

APPROVED
11.16.23



GEORGIA TRAUMA COMMISSION

Georgia Trauma Commission Meeting Minutes

Thursday, August 10, 2023

2:00 PM-5:00 PM

DeSoto Hotel

Savannah, Georgia

Meeting Recording: <https://youtu.be/T4Eb7c2oTo0>

Meeting Attachments: trauma.ga.gov

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

Dr. Dennis Ashley, Chairman
Dr. James Dunne, Vice-Chairman
Dr. Regina Medeiros, Secretary /Treasurer
Dr. John Bleacher
Mr. Courtney Terwilliger
Mr. Vic Drawdy via Zoom
Dr. Michelle Wallace via Zoom
Mr. Jim Adkins

STAFF MEMBERS & OTHERS SIGNING IN	REPRESENTING	ATTENDING
Elizabeth Atkins	GTC, Executive Director	In person
Katie Hamilton	GTC, Finance Operations Officer	In person
Gina Solomon	GTC, GQIP Director	In person
Gabriela Saye	GTC, Executive Assistant	In person
Cheryle Ward	Georgia Trauma Foundation, Executive Director	In person
Catherine Martin	Atrium Health Floyd Polk Medical Center, TMD	In person
Dawn Truett	Atrium Health Floyd Polk Medical Center, TPM	In person
Katie Hasty	Atrium Health Floyd, Injury Prevention Coordinator	In person
Crystal Wynn	Atrium Health Floyd, PI Coordinator	In person
Clarence McKemie	Atrium Health Floyd, TMD	In person
Melissa Parris	Atrium Health Floyd, TPM	In person
Tracy Johns	Atrium Health Navicent, TPM	In person
Robyn Axlund	Atrium Health Navicent, Trauma Data Coordinator	In person
Kyndra Holm	Augusta University, PTPM	In person
Ashley Faircloth	Augusta University, TPM PI	In person
David Cox	Crisp Regional Hospital, ER director/MD Crisp hospital	In person
Ashley Bullington	Crisp Regional Hospital, TPM	In person
April Moss	DPH OEMST, Deputy Director, Systems of Care	In person
Michael Johnson	DPH OEMST, Director	In person
Danlin Luo	DPH OEMST, Epidemiologist	Virtual

Jonathan Lieupo	DPH OEMST, Region 8 Regional Training Coordinator	Virtual
Marie Probst	DPH OEMST, State Trauma Registrar	In person
Bernard Restrepo	DPH OEMST, Training Coordinator	Virtual
Richard Rhodes	DPH OEMST, Training Coordinator	In person
Olalekan Akinyokunbo	Emanuel Medical Center, TMD	In person
Brooke Marsh	Emanuel Medical Center, TPM	In person
Gail Thornton	Emanuel Medical Center, Trauma Registrar	In person
Becca Hallum	Georgia Hospital Association, Associate General Counsel	Virtual
Lawrence Blair	Grady Memorial Hospital, Injury Prevention & Outreach Manager	In person
Rocky Rothenberg	Grady Memorial Hospital, PI Coordinator	In person
S. Rob Todd	Grady Memorial Hospital, SVP / Chief, Acute Care Surgery	In person
Sarah Parker	Grady Memorial Hospital, Trauma Program Director	Virtual
Greg Nickel	GTC Stop the Bleed, Coordinator	Virtual
Brian Delashmitt	Hamilton Medical Center, EVP CMO	In person
William Hardeman	Hamilton Medical Center, TMD	In person
Steve Paynter	Hamilton Medical Center, TMD	In person
Kim Brown	Hamilton Medical Center, TPM	In person
Judean Guinn	Hamilton Medical Center, VP/CNO	In person
Gregory Patterson	J.D. Archbold Memorial Hospital, TMD	In person
Farrah Parker	Joseph M. Still Burn Center, Supervisor Burn Services	In person
Karrie Page	Memorial Health Meadows Hospital, Training Coordinator	Virtual
Kendrix Evans	Memorial Meadows Hospital, TMD	In person
Karen Young	Morgan Medical Center, Director of Nursing and Risk	In person
David Lawrence	Morgan Medical Center, Medical Director	In person
Christie Mathis	Morgan Medical Center, TPM	In person
W Matthew Vassy	Northeast Georgia Medical Center, TMD	In person
Jesse Gibson	Northeast Georgia Medical Center, Trauma Program Director	In person
Naila Avery	Northside Hospital Gwinnett, TMD	In person
Nadirah Burgess	Northside Hospital Gwinnett, TPM	In person
Rayma Stephens	Northside Hospital Gwinnett, Trauma PI Coordinator	In person
Brandi Fitzgerald	Phoebe Putney Trauma Program, TPM	Virtual
Heather Morgan	Piedmont Athens, TPM	In person

