

APPROVED
05.21.26



GEORGIA TRAUMA COMMISSION

Georgia Trauma Commission Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 19, 2026

9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Emory Conference Center Hotel

Atlanta, Georgia

Meeting Recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vp8C1yGxCB4>

Meeting Attachments: trauma.ga.gov

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

Dr. Dennis Ashley, Chairman
Mr. Pete Quinones, Secretary-Treasurer
Dr. James Dunne
Mr. Terry Cobb
Dr. S. Rob Todd
Dr. J. Smith
Dr. Alicia Register

| STAFF MEMBERS & OTHERS SIGNING IN | REPRESENTING | ATTENDING |
|-----------------------------------|--|-----------|
| Elizabeth Atkins | Georgia Trauma Commission, Executive Director | In Person |
| Gabriela Saye | Georgia Trauma Commission, Business Operations Manager | In Person |
| Crystal Shelnutt | Georgia Trauma Commission, Regional Trauma Systems Development Manager | In Person |
| Gina Solomon | Georgia Trauma Commission, GQIP Director | In Person |
| Katie Vaughan | Georgia Trauma Commission, Finance Operations Manager | In Person |
| Tolulope Adedipe | Georgia Trauma Commission, Intern | In Person |
| Nicolle Soto-Reyna | Georgia Trauma Commission, Intern | In Person |
| Grace Threadgill | Georgia Trauma Commission, Intern | In Person |
| Nicole Sundholm | AdventHealth Redmond, Trauma Program Manager | Virtual |
| Anna Claire Cesario | Atrium Health Navicent, Trauma Program Manager | In Person |
| Josephine Fabico-Dulin | Atrium Health Navicent, Trauma Services Director | In Person |
| Amanda Battle | Childrens Healthcare of Atlanta, Injury Prevention Manager | In Person |
| Ashley Bullington | Crisp Regional, TPM | In Person |
| Laura Lunsford | Doctors Hospital of Augusta, Director | Virtual |
| Jon Allen | DPH Office of EMS and Trauma, Medical Director, Systems of Care | In Person |
| Ryan Hollinsworth | DPH Office of EMS and Trauma, Region 10 Regional Training Coordinator | In Person |
| Kelly Joiner | DPH Office of EMS and Trauma, Deputy Director | In Person |
| Danlin Luo | DPH Office of EMS and Trauma, Epidemiologist | Virtual |
| Gary Pinard | DPH Office of EMS and Trauma, Regional Director | Virtual |
| Marie Probst | DPH Office of EMS and Trauma, State Trauma Registrar | Virtual |

