

**APPROVED**  
**08.10.23**



# GEORGIA TRAUMA COMMISSION

## Georgia Trauma Commission Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 25, 2023

9:00 AM-12:00 PM

City of Madison Meeting Hall

Madison, Georgia

Meeting Recording: <https://youtu.be/TCKq3-wKbyE>

Meeting Attachments: [trauma.ga.gov](https://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  
Mr. Pete Quinones

### STAFF MEMBERS & OTHERS SIGNING IN

### REPRESENTING

Elizabeth Atkins	GTC, Executive Director
Gina Solomon	GTC, GQIP Director
Katie Hamilton	GTC, Finance Operations Officer
Gabriela Saye	GTC, Executive Assistant
Cheryle Ward	Georgia Trauma Foundation, Executive Director
Nicole Sundholm	AdventHealth Redmond, Trauma Program Manager
Ashley Faircloth	Augusta University, TPM P I
Alicia Register	Crisp Regional, TMD
Lynn Grant	Fairview Park Hospital, Trauma Program Director
Becca Hallum	Georgia Hospital Association, Associate General Counsel and Compliance Officer
Jenny Danker	Georgia Hospital Association, Legal Intern
Greg Nickel	Georgia Trauma Commission, STB Coordinator
S. Rob Todd	Grady, SVP / Chief, Acute Care Surgery
Sarah Parker	Grady, Trauma Program Director
Kelli Vaughn	J.D. Archbold Memorial Hospital, TPM
Fred Jones	MAG Medical Reserve Corps, Program Coordinator
John Harvey	MAG Medical Reserve Corps, Medical Director
Scott Maxwell	Mathews & Maxwell, Inc.
Rayma Stephens	Northside Hospital Gwinnett, Trauma PI Coordinator
Nadirah Burgess	Northside Hospital Gwinnett, Trauma Program Manager
April Moss	Office of EMS and Trauma, Systems of Care
Kelly Joiner	Office of EMS and Trauma, Deputy Director
Marie Probst	Office of EMS and Trauma, State Trauma Registrar

Brandi Fitzgerald	Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital, Trauma Program Manager
Richard Jacob	Piedmont Walton, TMD
Karen Hust	Piedmont Walton, TPM
Brian Dorriety	RTAC Region 7, Coordinator
Ford Vox	Shepherd Center, Medical Director, DoC
Janani Rajbhandari	University of Georgia, Associate Professor

**CALL TO ORDER (00:00:05)**

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

**CHAIRMAN REPORT (00:00:51)**

*Presented by Dr. Dennis Ashley*

Dr. Ashley welcomed all attendees and provided the following updates:

- Several trauma centers are undergoing ACS verification visits. It is a substantial amount of work, and I appreciate all those involved in making those visits happen.
- The 2023 legislative session is over. There was an attempt to cut \$700,000 from our FY 2024 budget; Fortunately, through some education efforts, we retained our full allocation. We appreciate all the legislators who participated and those in the room who provided emails and education during that time.
- We will discuss and approve the FY 2024 budget on today's agenda, which is getting tighter as we grow as a state. In the past, we had the initiative to generate \$80 million from the car tag fee, but unfortunately, we lost the vote. I think it's time to start getting our data together and go to the legislature during the next session and ask for additional funding to support our trauma system. We need to develop a plan and provide a case as to why we need the additional funds.
- The ACS trauma systems consultation report is available on the website. Please take the opportunity to review it. The report will help us determine what we need to prioritize. We will develop workgroups to address significant funding and transportation issues in rural Georgia.
- This week is EMS week, and I'd like to take the time to acknowledge our EMS colleagues and thank them for the work they do.

After the Chairman's Report, Dr. Ashley moved to approve meeting minutes.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES (00:07:30)**

*Presented by Dr. Dennis Ashley*

Dr. Ashley asked for a motion to approve the March 1<sup>st</sup> meeting minutes, p. 2-13, in the meeting packet (ATTACHMENT A).

**MOTION GTCNC 2023-05-01:**

**Motion to approve March 1, 2023 meeting minutes as submitted**

**MOTION BY:** Jim Adkins

**SECOND BY:** Pete Quinones

**VOTING:** All members are in favor of the motion.

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

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT (00:08:04)**

### ***Presented by Liz Atkins***

Liz Atkins referenced the full report on pages 14-33, which provides a high-level overview of significant initiatives.