Jay Connelly	Piedmont Henry Hospital, Dir. Trauma & Stroke	In person
Fred Nichols	Piedmont Henry Hospital, Medical Director	In person
Justin Keeton	Piedmont Henry Hospital, PI coordinator	In person
Richard Jacob	Piedmont Walton, TMD	In person
Karen Hust	Piedmont Walton, TPM	In person
Crystal Shelnutt	Region 10 RTAC, Coordinator	Virtual
Andrew Altman	RTAC Region 9, Coordinator	Virtual
Ford Vox	Shepherd Center, Medical Director / DoC	Virtual
Nadine Lynch	Wellstar Cobb, Burn Program Manager	In person
Alyssa Monda	Wellstar Cobb, PI Coordinator	In person
Winston Charles	Wellstar Cobb, TPM	In person
Roger Smith	Wellstar Cobb, Trauma Registrar	In person
Rachel Hand	Wellstar Ga Medical Center, TPM	In person
Danielle Johnson	Wellstar Kennestone / RTAC Region 3, Trauma Outreach Coordinator	Virtual
Jamie Van Ness	Wellstar Kennestone, Director of Trauma Services	Virtual
Megan Dawson	Wellstar Kennestone, PI Coordinator	Virtual
Christina Ucci	Wellstar Kennestone, Trauma PI Coordinator	Virtual
Jaina Carnes	Wellstar North Fulton, TPM	In person
Arthur Curran	Wellstar Paulding, TMD	In person
Kerry Carter	Wellstar Paulding, TPM	In person

CALL TO ORDER (00:00:13)

Dr. Dennis Ashley called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM, with eight Commission members present.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES (00:00:38)

Presented by Dr. Dennis Ashley

Dr. Ashley requested a motion to approve the May 25 meeting minutes, p. 2-10, in the meeting packet (ATTACHMENT A).

MOTION GTCNC 2023-08-01:

Motion to approve May 25, 2023 meeting minutes as submitted

MOTION BY: Jim Adkins

SECOND BY: John Bleacher

VOTING: All members are in favor of the motion.

ACTION: The motion **PASSED** with no objections nor abstentions.

CHAIRMAN REPORT | TRAUMA SYSTEM FUNDING ANALYSIS (00:01:06)

Presented by Dr. Dennis Ashley

Dr. Ashley explained that the Chairman Report will be a presentation of the Trauma System Stabilization Proposal, p. 11-50. The proposal is a collaborative effort to analyze the system's financial situation. It was noted that a substantial amount of data is available to support the need for additional funding. Dr. Ashley highlights the comprehensive data analysis over the past 13 years to present a financial narrative of the trauma system's journey. The presentation included both achievements and challenges faced by the system. In addition, the number of trauma centers and their current status were reviewed to emphasize the evolution of the trauma center landscape over time. The financial drivers for trauma centers, specifically readiness and uncompensated care costs, were discussed. Dr. Ashley stressed that the numbers provided are conservative estimates.

The presentation concluded with a proposal for a stabilization plan, suggesting a 50% funding model for readiness (level I, II, and III trauma centers) and 100% readiness funding for level IV trauma centers totaling \$61 million. The proposal will offer trauma centers more financial predictability, allow trauma system expansion, and increase rural center support.