| STAFF MEMBERS & OTHERS SIGNING IN | REPRESENTING | ATTENDING |
|-----------------------------------|---|-----------|
| Stacee Smith | DPH Office of EMS and Trauma, State Trauma Coordinator | In Person |
| Mia Carvalho Guimaraes | Emory, Injury Prevention Research Center Program Manager | In Person |
| Brian Dorriety | Georgia Trauma Commission, Region 7 RTAC Coordinator | In Person |
| Kristin Spires | Georgia Trauma Commission, EMS Education Coordinator | In Person |
| Scott Stephens | Georgia Trauma Commission, Region 1 RTAC Coordinator/ EMS Council Chair | In Person |
| Ben Whiddon | Georgia Trauma Commission, Region 8 RTAC Coordinator | In Person |
| Cheryle Ward | Georgia Trauma Foundation, Executive Director | In Person |
| Paul Beamon | Gilmer County Fire Rescue, EMS Chief | In Person |
| Elizabeth Benjamin | Grady, TMD | In Person |
| Debbie Boyett | Grady, Burn Quality RN | Virtual |
| Latresia Fair | Grady, RN | Virtual |
| Rebecca Gaskins | Grady, Director of Trauma Programs | In Person |
| Pamela Vanderberg | Grady, VP, Trauma and Burn Services | In Person |
| William Hardeman | Hamilton Medical Center, Trauma Medical Director | In Person |
| Kelli Vaughn | J.D. Archbold Memorial Hospital, Trauma Program Manager | In Person |
| Tammie Russell | Liberty Regional Medical Center, Trauma Program Coordinator | Virtual |
| Erika Mabes | Medical College of Georgia, Assistant Professor | Virtual |
| Christie Mathis | Morgan Medical Center, TPM | Virtual |
| Jessica Mantooth | Northeast Georgia Medical Center, Trauma Program Director | In Person |
| Matthew Vassy | Northeast Georgia Medical Center, TMD | In Person |
| Nadirah Burgess | Northside Hospital Gwinnett, Trauma Program Manager | In Person |
| Romeo Massoud | Northside Hospital Gwinnett, Trauma Medical Director | In Person |
| Eva Carignan | Piedmont Athens Regional, Trauma Injury Prevention and Outreach | Virtual |
| Heather Morgan | Piedmont Athens Regional, TPM | In Person |
| Shannon Thomas | Piedmont Athens Regional, Performance Improvement Coordinator | Virtual |
| Kelly Gasser | Piedmont Columbus Midtown, TPIC | Virtual |
| Jack Rodgers | Piedmont Columbus Regional, Emergency Services Director | In Person |
| Jams Polston | Piedmont Walton, TPM | Virtual |
| Jeffrey Sanders | Rehab and Beyond, CFO | In Person |
| Abbie Price | Safe Kids Central Georgia, Coordinator | In Person |
| Emily Brown | SGMC Health, Director of EMS and Trauma | In Person |
| Kailey Paulson | SGMC Health, TPM | In Person |
| Raeda Anderson | Shepherd Center, Scientist | In Person |
| Devorah Mekonnen | State Office, Program Coordinator | In Person |
| Daniel Dohan | UCSF, Professor | Virtual |
| Megan Dawson | Wellstar Kennestone, Trauma Program Manager | Virtual |

| STAFF MEMBERS & OTHERS SIGNING IN | REPRESENTING | ATTENDING |
|-----------------------------------|---|-----------|
| Zack Aldaher | Wellstar MCG, Resident- Surgical Simulation Fellow | In Person |
| Elizabeth Folse | Wellstar North Fulton, Trauma Program Manager | Virtual |
| Rachel Hand | Wellstar West Ga Medical Center, Trauma Program Manager | In Person |

CALL TO ORDER (00:00:04)

Dr. Dennis Ashley, Georgia Trauma Commission Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:03 AM, with seven of nine Commission members present, establishing a quorum.

CHAIRMAN REPORT (00:00:13)

Presented by Dr. Dennis Ashley

Dr. Ashley opened the report by welcoming Dr. Alicia Register as the Commission’s newest appointee, noting her background as a general and trauma surgeon and expressing confidence in her leadership. The Chair also acknowledged the passing of former Vice Chair Dr. Regina Medeiros, recognizing her commitment to process and governance, and stated that the Commission would honor her legacy by adhering to proper procedures in electing a successor. He reflected on the maturation of the trauma system over the past 15 years, citing improvements in mortality and access while emphasizing continued focus on rural access, system integration, EMS coordination, and closing coverage gaps. He expressed gratitude to the more than 300 stakeholders and committee members who support the Commission’s work.

ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR TO FILL VACANCY (00:05:50)

Presented by Dr. Dennis Ashley

Dr. Ashley opened the floor for Vice Chair nominations, noting that Dr. Rob Todd had nominated Dr. James “J.” Smith. Hearing no additional nominations, nominations were closed.

MOTION GTCNC 2026-02-01:

Motion to elect Dr. James “J.” Smith as Vice Chair

MOTION BY: S. Rob Todd

SECOND BY: James Dunne

VOTING: All members are in favor of the motion.

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

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES (00:07:25)

Presented by Dr. Dennis Ashley

Dr. Ashley requested a motion to approve the November meeting minutes (ATTACHMENT A, pp. 3-13)

MOTION GTCNC 2026-02-02:

Motion to approve the November 20, 2025, meeting minutes.

MOTION BY: Pete Quinones

SECOND BY: Terry Cobb

VOTING: All members are in favor of the motion.

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

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT (00:07:50)

Presented by Liz Atkins

Liz Atkins referenced the Executive Report noted on **pp. 14-17**.

