 2026, meeting minutes. <u>MOTION GCTE 2026-04-01:</u> Motion to approve February 19, 2026, meeting minutes. MOTION: Danielle Johnson SECOND: Shelby Adams DISCUSSION: None ACTION: The motion <u>PASSED</u> with no objections nor abstentions After minutes approval, Becky asked if new committee members were present and welcomed them to the committee.
Georgia Trauma Commission (GTC) Update	Commission updates included: • The legislative session concluded on April 2nd. The Georgia Trauma Commission budget passed intact, including continued supplemental \$4 million funding. • A called Commission meeting was scheduled for budget approval to expedite contracts and funding distributions. • HB 629, mandating bleeding control training in schools, passed successfully. Recognition was given to Representative Hawkins and Northeast Georgia Medical Center leadership for support and advocacy. National partnerships are being explored with Stop the Bleed leadership. • Crystal Shelnutt was congratulated on her appointment to the National EMS Advisory Council (NEMSAC). • Ongoing statewide preparedness planning for large-scale casualty and surge events continues. Emphasis was placed on statewide triage and inpatient capacity coordination. • Registration reminders were provided for the OPTIMAL Course and Summer GQIP Meeting at Jekyll Island (ATTACHMENT A). Attendance requirements for hospital leadership, trauma program managers, and medical directors were reviewed. • Elizabeth Atkins reported on her participation in the World Trauma Congress in Stockholm. International trauma system observations included: • Mass casualty preparedness

TOPIC	DISCUSSION
	• Trauma bay and imaging innovations • NATO-related surge planning • Liz Atkins also shared that her term as STN President. New STN initiatives include: • International Special Interest Group (SIG) • Rural SIG development
Georgia Quality Improvement Program Update	Gina Solomon provided the following updates: • Reminder provided regarding the May 19th combined GQIP/TMD call. • Attendees were encouraged to register for the Summer GQIP Meeting. Dr. John Holcomb will serve as keynote speaker for the summer meeting. • 2025 data has been uploaded into the ArborMetrix system. Report cards are being finalized and distributed. • Spring TQIP reports and collaborative reports were released. Future requests for performance matrices will follow review of current reports. • Leadership continues refining useful and meaningful metrics. Work is underway to develop a geriatric trauma case review tool. Focus areas include: • Frailty screening • Delirium • Mortality and major event review enhancements
Regional Trauma Advisory Committee (RTAC) Updates	Crystal Shelnutt provided the following updates: • Region 1 launched a collaborative multi-county pre-hospital blood initiative. The project was recognized for innovation and efficient blood product management. • Region 9 is developing a rural-focused pre-hospital blood initiative with multiple regional partners. • RTACs partnered with the Georgia Trauma Foundation to expand Stop the Bleed kits in public high schools. Expansion includes increased training and larger kit inventories. • EMS education grants are now available through the GTC website. Funding opportunities include: • EMR programs • EMT/AEMT programs • Rural micro-grants • The first cadaver lab is scheduled at Lanier Technical College. Labs will expand statewide across all regions. Northeast Georgia Medical Center was recognized for support and partnership. • Upcoming educational offerings include: • TECC courses • MCI training • EVOC instructor courses • NAEMT courses