Dr. Ashley advised that the proposal was open for discussion and collaboration. Some discussion points included:

- The proposal's primary funding focus is readiness costs due to its predictability and alignment with established standards. Uncompensated care costs are less predictable.
- EMS funding support is also needed to address issues like interfacility transportation. It was acknowledged that EMS barriers need further examination and data analysis to determine the necessary funding.
- The importance of trauma center expansion, especially in rural areas, was emphasized. The expansion aims to stabilize patients closer to the injury site.
- There is a need for careful messaging when communicating with legislators. The recent hospital closures and potential consequences of inadequate funding were identified as key points.
- Data limitations were noted, with available data only extending up to 2020. Recent hospital closures' impact remains unmeasured.

Dr. Ashley thanked Commission members for their feedback and asked Liz Atkins to continue with the Executive Director Report.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT (00:043:56)

Presented by Liz Atkins

Liz Atkins referenced the full report on pages 51-60, which provides a high-level overview of the last quarter's progression of our key initiatives.

- If a center was designated before May, they are now included in the contracted funding with the Georgia Trauma Commission. Bringing additional trauma centers into the funding impacted the allocation to the existing contracted centers. As the funding is spread across more centers, there is less funding to go around as our overall pool of funding does not significantly increase from year to year.
- A new committee, the Trauma System Executive Leadership (TSEL), was formed, including dyad leadership from the Department of Public Health and the Georgia Trauma Commission, to address higher-level system issues and eliminate confusion surrounding agency responsibilities.

- The draft of a Trauma System Dashboard is under development, p.55. It aims to monitor system performance, such as over and under-triage rates, treatment of critical patients, and time to definitive care. Each metric will have a clear definition and data source identifier.
- Liz reviewed the tentative 2024 Commission meeting dates and requested a motion for Commission approval, p. 60:
 - Thursday, February 15th | Madison, GA
 - Wednesday, May 22nd | Braselton, GA
 - Thursday, August 15th | Madison, GA
 - Thursday, November 21st | Cordele, GA

MOTION GTCNC 2023-08-02:

Motion to approve 2024 Commission meeting dates

MOTION BY: James Dunne

SECOND BY: Jim Adkins

VOTING: All members are in favor of the motion.

ACTION: The motion **PASSED** with no objections nor abstentions.

COMMITTEE AND WORKGROUP REPORTS

BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT (00:50:00)

Presented by Dr. Regina Medeiros and Katie Hamilton

Dr. Regina Medeirosa referenced the report on pages 61-99:

- All designated and verified trauma centers as of May 2023 are now funded. Funding has increased to support level III and IV centers.
- Katie Hamilton reviewed the year-end close-out, reviewing FY 2023 budget summaries. \$146.74 of unspent funds were returned to the State. The committee acknowledged and commended Katie on her hard work tracking Commission dollars, p. 63-72.
- Katie Hamilton referenced the FY 2023 performance-based payment program (PBP) trauma center awards and reductions, p. 73-89. In FY 2024, quarterly invoicing will shift to semi-annual invoicing. PBP will be prospective in nature meaning that the trauma center's current performance will determine the following fiscal year's readiness allocation.
- Dr. Regina Medeiros highlighted the year-end Super Speeder Summary, p. 94-97. We are happy to report we closed out \$2 million ahead of the previous fiscal year.
- Katie Hamilton reviewed open purchase orders to date, p. 91-93. Open purchase orders must be managed carefully to prevent potential fund returns to the treasury. The Office of Planning and Budget (OPB) also requests an annual status update on all open purchase orders.
- Dr. Regina Medeiros mentioned upcoming Budget Committee tasks, including developing the FY 2025 budget proposal. There were discussions about how the FY 2025 budget should adhere to the new instructions from OPB, including a 1% budget decrease and the inclusion of measurable outcomes and deliverables.

A request was made to allow the Budget Committee to draft a proposed FY 2025 budget during their next committee call. The proposed budget must be submitted to the Department of Public Health by September 1 based

on instructions from OBP. It was clarified that the proposed budget would serve as an anticipation of spending and would not obligate the Commission to specific expenditures. The Commission agreed to proceed as planned. It was noted that while the process slightly differs from year to year, we must proceed according to instructions and timelines set forth by OPB.