- Legislative session underway; Commission presented operations overview to House Appropriations Subcommittee.
- Amended FY and FY27 budgets heard in House and Senate subcommittees; additional hearings pending.
- House Bill 629 (Bleeding Control Education), sponsored by Representative Hawkins:
 - Mandates bleeding control training in schools
 - Highlights the Commission's bleeding control kit program.
 - Passed House; referred to Senate.

Liz asked Pete Quinones to provide updates on EMS legislation. Mr. Quinones shared progress on the following bills:

- Senate Bill 462:
 - Passed Senate (51-1).
 - Ends EMS balance billing; sets provider reimbursement at 325% of Medicare.
 - Applies to all EMS provider types; ground transport only.
- House Bill 961:
 - Similar structure with added enforcement provisions; pending vote.
 - Clarification provided on how the bill protects patients from surprise EMS bills (excluding deductibles/co-pays).

Liz continued her report:

- Federal Updates: Mission Zero Program and federal trauma grants funded under the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2026. Advocacy is ongoing to increase funding and reauthorize preparedness programs.
- Georgia hosted the annual meeting of the Eastern Association for the Surgery of Trauma; strong participation from Grady Health System and other state centers.
- Registry Startup Grant: Three participating centers (Coffee, Colquitt, Wellstar Douglas).
- Level I and II Readiness Cost Survey: Near completion of data review; reported costs higher than anticipated. The full summary is expected at the May meeting.

The floor transitioned to the Georgia Quality Improvement Program (GQIP) Report, presented by Gina Solomon

GEORGIA QUALITY IMPROVEMENT REPORT (00:20:17)

Presented by Gina Solomon

Gina Solomon provided a brief update and referenced the report on **pp. 18-19**:

- The benchmarking platform and Data Central site have expanded with geriatric report cards and first-quarter FY26 report cards distributed to all centers, and new age filters were added to the platform.
- The next development phase will include cohort filters for blunt multi-system injuries and shock, as well as additional major event metrics, in collaboration with ArborMetrix

- The winter meeting, focused on geriatrics, is scheduled for tomorrow, and the summer meeting is planned for August 21 at Jekyll Island, with John Holcomb confirmed as the keynote speaker.
- We have been working with ArborMetrix on a three-year platform plan, including cost proposals, which were presented to the Finance Committee to inform FY27 budget planning.
- The Time to Care project has officially started with Dr. Raeda Anderson, using a test dataset based on prior work by Dr. Ashley and Dr. Dunne, and is expanding from the initial two-center pilot toward a statewide analysis.

Dr. Ashley asked Dr. Dunne to provide a brief update on the Time to Definitive Care pilot study. Dr. Dunne reported that the study was accepted for a podium presentation at the Southeastern Surgical Congress and that the manuscript has been submitted for publication. The statewide study will increase the sample size to yield more robust findings.

It was suggested that the study findings be presented to the Commission at the next meeting, potentially after publication. Dr. Ashley acknowledged Dr. Dunne's contributions and noted his expertise in statistics significantly advanced the pilot study.

REGIONAL TRAUMA ADVISORY COMMITTEE (RTAC) REPORT (00:24:54)

Presented by Crystal Shelnutt

Crystal Shelnutt presented the RTAC update (pp. 20-58), noting that all 10 regional coordinator reports are included in the meeting packet and highlighting key developments.

- Brian Dorriety returned as Region 7 RTAC coordinator after a six-month hiatus and has quickly re-engaged in leadership activities.
- RTAC subcommittees for education, performance improvement, and injury prevention are growing, with notable expansion in Regions 8 and 9.
- The Stop the Bleed program distributed 3,747 kits statewide last year and trained over 1,700 students in the last quarter. The application period for the next round of kits is now open for schools, school bus programs, and first responders.
- Kristin Spires, previously Region 10 coordinator, was contracted to manage the education program and has been in the role for three weeks, expected to significantly impact program development.
- The initial education grant program has received 10 applications in a few weeks, with three classes already underway, and the first instructor class started this week in Milledgeville with 22 students.
- Regional highlights:
 - Region 1: Scott Stephens' PI project generated over 300 case submissions and is creating a new regional QA and PI committee.
 - Region 2: Kyle Gibson hosted the 10th annual Northeast Georgia Trauma Symposium with 600+ participants
 - Region 3: Steve Elmgren launched an EMS documentation improvement initiative to strengthen trauma registry accuracy.
 - Region 4: Jay Connelly and Rachel Hand held a Safe Riders Bike and ATV safety event with 142 participants, distributing 60 helmets and 17 bikes.
 - Region 5: Kristal Smith expanded the Honor Program to support provider wellness, reflection, and resilience.
 - Region 6: Farrah Parker is piloting Stop the Bleed training for all 9th graders in Richmond County, aiming for full coverage in four years.