- In November, we had an open comment period for the FY 2024 performance-based pay criteria, in which we adjusted some meeting dates. We're also moving towards two trauma center invoicing payments next year, where your current performance dictates your future economic viability.
- The Georgia Trauma Commission staff have transitioned to the .gov email address. The .org emails cutoff date will be in August. Please save our new contact information.
- We have two new RTAC Coordinators: Jay Connelly for Region 4 and Andrew Altman for Region 9.
- Stop the Bleed is still ongoing with the additional kit beneficiaries. We are reviewing our current application process to determine future application periods.
- Due to a conflict with the Western Trauma Conference, the February GTC/GQIP Winter Meeting dates will be rescheduled. We are working with Chateau to determine possible options, including pushing back until May.
- Senator Warnock sponsored the Improving Trauma Systems and Emergency Care Act bill that passed last federal legislative year. Now, they're going forward with funding.
- Dan Walsh, our Attorney General (AG) representative, is transitioning to another role. We will be assigned a new representative with the AG office. A letter from the AG office is included in the packet, page 21, clarifying commission member presence and motions within committees. As long as the meeting is noticed as a committee meeting, the motions are considered a committee motion, regardless of how many commission members are present.
- There are two news articles included within the packet, which feature our Georgia trauma system.
- Dr. Ashley was honored at the Trauma Center Association of America Annual Meeting with the Distinction for Trauma System Leadership Award. The nomination is included in the packet. Congratulations to Dr. Ashley.
- Dr. Ashley and I met with the Georgia Hospital Association Center for Rural Health on May 11<sup>th</sup> and have been invited to attend their board meeting in August. They are close to the rural issues, and we hope to discuss solutions for the ACS findings.

## **COMMITTEE AND WORKGROUP REPORTS**

### **BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT (00:25:22)**

#### ***Presented by Dr. Regina Medeiros***

Dr. Regina Medeirosa referenced the report on pages 42-43:

- FY 2024 Budget; p. 35-37
  - A detailed summary with comments provides background on decisions to increase funds in some areas.
  - The uncompensated care is a projected amount. We still need the report. There may be slight adjustments to those numbers.
  - Due to user license agreements, the Commission still has to pay for software usage as a state agency.

- The Commission continues to fund the MAG (Medical Association of Georgia) Medical Reserve Corps, which provides resources and support in the event of disasters. Their report of activities is included in the packet, p. 52-57.
- FY2024 Departmentalized Budget; p. 38-46
  - The projected amount of revenue is based on Super Speeder, \$22,144,775.
  - You will see the budget breakdowns by category.
  - The last page, p .46, shows the fund distribution for each trauma center. We have elected to include all participating designated trauma centers in the FY 2024 funding. The additional centers are in bold and will start receiving registry and readiness. Due to limited funding, the additional centers in bold will be eligible to receive uncompensated funds in three years once the costs are validated. We had to decrease the funds from other centers to provide funding for these centers. We must obtain more funding to recruit and maintain new centers that enter our system in the future.

**MOTION BY: GTC Budget Committee**

**MOTION GTCNC 2023-05-02:**

**Motion to approve the FY 2024 Proposed Budget**

**MOTION BY: Budget Committee**

**VOTING:** All members are in favor of the motion.

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

**EMS COMMITTEE REPORT (00:44:49)**

***Presented by Courtney Terwilliger***

Courtney Terwilliger referenced the report on pages 47-48 for the EMS Committee and provided the following updates:

- The EMS committee has included two new funding items for FY2024:
  - \$10,000 to support the Metro Atlanta EMS conference and allow them to record and upload it to the TRAIN platform.
  - Earmarked funds for a pre-hospital EMS project with Dr. Bulger, an EMS physician in Washington state that has conducted substantial EMS research.
- We continue to work on the delay in transportation issues. We are working with Nita Ham at the State Office of Rural Health to identify stakeholders to collaborate with.
- We are determining what equipment supplies are available at the rural facilities to care for patients for MARCH PAWS.

Commission members briefly discussed the EMS workforce shortage and its impact on EMS education and training.

**LIII/IV COMMITTEE REPORT (00:52:39)**

***Presented by Dr. Alicia Register***

Dr. Alicia Register referenced the report on page 49:

- The plan is to meet and review the ACS and PTSF reports in the upcoming weeks and identify common themes, lowest-hanging fruit, and short-term versus long-term goals.