EMS COMMITTEE REPORT (01:07:26)

Presented by Courtney Terwilliger

Courtney Terwilliger referenced the report on pages 100-114 for the EMS Committee and provided the following updates:

- FY2023 EMS education resulted in 189,048 contact hours through GEMSA, p. 103-114 provide details of the number of courses funded and completed.
- The Automatic Vehicle Locating System (AVLS) Program is ongoing, which provides equipment throughout Georgia to enhance the State's ability to monitor EMS assets.
- A call is scheduled in September to discuss the EMS Equipment Grant. We will discuss different approaches to facilitate future applications. Dr. James Dunne asked who was eligible for the grant. Courtney Terwilliger clarified that the grant is for 911 EMS agencies. Agencies that are not 911-zoned are not eligible. The grant is based on the number of 911 ambulances operated by an agency. The total grant funds are divided by the total number of 911 ambulances across the State.
- The Department of Public Health (DPH) Office of EMS and Trauma (OEMST) and the GEMSA organized Town Hall meetings across the State to gather input and recommendations on how EMS funds could be used more effectively to improve trauma care.
- An ongoing issue related to inter-hospital transportation for time-sensitive patients was raised. The committee is working on defining the problem and collecting data to address this issue.
- An EMS recruitment video was developed to showcase the EMS profession and attract possible candidates.
- MARCH PAWS discussion was deferred to the Level III/IV Committee Report.

Jim Adkins shared an update on the Hospital Signage project. The EMS Committee approved to work on hospital signage to improve the navigation to emergency & trauma centers. EMS agencies are tasked to report missing or incorrect signs. Progress has already been made in installing the appropriate signage.

LIII/IV COMMITTEE REPORT (01:21:48)

Presented by Dr. Greg Patterson

Dr. Greg Patterson referenced the report on page 115:

- The committee is focused on the 11 recommendation points provided by the American College of Surgeons:
 - We have addressed the need to repeat financial surveys to evaluate the impact of the new ACS standards.
 - There have been Town Hall meetings across the State to address patient transport barriers.
 - Geo-mapping has been identified as a possible endeavor, partnering with UGA to map base locations.
- Access to Specialty Care to be updated, which provides centers contact information and available resources.
- MARCH PAWS completed its first pilot course in Cordele, GA, on June 30, with attendees providing positive feedback. We are looking into providing CMEs for Physicians to encourage course participation. The scalability of the course and the idea of maintaining caches of training supplies around the State

were discussed. Upcoming courses are scheduled for September 22 in Swainsboro and October 27 in Thomasville.

- Plans for a November meeting were discussed at the State Office of Rural Health.

GEORGIA COMMITTEE FOR TRAUMA EXCELLENCE (GCTE) REPORT (01:38:23)

Presented by Tracy Johns

Tracy Johns referenced the report on page 116 for the Georgia Committee for Trauma Excellence.

- TQIP data uploads are completed. GQIP and State uploads are overdue, pending software updates.
- Registry education funds have been allocated. Plans are underway to disperse funds by the end of the year, focusing on ATS and AIS registry courses. Course funding may be pro-rated depending on center level: Level II/IV paid at 100%, and Level I/II paid at 50% of registration costs.
- A slide set has been created related to time to definitive care and AKI to distribute to trauma centers so they can use it for referring facility education.
- A Trauma Program Manager toolkit is in development, targeting all new trauma center Trauma Program Managers offering guidance and resources. An educational toolkit for bedside nurses is also in development.
- Injury Prevention activities are ongoing with Bingocize, Back to School Programs, and Stop the Bleed. There are plans for several teen-driving events in the fall.
- The GCTE meeting was held this morning. Jesse Gibson presented a paper published by the American Association of Critical Care Nurses on collaborating with organ procurement to raise awareness about organ donation. The focus of the recent meetings has been on reviewing the new ACS trauma standards.
- The next committee meeting is scheduled for November via Zoom.