- Region 7: Brian Dorriety advanced community injury prevention with an annual firearm safety course in partnership with the Georgia DNR.
- Region 8: Ben Whiddon revitalized the RTAC structure, establishing subcommittees, a full executive board, and engagement across all 27 counties.
- Region 9: Coy Tippins initiated planning for a large-scale MCI exercise in Tattnall County to strengthen readiness.
- Region 10: Kristen Spires launched a centralized statewide trauma instructor directory to improve access to qualified educators for EMS agencies.
- The Educational Needs Assessment is currently open for the next few days, and Crystal invited questions on Stop the Bleed or RTAC activities.

FINANCE & BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT (00:32:15)

Presented by Pete Quinones and Katie Vaughan

Pete Quinones provided the Finance and Budget Committee update, noting that the last few meetings lacked a quorum, but the next meeting on March 16th is expected to have full participation.

- Dr. Mables presented progress on the Rural Interactive Trauma Simulation (RITS) Program and requested \$162,160 in funding from the Georgia Trauma Commission, though no vote has yet been taken.
- The ArborMetrix future funding was discussed extensively. Pete asked Elizabeth Atkins and Gina Solomon to provide more background information on the platform cost.

Elizabeth Atkins explained that ArborMetrix is the backbone of the GQIP program, providing data to identify system opportunities and drive statewide improvements. Michigan is the only other state using ArborMetrix at the state level, and Georgia is leveraging lessons from its 20-year experience to build dashboards and performance-based metrics over time. Gina Solomon added that initial performance-based metrics include time to hip fracture repair and VTE prophylaxis, with plans to expand dashboards and lead measure tracking to improve real-time statewide PI. Dr. Ayoung-Chee has been instrumental in bridging clinical expertise with ArborMetrix data scientists, helping build scorecards and push actionable data to trauma centers.

Pete Quinones emphasized that ArborMetrix's pricing is comparable to that of software-as-a-service platforms used by other organizations and provides statewide coverage for Level I-IV trauma centers.

Katie reviewed the following budget items (pp. 60-95). Highlights included:

- FY2026 expenses through December 31st are on track, and trauma centers have submitted their first biannual invoices.
- Initial FY2026 reallocation and fireworks revenue allocations will be voted on in a called meeting.
- The preliminary FY2027 budget reflects adjustments from the governor's release, with total funds at \$31 million.
- FY2026 included a one-time \$2,000 salary supplement for all full-time state employees.
- FY2027 budget adjustments reduced the employer contribution for the state health benefit plan
- Super Speeder collections were trued up from the prior year.

Dr. Ashley thanked Pete and Katie for their work in compiling and presenting the budget materials.

EMS COMMITTEE REPORT (00:46:21)

The EMS Committee had no new updates as Courtney was absent; all current information was included in the packet (pp. 96-97).

LIII/IV COMMITTEE REPORT (00:46:46)

Presented by Dr. Alicia Register

Dr. Register provided the final Level III/IV Rural Trauma Committee report (pp. 98), noting that leadership will transition to Dr. Cianna Pender and Kelli Vaughn.

- The March PAWS program has now concluded. The remaining funds are being transitioned to the Rural Interactive Trauma Simulation (RITS) program, led by Dr. Erika Mabe at AU, leveraging academic resources to support statewide success. Dr. Register highlighted a successful course in Cordele with over 40–50 participants and tangible clinical impact, including EMS crews applying newly learned skills in real patient care.
- Feedback from the Pennsylvania Trauma Systems Foundation and ACS rural system visits has been integrated into action plans, particularly around performance improvement (PI) for lower-level centers, in coordination with the Trauma Connections Group.
- The Georgia Trauma Commission approved funding for the Rural Topic course for Level III/IV centers, supporting continued professional development and rural trauma education.