- We have a mentorship group between the higher-level centers and the rural centers. In addition, we have a subgroup of level III and IV center trauma program managers to connect, collaborate, and share information.
- We have a virtual meeting on June 2<sup>nd</sup> to review the plans for the first MARCH PAWS pilot course. We want to teach MARCH PAWS to coincide with best practice guidelines and not contradict other educational programs. The first course will be at Emanuel Medical Center in Swainsboro, followed by Cordele, then Thomasville. We plan to finish the first course by the end of summer and share updates at the August meeting.

### **GEORGIA COMMITTEE FOR TRAUMA EXCELLENCE (GCTE) REPORT (01:03:35)**

#### ***Presented by Lynn Grant***

Lynn Grant referenced the report on page 51 for the Georgia Committee for Trauma Excellence.

- The Rehab committee has requested data entry to include rehab and skilled nursing facility names to review where patients are going.
- The 2023 Data Dictionary was updated and released to all trauma centers. They are using a change log to update throughout the year. As soon as ACS releases its preliminary 2024 dictionary, we will start to work on our 2024 Data Dictionary.
- AIS 2015 injury coding will be required starting January 1, 2025. We have begun the transition planning for a registrar update course with Georgia Trauma Commission funding, emphasizing level III and IV center education.
- PI subcommittee's new chair is Karen Hust. Their primary focus is time to definitive care, and they will start to review level III and IV transfer out times.
- The Injury Prevention subcommittee has stayed busy with Child Abuse Prevention webinars, Bingocize (central GA & metro Atlanta with Floyd & Morgan starting programs soon), Trauma Awareness and Stop The Bleed Month – webinars; Participation encouraged in Georgia Stay SAFE, June 18-24.

### **REHABILITATION COMMITTEE REPORT (01:06:57)**

#### ***Presented by Dr. Ford Vox***

Dr. Ford Vox referenced the report on pages 52-54:

- We recently had our second committee meeting and continue to welcome new members.
- We established our first subcommittee for data analysis, led by Susannah Kidwell, Director of Rehabilitation Services at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta.
- The ACS report contains seven directives regarding rehabilitation integration into the trauma system. We are breaking those down and discussing the low-hanging fruit.
- Within the initial data request, we found some data gaps regarding where patients are going and the names of the facilities. We will ask registrars to start typing in facility names to analyze and determine the appropriate level of discharge and the utilization of rehabilitation services in the state. We also plan to analyze:
  - How patients are being treated according to payer source.
  - Discharge patterns and trends for post-acute rehab services and the basis of which trauma center and what's available in their region.
- The rehabilitation field has a variety of established quality standards and certifications that we can roll into official system guidelines and track compliance. The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) provides accreditations for relevant specialty programming such as TBI and SCI. The committee will work on incorporating these into the trauma system guidance.

- We are working with our individual facility's Quality Directors to determine metrics most appropriate to contribute to a state database.
- We are developing a survey to be sent to trauma hospitals to rank their challenges in discharging patients and determine their rehabilitation needs following trauma care. We will analyze where we can make recommendations for improvement in the system.
- Our next committee meeting is in August.

#### **TRAUMA ADMINISTRATORS COMMITTEE REPORT (01:17:16)**

***Presented by Dr. Michelle Wallace***

Dr. Michelle Wallace referenced page 55 of the meeting packet for the committee report:

- Our two meetings were in March at Chateau and in April via Zoom. We had lots of discussions about the diversion and trauma status.
- Next Thursday, we have a diversion workgroup meeting to discuss system, regional, and state diversion definitions and plans. The workgroup will morph into the regional trauma status communication and plan team.
- We are still looking for a finance workgroup chair. Multiple people are interested in participating in the projects but are not interested in chairing.
- During our next July committee meeting, I plan to discuss the process for having patients return to their home sites once they meet the capabilities of their communities to support patients and their families better.