TOPIC	DISCUSSION
Office of EMS & Trauma (OEMST) Update	Marie Probst provided the following updates: • Third quarter OTCPE and OBCPE reports are still being submitted. TPMs were reminded to submit required forms promptly to begin review. TMDs were reminded to complete attestations; the submission form closes the day of the meeting. • 2025 ImageTrend data submissions were completed by all centers. The submission portal will be closed following the meeting. • Instruction was provided to delay any 2026 data imports until the 2026 Georgia state update is installed in ESO. The 2026 state update was distributed and includes installation instructions via email. • Requests were made for updates on EMS or hospital name changes and new service entries for upcoming listings. • The next data download deadline is June 1st, covering records beginning January 1, 2026. • The Georgia Extension data dictionary is available for vendors to support correct system mapping. • Facilities were reminded to perform QA checks prior to submission, focusing on: • Missing data • Invalid entries • Non-matching records • Required reporting fields include NTDS, ITDX, and Georgia Extension elements. Stacee Smith provided the following updates: • Memorial Satilla Health was recognized as a newly designated Level IV trauma center in Region 9. • Thirteen total designation and re-designation visits are scheduled for the year. • Recent American College of Surgeons (ACS) visits emphasized: • Demonstrating how TQIP data is used in PI processes • Showing measurable improvement actions based on data • Trauma centers were encouraged to move beyond reporting metrics to demonstrate actionable quality improvement efforts. • ACS reviewers also discussed trauma triage evaluation: • Continued use of Cribari is acceptable. • NFTI scale was introduced as an additional method for deeper analysis of over- and under-triage. • Emphasis was placed on further breakdown and validation of triage outliers within PI processes. • The EMS Systems of Care Advisory Council continues its work across trauma, stroke, cardiac, and EMS systems. • OTCPE and OBCPE submissions are under review, with feedback to be distributed to centers.
Georgia Trauma Foundation Update	Tyler Bryant provided the following updates:

TOPIC	DISCUSSION
	• One Georgia Gala will be held at the Delta Flight Museum in Atlanta in approximately one month. The event will highlight trauma system achievements and survivor stories. Activities include: • Live and silent auctions • Fundraising and recognition events • Volunteers are being recruited for event support. • Ticket information is available through the Georgia Trauma Foundation website. • Regional events were announced: • Region 9 event scheduled for September 19th in Savannah at Ships of the Sea Maritime Museum, featuring coastal cuisine. • Region 5 event scheduled for November 7th in Dublin at Southern Pines Regional Park, featuring an outdoor festival and live music. • Region 8 event is planned but dates are pending finalization. • Sponsorship opportunities are available for regional events.
Subcommittee Reports	Education: Emily Russell provided the following updates: • Collaborating with the Georgia Trauma Commission to offer funded courses: • TOPIC Course set for May 8th, registration closed • OPTIMAL Course set for Aug 19, registration deadline July 15th Addendum: Courses are organized by Gabriela Saye, please contact gabriela.saye@gtc.ga.gov for registration or course information. Pediatric: Kellie Rowker provided the following updates: • Congratulations extended to the Arthur Blank Trauma Team following successful ACS verification. • Pediatric Indications for Transfer one-page document is finalized and available upon request. • Pediatric Radiology Toolkit: • Proposal completed • Literature review finalized • Pending review meeting with CHOA ED physicians and pediatric radiologists • Target release: Quarter 3 • Pediatric tri-fold quick reference guide: • Content approved • Formatting issues remain • Expected release: Quarter 3 • Full Pediatric Transfer Toolkit is in development, with anticipated electronic availability in 2027 Performance Improvement: Rayma Stephens provided updates:

TOPIC	DISCUSSION
	• Subcommittee continues compiling standardized PI review documents. • Focus shifted toward developing geriatric trauma initiatives across facilities. • Members are sharing tools and existing geriatric guidelines. A shared repository has been created in Basecamp for collaboration and document storage. Registry: Kelli Vaughn provided the following updates: • The subcommittee met during its quarterly registry meeting. • There is continued interest in conducting another vendor review, planned to occur over the summer. A smaller planning group will meet before broader communication is sent due to increased vendor participation. • A registry Q&A log has been created in Basecamp for tracking questions and resolutions. The log includes monthly topics, questions, and final resolutions. Registry questions are shared and discussed among program managers statewide. A significant discussion ensued focused on guidance from TQIP regarding hospital discharge disposition for patients discharged home with hospice services. The current TQIP interpretation classifies these patients as “discharged home,” based on the rationale that most care is provided by family or caregivers rather than inpatient hospice services. This interpretation differs from many hospital practices, where such cases are typically documented as discharge to hospice and reviewed as mortality-related performance improvement cases. Concerns were raised regarding inconsistencies between registry definitions, billing practices, and NTDS dictionary guidance. Members also expressed concern that reclassification as “home discharge” could impact performance improvement processes by reducing visibility of hospice-related cases. Discussion highlighted the need for clarification and alignment across registry standards, billing definitions, and TQIP guidance. It was agreed that further communication with TQIP is necessary. A draft memo had been prepared by the registry subcommittee requesting reconsideration and clarification of the guidance. However, after discussion, the group agreed to pause formal submission. Leadership, including Liz Atkins and Kelli Vaughn, will collaborate further to refine the message and determine appropriate next steps for escalation. Injury Prevention and Outreach: Kristal Smith provided the following update:

TOPIC	DISCUSSION
	• The Injury Prevention Subcommittee continues to meet monthly to discuss injury prevention and outreach efforts. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday at 2:00 PM. Calendar invites will be updated and redistributed; members should notify leadership if they are not receiving invitations. • Subcommittee meetings continue to include member presentations on successful injury prevention projects and outreach efforts. Members also share experiences related to ACS verification and injury prevention/outreach requirements. • State partners regularly participate, including representatives from Safe Kids, Area Agencies on Aging, and DPH, providing updates on statewide injury prevention initiatives. • The subcommittee is planning a series of webinars for National Stop the Bleed Day. • Due to scheduling conflicts with Trauma Awareness Month, Trauma Survivor Day, and EMSC Day, webinars will be moved to Thursday of that week instead of Wednesday. • Upcoming presentation: Rachel will present on bicycle and ATV safety at the next meeting.
Q3 GCTE Meeting Date Selection	Becky Gaskins introduced the item for discussion regarding the next meeting date. The group moved to vote on scheduling the Q3 GCTE meeting. A Mentimeter poll was used to collect availability. Options included: • Wednesday, July 29th • Tuesday, August 4th • Friday, August 7th After polling, Tuesday, August 4th, 1:00-3:00 PM, was selected as the preferred date (ATTACHMENT B). The meeting invitation will be distributed following the meeting.
2022 ACS Standards Review: Standard 7.1	Megan Dawson presented Standard 7.1 (Trauma Performance Improvement and Patient Safety Program). • Standard requires the PIPS program to be empowered to identify opportunities for improvement and implement action plans. • The PIPS program must be integrated with hospital PI and quality departments. • Feedback loops must be established to ensure closure of performance improvement issues. • Trauma care involves multidisciplinary providers, and the PIPS program should facilitate collaborative review and improvement efforts. • Compliance requires submission of the hospital organizational chart showing integration between PIPS and organizational PI programs. • At the presenter's facility: • Trauma committee meets monthly. • Reports are submitted to the hospital quality review committee. • Minutes are accessible to committee members.

TOPIC	DISCUSSION
	• Issues escalate through medical executive committees and system-level governance when appropriate. • PI plan ensures alignment between trauma and quality processes with bidirectional communication. • External review (ACS verification) confirmed integration of trauma PI with hospital quality processes.
2022 ACS Standards Review: Standard 8.2	Ashley Bullington presented Standard 8.2 (Nursing Trauma Orientation and Education). • Standard requires trauma centers to provide nursing orientation and education related to trauma care. • Compliance is evaluated through review of orientation materials and required certifications. • At the presenter's facility: • ER nursing orientation includes lectures, hands-on scavenger hunts, and simulation-based training. • TNCC certification is required for emergency department nurses. • TCAR certification is encouraged for ICU and inpatient nurses, with ongoing efforts to increase participation. • Internal and external trauma education courses (TNCC and ENPC) are offered through Georgia Trauma Foundation programs. • Ongoing bedside education is provided based on staff request (splinting, IO access training, etc.). • ED Trauma Focus Group supports education, mock drills, and project development. • Mock drills occur every other month and include tabletop and live scenarios. • Hospital-wide skills fairs include trauma education components. • Annual ED competencies include trauma-related skills such as rapid infusers and ultrasound use. • HealthStream modules are used for annual trauma education compliance. • New nurse orientation includes trauma education components and resource provision.
2022 ACS Standards Review: Standard 8.3	Kristal Smith presented Standard 8.3 (Pre-Hospital Provider Training). • Standard requires all trauma centers to participate in training pre-hospital providers. • Participation requires active engagement and appropriate documentation, not passive support. Engagement with EMS providers can be challenging due to competing responsibilities and regional variability. • The presenter noted strong collaboration with regional EMS partners, including Atrium Navicent EMS and surrounding counties. Communication with EMS education and performance improvement teams is ongoing and collaborative. Regional EMS partners, RTAC, EMS for Children programs, EMS training coordinators, and related stakeholders serve as key collaborators. • The RTAC model supports regional engagement and scalability of education efforts. Emphasis is placed on shared ownership between trauma centers and EMS agencies rather than centralized control. • EMS agencies are encouraged to adapt educational resources to meet local needs. • Multidisciplinary inclusion is emphasized, including EMS, fire, law enforcement, nursing, and physician partners across designated and non-designated facilities. • Education is delivered through an inclusive, system-wide approach to promote alignment and consistency.