Dr. Register handed the floor to Dr. Erika Mabe to provide a RITS program update.

RURAL INTERACTIVE TRAUMA SIMULATION (RITS) PROGRAM UPDATE (00:51:04)

Presented by Dr. Erika Mabe

Dr. Erika Mabe discussed the RITS program budget and sustainability (pp.78-94):

- Fellowship expenses and overhead total approximately \$104,000, a slight increase from the previous year, covering simulation fellow stipends, benefits, outreach travel, and scholarly activity (data collection, analysis, abstracts).
- Additional support is planned for course development, coordination, and project management, including collaboration with Nita Ham and the Georgia State Office of Rural Health via a potential 5-year grant.
- Medical College of Georgia support is requested for faculty buy-down, curriculum and video development, simulation equipment, and shared project coordination.
- Virtual course development is underway to expand accessibility and program reach.

The Commission moved to approve funding for \$162,160 to the Rural Interactive Trauma Simulation Program with funding incorporated into the FY2027 budget.

MOTION BY: Finance & Budget Committee

MOTION GTCNC 2026-02-03:

Motion to approve the FY 2027 Rural Interactive Trauma Simulation Program funding request, \$162,160.00

MOTION BY: Finance and Budget Committee

VOTING: All members are in favor of the motion.

ACTION: The motion PASSED with no objections nor abstentions.

Dr. Mabes expressed gratitude for the Commission's support and highlighted continued commitment to program growth and in-person participation at future meetings.

Dr. Zach Aldaher, Surgical Education and Simulation Fellow at the Medical College of Georgia (MCG), continued the update by presenting data and program outcomes from the Rural Interactive Trauma Simulation (RITS) program. The presentation (**ATTACHMENT B**) included an overview of the program curriculum, participant engagement and outcomes, feedback and areas for improvement, academic dissemination, and future plans.

Dr. Aldaher emphasized that the fellowship and RITS program offer a rewarding, high-impact educational experience, made possible through the Georgia Trauma Commission's support.

The presentation concluded with an acknowledgment of participants' engagement and an opportunity for questions.

The Commission thanked Dr. Mabes and Dr. Aldaher for the report.

GEORGIA COMMITTEE FOR TRAUMA EXCELLENCE (GCTE) REPORT (01:13:17)

Presented by Becky Gaskins

Becky Gaskins referenced the report on (**ATTACHMENT A, pp. 112-113**) for the Georgia Committee for Trauma Excellence.

- The Performance Improvement Subcommittee is developing a Performance Improvement (PI) Toolkit for statewide trauma initiatives.
- The Pediatric Subcommittee is finalizing the Peds Transfer Toolkit, with expected rollout by the end of February, and updating the Peds Imaging Toolkit, with a planned Q2 release. EMS education continues under the EMS Safe Transport Project, with ongoing data collection.
- Registry Subcommittee updates: Dr. Ayoung-Chee presented on ArborMetrix for GQIP data usage, providing registry support and solutions for trauma centers.
- The Education Subcommittee is supporting the GTC as the GTC finalizes logistics for the upcoming TOPIC and OPTIMAL courses. The Education Subcommittee continues to work with the RTAC coordinators to enhance education collaboration.
- Injury Prevention Subcommittee hosted Stop the Bleed Winter Blitz with 250 attendees and Matter of Balance training in January; additional teen driver and child injury prevention events planned for spring.

TRAUMA SYSTEM PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE REPORT (01:18:57)

Presented by Dr. James Dunne

Dr. James Dunne provided the following update referenced on **p. 114**:

- Acknowledged support from the Office of EMS and Trauma for collating trauma center data into the state database.
- Time-Definitive Care pilot study completed; data will be presented at the next Trauma Commission meeting and submitted for publication in *The American Surgeon*.
- Planning a statewide analysis of pilot data with Dr. Anderson and ArborMetrix, the sample size is anticipated to increase by five to tenfold to yield more robust insights. IRB process ongoing via Morehouse, led by Dr. Ayoung-Chee; data collection is expected to be more efficient than the pilot.