#### **TRAUMA SYSTEM PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE REPORT (01:21:39)**

***Presented by Dr. James Dunne***

Dr. James Dunne referenced page 56 of the meeting packet for the committee report:

- OEMST is working internally to pull data out of the new Georgia Patient Registry to provide epidemiologic data for analysis. OEMS&T and GQIP will resume work days to drill down into patients.
- The armband project is still in process; The pilot includes one trauma center and one non-trauma center, EMS & Law Enforcement. The team is working to link the data in Biospatial. NHTSA is the funding source and will only support data from motor vehicle crash patients, not all trauma patients.
- Atrium Navicent and Memorial Health University Medical Center are working on their own time to definitive care project by sharing and comparing data. We are waiting for IRB approval from Memorial Health to combine the data. We hope to have preliminary data available by the August Commission meeting.

## **SYSTEM PARTNER REPORTS**

#### **GEORGIA TRAUMA FOUNDATION REPORT (01:26:50)**

***Presented by Cheryle Ward***

Cheryle Ward referenced the report on pages 57-61.

- Cheryle provided a brief overview of the Continuing Education Instructors' Database (CEID) project, pages 58-61. GTF is in its first year of operating an online directory that serves as a master list of trauma education providers throughout the state. The directory has been formally named Continuing Education Instructors' Database but will be known by its acronym CEID (pronounced seed). The database is a free, password-protected resource. Each trauma center will have its credentials for accessing this resource. The official statewide promotion and rollout of the system begins June 1.

- GTF was recently awarded a \$1.1 million grant from the Department of Community Health to coordinate continuing education programs for rural providers. By the end of the four-year grant, the Foundation will meet the objective of providing a minimum of 48 continuing education courses in the state's rural communities.

Cheryle Ward clarified that one of the ways the Foundation brings funds into the system is through grants. Cheryle works as a project manager for these grants. Still, the grant provides funds for additional salaries, such as coordinators, to help facilitate the programs and keep the database current. The funding for additional salaries is set for five years, but we will pursue other funding before the deadline. The responsibility of the Foundation will be to ensure that grant deliverables are met.

### **GEORGIA QUALITY IMPROVEMENT REPORT (01:40:12)**

***Presented by Dr. Rob Todd and Gina Solomon***

Dr. Rob Todd reviewed the GQIP report and content in the packet on pages 62-64:

- We will sunset the TBI workgroup by the August meeting and look to introduce two new workgroups: VTE prophylaxis and time to definitive care. We will introduce a third workgroup after the summer meeting.
- Our GQIP Trauma Advisory Committee continues to meet monthly. We met on May 1<sup>st</sup> and worked on the summer meeting agenda. We plan to have an open GQIP meeting in the morning, but the afternoon will be a closed session for the TQIP collaborative review and to present some patient cases.

Gina Solomon added:

- The ArborMetrix platform is still in the build phase, and we meet with them twice a month. We have worked on fourteen process and outcome measures. The target kick-off data is mid-September.
- There is a glitch with the ACS and data imports; no one is getting any 2023 data at this time. While the kinks are worked out, we continue to examine 2022 data.
- We have established a meeting cadence with our PSO attorney starting in June.

### **OFFICE OF EMS AND TRAUMA REPORT (01:50:05)**

***Presented by April Moss and Kelly Joiner***

April Moss reviewed their report on pages 62-64:

- We recently had two Level IACS re-verification visits, with VRC final reports pending.
- Two Level III Facilities with Provisional Designations submitted CD corrections and moved to full designation.
- The State Trauma Program Coordinator position is in the selection process.
- We received finalized Georgia ACS Consult Review Summary and are reviewing and prioritizing areas for improvement.
- OEMST met with our burn centers to revise the FY2024 Ongoing Burn Center Performance Evaluation (OBCPE) form to align the report with burn designation performance measures. The FY2024 form will open in October 2023
- The ImageTrend Patient Registry report writer training was offered from 4/24-26/2023. The OEMST, GTC, and cardiac and trauma center staff attended the sessions. The report writer is available for all users, including trauma centers using the V5 registry.
- We have a couple of other pending ACS verification visits throughout the summer. We also have a couple of new centers seeking level IV designations. We will visit those sites to discuss the processes and help them prepare to enter their retrospective data.