TOPIC	DISCUSSION
	• Regional capacity building includes loaning equipment and supporting train-the-trainer models. • The train-the-trainer approach is used to expand educational reach and sustainability beyond individual sessions. • Education has shifted from event-based training to a culture-based model supported by ongoing systems and processes. • Performance Improvement processes guide educational development at both facility and regional levels. • Surveillance methods used to guide education include: • Case reviews • Dispatch audio review when appropriate • Review of hospital and security system data when available • Surveillance data is used to identify system gaps and avoid reliance on assumptions or single data sources. Findings are used to identify best practices and disseminate them regionally. • Successes and lessons learned are shared across EMS partners to improve system-wide care. • EMS partner feedback is actively used to refine education and identify best practice agencies. Emphasis is placed on understanding the why behind performance gaps. Documentation requirements include: • Training rosters • Post-course evaluations • Knowledge assessments when applicable • Records of collaboration with partners • Opportunities for engagement include regional EMS education programs such as PHTLS, PALS, and ACLS courses.
Roundtable Discussion: Shared Experiences and Updates	Linda Greene provided a data-related update. • When running chart pulls for trauma verification documentation, users should verify diagnosis code alignment. • Differences exist between ICD coding versions (2005 vs 2015). • Some diagnosis codes, including spinal cord injury with neuro deficits, have changed between versions. • Pre-built queries may not include updated 2015 codes. • Users are encouraged to ensure reports include updated coding standards to avoid discrepancies. Ashley Bullington and participants discussed strategies to support TNCC certification. • TNCC certification is sometimes not included in job descriptions, creating participation challenges. • Suggested strategies include: • Financial incentives (e.g., pay differentials or bonuses for certification) • Linking certification to job expectations or scheduling requirements • Leadership support from nursing and emergency department leadership

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	• Examples shared included: • \$1 per hour pay increase for TNCC-certified nurses • 2% salary increase for certified nurses • Requirement to obtain certification within a defined timeframe Updates were provided on pre-hospital blood programs. • SGMC Health reported implementation of pre-hospital whole blood with early successful administrations. • Atrium Health Navicent reported: • Five pre-hospital blood administrations to date • Positive early patient outcomes • Grady EMS reported a two-year milestone for its whole blood program with strong outcome data and documented patient saves. Liz Atkins requested input from the group to tailor upcoming OPTIMAL course. • Proposal to develop a focused survey to identify educational needs. • Goal is to tailor state-level optimal course content to Georgia-specific needs. • Focus areas may include: • Site visit preparation challenges • Verification readiness concerns • Level III consultation visit preparation needs • PI subcommittee agreed to assist with survey development and distribution. The following celebrations were shared: • One facility reported a trauma registrar successfully passing the CAISS certification exam. • Another facility reported two registrars passing the CAISS exam. • Several centers recently completed or are awaiting ACS verification survey results. Positive survey outcomes were noted, with final reports pending official confirmation.
Adjournment	GCTE leadership thanked committee members for their efforts and contributions across the trauma programs. The next meeting is scheduled for August 4th via Zoom <i>Becky Gaskins adjourned the meeting at 3:38 pm</i>