- Planning a statewide trauma system dashboard to visualize trauma efficiency; the goal is to provide actionable insights without overwhelming users with unnecessary demographic or quality data. Preliminary draft expected at upcoming meetings.

TRAUMA MEDICAL DIRECTORS COMMITTEE REPORT (02:09:23)

Presented by Dr. Matthew Vassy

Dr. Vassy provided committee updates, pp. 115-116:

- The committee plans to focus on the RMOCC (Regional Medical Operations Coordination Centers) concept and roadmap.
- The Alabama trauma system will be presented as an example and potential roadmap for implementation.
- The committee will discuss growth and leadership expansion, including adding one or more leaders.

GEORGIA TRAUMA FOUNDATION REPORT (02:15:16)

Presented by Cheryle Ward

Cheryle Ward referenced the report on pp. 117:

- The Foundation funded 20 scholarships for a trauma symposium at Grady, awarded to 13 student nurses, 3 surgical residents, and 4 paramedics/EMTs.
- The Continuing Education Instructors Database (CEID) has expanded to include PHTLS, TECC, GEMS, EPC, AMLS, and Stop the Bleed, providing a directory of credentialed instructors.
- The Foundation’s next gala, now called the One Georgia Gala, will be held on May 30th at the Delta Flight Museum. The name emphasizes “one state, one standard” to ensure equal trauma care access statewide. Gala proceeds support programs, and all donations go directly toward programs, thanks to Commission funding of operations.
- Community investment grants will total \$100,000 this year, up from 8 grants last year to 10 grants in 2026. 2026 grant winners include:
 - Gilmer County Fire Rescue: Gilmer, Pickens, Fannin Regional Blood Program, providing pre-hospital blood transfusions to trauma patients in rural areas.
 - Safe Kids Georgia: Firearm Safe Storage project, distributing lock boxes and providing caregiver training to reduce unintentional firearm injuries.
 - Rehab and Beyond: Indigent Rehabilitative Caregiver Support, expanding a 14-week training program for families of stroke and brain injury survivors.
 - Region 4 RTAC: Safe Riders, delivering quarterly community events on safe riding practices for bikes, scooters, skateboards, and ATVs.
 - Region 5 Trauma Education and Outreach: Expanding the MCI Multiverse, a hybrid mass casualty training platform reaching two additional EMS regions.
 - Safe Kids Central Georgia: Screens Are Not Safety Devices, educating caregivers and distributing window guards to prevent pediatric window fall injuries.
 - Medical College of Georgia at AU: Expanding Access to Trauma Simulation for Rural Georgia Hospitals, bringing hands-on trauma training to 6-8 additional rural hospitals.
 - Region 8 RTAC: Heads Up, Helmets On, targeting preventable ATV, UTV, and golf cart injuries through education, youth programming, and community engagement.
 - Region 10 EMS Education Committee: Advance TECC, scenario-based training to strengthen coordination and safety in high-risk rescue operations.
 - Savannah Speech and Hearing Center: Expanding trauma support through technology, enhancing hybrid Speakeasy Support Group sessions for stroke and TBI survivors.

- Grant scoring this year ensured that all regions received funding, and unclaimed funds were redistributed to the next-highest-scoring applications. The Foundation encouraged all projects, large or small, to apply for grant funding.
- Gala tickets go on sale March 2nd, and all Commissioners are encouraged to attend and support the event.
- Trauma Awareness Day is scheduled for Tuesday, with 115 registered attendees; breakfast registration is closed, but attendees can still participate at the Capitol.

Cheryle concluded her report, and the Commission congratulated the grant recipients, noting it was a positive day for both the Foundation and the Commission.