REHABILITATION COMMITTEE REPORT (01:44:14)

Presented by Dr. Ford Vox

Dr. Ford Vox referenced the report on pages 117-124:

- The committee is comprised of Wellstar, Shepherd Center, Warm Springs, Emory, Northeast Georgia, and Atrium Health Navicent representatives. We met on August 3 and will meet again in November.
- A new subcommittee focused on data analysis was formed and is led by Susannah Kidwell from Children's Healthcare of Atlanta. The subcommittee aims to engage Dr. Eli Mlaver, a General Surgery Research Fellow, to assist with the data analysis. We discussed contributing data to a database and streamlining a process to facilitate data sharing. Discussions have begun with quality departments at rehabilitation facilities to select relevant data for the database.
- The possibility of engaging insurers such as Medicaid and Blue Cross was considered to address issues related to rehabilitation transition.
- Plans to send out a survey targeting trauma case managers have been discussed. The survey aims to gather information on challenges related to access to rehabilitation services. The goal is to improve the transition from trauma to rehabilitation.
- The idea of creating an informative resource sheet was proposed. The sheet would offer general advice on accessing rehabilitation services, continuum of care, return to work, and disability services.

TRAUMA ADMINISTRATORS COMMITTEE REPORT (01:56:36)

Presented by Dr. Michelle Wallace

Dr. Michelle Wallace referenced page 125 of the meeting packet for the committee report:

- There have been significant developments since our last committee meeting. The new Georgia Coordinating Center (GCC) platform went live on July 1. Lori is working on communication strategies to present to the administrator's group during the next meeting.
- Two diversion workgroup meetings were held, with extensive discussions regarding the definition of diversion. Participants felt that the existing state definition was adequate but needed additional clarity. It was decided to remove the word "saturation" from the terminology. We are seeking input from other states.
- Dr. Ashley presented the financial analysis to the group. The upcoming meeting will delve deeper into financial matters, addressing the administrator's perspectives and questions. The possibility of Georgia Medicaid was discussed, which could alleviate some financial burdens.

TRAUMA SYSTEM PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE REPORT (02:02:19)

Presented by Dr. James Dunne

Dr. James Dunne provided the following updates:

- The Armband Project, conducted by the Office of EMS and Trauma, has been launched as a pilot. To date, 78 patients have received armbands. The next step is to connect the armband data with the trauma registry, which has faced challenges due to issues with ESO uploads.
- Delays have affected the State's Trauma Data Report due to ESO mapping issues. Once the linkage between ImageTrend and ESO is established, data analysis between 2022 and 2023 will commence.
- Atrium Navicent and Memorial Health University Medical Center are working on their own time to definitive care project by sharing and comparing data. Data sharing agreements and IRB approvals are in progress to facilitate analysis.

TRAUMA MEDICAL DIRECTORS COMMITTEE REPORT (02:07:00)

Presented by Dr. Matthew Vassy

Dr. Matthew Vassy referenced page 126 of the meeting packet for the committee report:

- There were barriers to recent leadership changes and prior disengagement. I obtained a contact list for re-engagement and look forward to revitalizing the committee.
- I am creating a survey to be sent to all TMD contacts to encourage and measure engagement, as well as obtain perceptions regarding both barriers to sending and receiving transferred trauma patients.
- Several years ago, the Georgia Trauma Commission circulated a poster and cover letter to critical access centers regarding the importance of early recognition and expedited transfer of significantly injured patients, similar to RTTDC principles, which was very effective. Like most efforts to achieve a paradigm shift, reminders are often needed. I plan to revise as needed and redistribute after Commission approval.

SYSTEM PARTNER REPORTS

GEORGIA TRAUMA FOUNDATION REPORT (02:09:53)

Presented by Dr. John Bleacher

Dr. John Bleacher referenced the report on pages 127-129.

- The Rural Continuing Education Initiative, funded by a \$1.1 million grant, is progressing well, with numerous courses scheduled throughout the State.
- We have set a five-year target to raise \$5 million, encompassing individual donors, small donations, corporate donations, major gifts, fundraising events, and grants. Fundraising opportunities include Giving Tuesday and an upcoming May 18, 2024 Gala.

- A question was raised regarding the Georgia Trauma Foundation's website and donation options. The website does not currently have online donations, but digital donation options are being researched and will be selected. In the meantime, donations can be routed to Cheryle Ward. Venmo or other digital payment methods could conveniently collect small donations and reach a broader audience.