TRAUMA ADMINISTRATORS COMMITTEE REPORT (01:38:22):

Presented by Dr. Patrice Walker

Dr. Walker referenced the report on **p. 113**:

- Following Dr. Benjie Christie's RMOCC presentation in November, the committee developed a brief survey to assess current RMOCC knowledge and interest in serving on an RMOCC subcommittee.
- The survey was conducted in real time during the meeting, generating robust discussion about trauma administrators' understanding of the RMOCC concept. The survey results will be shared at the Trauma Medical Directors Committee meeting, and the committee expressed excitement about future involvement in RMOCC planning.
- The committee discussed the roles and duties of a vice chair. A formal call for nominations was sent, and several candidates expressed interest in supporting leadership and succession planning.
- Trauma administrators were also reminded about the upcoming Trauma Awareness Day at the Capitol.

OFFICE OF EMS AND TRAUMA (OEMST) REPORT (01:41:12)

Presented by Stacey Smith

Stacey Smith reviewed their report on **pp. 119-120**.

- The Systems of Care Medical Director position had been vacant. Dr. Jonathan Allen from Wellstar in Augusta has accepted the position and will oversee cardiac, trauma, stroke, and EMSC programs.
- Three Level IV trauma centers, Wellstar Spalding, Atrium Floyd Polk, and Emanuel Medical Center, were re-designated at the end of last year.
- Northeast Georgia received ACS re-verification and state re-designation.
- For 2026, three additional Level IV centers are scheduled for designation, and a possible fourth may follow in 2027. Thirteen centers overall will require ACS re-verification and state re-designation this year.
- The final 2025 data download for the registry is due March 2nd. ImageTrend and ESO are aware of errors and are working to correct them. Preparation for the 2026 data download is underway.
- The Systems of Care Advisory Council will meet on March 10th in a hybrid format, and several subcommittees are already working on projects.
- Eight centers have been designated as Pediatric Readiness Centers. Centers interested in the pediatric readiness designation were encouraged to contact the office. It was clarified that Pediatric readiness centers are tiered into Levels I-III. Level I represents comprehensive children's hospitals, with only three expected in the state. Level II and III centers are evaluated for pediatric care capabilities in the ER, including equipment, personnel, and quality improvement measures. Pediatric readiness centers ensure safe resuscitation and stabilization of pediatric patients before transfer to higher levels of care.

ADJOURNMENT (01:48:54)

Prior to adjournment, Elizabeth Atkins shared some additional information:

- The FY2027 budget will be approved through the Finance Committee and then called Commission meeting after the legislative session ends.
- The MAG Medical Reserve report included in the packet summarizes quarterly activities **pp.121-124**.
- GTC Interns Grace, Tolu, and Nicole have been assisting with setup and guidance, providing meaningful experience and support.

Commission members thanked staff and interns for their support and efforts during the meeting.

MOTION GTCNC 2026-02-04:

Motion to adjourn

MOTION BY: Pete Quinones

SECOND BY: James Smith

VOTING: All members are in favor of the motion.

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

SUMMARY OF HIGHLIGHTS & ACTION ITEMS

- Dr. Alicia Register was welcomed as the Commission's newest appointee.
- Dr. James "J." Smith was elected as Commission Vice Chair
- Legislation updates included:
 - House Bill 629: Mandates bleeding control training in schools. Passed House; referred to Senate.
 - Senate Bill 462: Ends EMS balance billing. Passed Senate (51-1).
 - House Bill 961: protects patients from surprise EMS bills. Pending vote.
- The GQIP Summer meeting will take place on August 21st at Jekyll Island.
- Time-Definitive Care pilot study completed; data will be presented at the next Trauma Commission meeting and submitted for publication in The American Surgeon.
- The Commission approved the FY 2027 Rural Interactive Trauma Simulation Program funding request, \$162,160.00 (**ATTACHMENT A, pp. 78-94**)
- Dr. Zach Aldaher, Surgical Education and Simulation Fellow at the Medical College of Georgia (MCG), continued the update by presenting data and program outcomes from the Rural Interactive Trauma Simulation (RITS) program (**ATTACHMENT B**)
- Georgia Trauma Foundation launched a \$100,000 grant program to strengthen trauma care and save lives across Georgia, presenting awards to recipients during the meeting. The funding supports projects that advance injury prevention, trauma education, public awareness, and community-based programs
- The Georgia Trauma Foundation Gala, "One Georgia Gala," will debut on May 30 at the Delta Flight Museum. Ticket sales to go live on March 2nd.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by Gabriela Saye