GEORGIA QUALITY IMPROVEMENT REPORT (02:18:13)

Presented by Dr. Rob Todd

Dr. Rob Todd reviewed the GQIP report and content in the packet on pages 130-132:

- Time to Care and VTE workgroups are in development; we plan to start them during the Summer Meeting. Challenges exist with enlisting volunteers for workgroups.
- The launch date for ArborMetrix was pushed back to December 2023. A meeting has been requested with ArborMetrix leadership to discuss delays.
- Work with the PSO attorney has started. We plan to apply to AHRQ by the end of 2023. We are beginning to work through the required policies.
- The Trauma Advisory Committee continues to meet monthly.

Dr. Ashley highlighted the importance of the upcoming GQIP meeting with the plan to review data and share best practices, emphasizing performance improvement and learning from complications.

OFFICE OF EMS AND TRAUMA REPORT (02:22:31)

Presented by April Moss and Kelly Joiner

April Moss reviewed their report on page 133:

- Access to the GQIP ESO Central Site for 2021-2022 records for the annual reports has been granted.
- The data dictionary for 2023 was finalized, and work on the 2024 schemas has begun.
- The Armband Project is in the pilot phase, starting in Lumpkin and Hall County.
- The State Trauma Plan is being revised, focusing on essential trauma system elements.
- Collaborative efforts are ongoing to revise the Burn Performance Evaluation and identify burn care metrics.
- In the last several months, we had many ACS visits, initial verifications, and re-verifications. We also have several ACS consultative visits in the next several months and into the beginning of 2024.
- We still seek a Trauma Program Coordinator candidate to replace Renee Morgan's previous role.
- Continue collaborating with Liz Atkins and Gina Solomon to develop the Trauma System Dashboard.
- We are always in need of trauma center site reviewers. A couple of forms must be filled out to ensure the reviewer is set up as a vendor in the state system for payment. Please reach out to April Moss for any interests or questions.

Dr. Ashley expressed gratitude for April's hard work and dedication. It was noted again that the Department of Public Health Office of EMS and Trauma and the Georgia Trauma Commission leadership have created a new committee, the Trauma System Executive Leadership (TSEL), to address higher-level system issues.

NEW BUSINESS

GRACE COMMISSION AND G60 TRAUMA PROGRAM (02:33:50)

Presented by Jim Adkins

Jim Adkins provided an overview of the Grace Commission, a project initiated by the Governor's wife in 2019, focused on combating human trafficking. There is a 33-minute informational video available online.

Dr. Alicia Mangum from Phoenix, Arizona, has created the G60 Trauma Program to recognize traumatic injuries in individuals aged 60 and older, such as low-level falls and fractures of the femur, pelvis, and hip. Further investigation and discussion of the program will occur during the EMS Committee meeting.

CLOSED SESSION (02:35:44)

Presented by Dr. Dennis Ashley

Dr. Ashley asked the Commission for a motion to move to a closed session.

MOTION GTCNC 2023-08-03:

Motion to move to a closed session

MOTION BY: Regina Medeiros

SECOND BY: James Dunne

VOTING: Dr. Dennis Ashley, Dr. James Dunne, Dr. Regina Medeiros, Dr. John Bleacher, Courtney Terwilliger, Vic Drawdy, Dr. Michelle Wallace, and Jim Adkins voted in favor.

ABSENT: Pete Quinones

ACTION: The motion **PASSED** with no objections nor abstentions.

The Commission moved to a closed session at 5:03 PM; the closed session affidavit is included as **ATTACHMENT B**.

SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS

- The Commission approved the 2024 Commission Meeting dates.
- During the next committee call, the Budget Committee will draft a proposed FY 2025 budget. Based on new instructions, the proposed budget would need to be submitted to the Department of Public Health by September 1. It was clarified that the proposed budget served as an anticipation of spending and would not obligate the Commission to specific expenditures.
- The Commission moved to a closed session prior to adjournment. The closed session affidavit is included as **ATTACHMENT B**.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by Gabriela Saye