- 2023 schema status - ESO received the approved changes from OEMST again on 4/12/2023 to prepare the 2023 schema. ESO will distribute the schema SDL file to all V5 users, enabling users to download and import the 2023 registry records to the Georgia Patient Registry. The release is delayed due to ESO making additional national registry changes.
- The GCTE Registry Subcommittee and OEMST finalized the 2023 Georgia Trauma Data Dictionary. The Georgia Data Dictionary and the National Trauma Data Standard Dictionary represent the fields required by OEMST and GQIP.
- The OEMST and GQIP met to create a Trauma Data Dashboard to track and trend data from 2019 - to the present.
- GOHS/OEMST Armband Project: The pilot project has begun (April 11th) with Law Enforcement and EMS in White County, Law Enforcement and EMS in Lumpkin County, AirLife GA, and Northeast GA Health System Gainesville and Dahlonega. Data from the trauma records will be received in July once the data is downloaded from the trauma centers.
  - The Commission members discussed the amount of missing EMS trip reports. OEMST advised that they contact noncompliant ambulance services and work through a plan to ensure they submit trip reports. Kellie Joiner encouraged hospitals to contact OEMST if they notice any missing reports in the hospital hub.
- ACS New Resources for Optimal Care of the Injured Patient does not have Level IV Trauma Center Criteria. OEMST will be utilizing 2014 standards until ACS adds back level IV criteria.
- The Georgia Patient Registry received complete 2021 and 2022 imports from all but two designated centers. We plan to close the import links for 2021 and 2022 imports in June to prepare for the 2023 imports.
- A solution to the data export difficulties is being tested in the Georgia Patient Registry. The export issues prevent preparing the annual trauma report and new downloads to Biospatial. Dipti Patel and Dr. Danlin Luo will confirm when the data export is accurate for data analysis and download to Biospatial.
- As a result of the ACS and PA recommendations, discussions have begun to develop a formal mentorship program. The initiative is a joint effort between GCTE, OEMST, and GTC leadership to support trauma programs statewide. The mentorship will support all centers, focusing on level IV and new centers' needs.

Dr. Ashley added that the Office of EMS and Trauma and the Georgia Trauma Commission leaders have started to meet regularly to tackle some of the ACS recommendations.

Liz Atkins stated they are making headway on a dashboard for the trauma system. There are two separate databases: ImageTrend Georgia Patient Registry and ESO Central Site. April and I will work on a graphic for the August meeting. We want to avoid multiple databases in the future.

#### **MAG MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS FY2023 (02:10:00)**

***Presented by Dr. John Harvey***

Dr. John Harvey reviewed his report on pages 67-71:

- A couple of the events facilitated since last year are:
  - Drone Team Training
  - LZ Team training
  - Shelter Team/GDPH Training
  - Family Preparedness
  - K-9 Team Training



- We participated in an active shooter CME seminar, concentrated on active shooters at medical facilities.
- We continue to solicit the interest of physicians around the state. We have a reservoir of about 30 to 40 immediately deployable members.
- We continue to support Stop the Bleed and have provided training at the Georgia State Capitol.
- We participated in the EMAG summit with a speaker Dr. Paul Purcell and Gary Glemboski.
- Several members of MAGMRC attended this online webinar presented by the Southern Regional Disaster Response System.
- We participated in a Warner Robins multi-agency drill with triage in medical management for training capacity. We have another large-scale exercise in Atlanta next week.

Dr. Dunne asked for clarification on how the Commission funds are expended and other funding sources. Dr. Harvey advised that MAG's funding is allocated to uniforms, equipment, and underwriting the travel and lodging costs for training, especially for our instructors and participants. MAG's primary source of funding comes from the Georgia Trauma Commission and a small number of donations.

### **CLOSING COMMENTS (02:23:00)**

#### ***Presented by Dr. Dennis Ashley***

Before adjournment, Dr. Ashley stated there is a need to form workgroups to take on the ACS recommendations. Dr. Ashley suggested he work with Liz Atkins to start assigning specific recommendations to groups or create new groups if needed. We need an outline of how we want to do that and begin engaging stakeholders by the next Commission meeting.

Liz recommended beginning work on the trauma system plan, which will address some recommendations. We need to engage RTAC Chairs to facilitate the work and solutions throughout all regions. A possible strategy is to include focus groups during the winter meeting at Chateau Elan.

### **MOTION GTCNC 2023-05-03:**

#### **Motion to adjourn.**

**MOTION BY:** Regina Medeiros

**SECOND BY:** Courtney Terwilliger

**VOTING:** All members are in favor of the motion.

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

### **SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS & ADJOURNMENT**

- Commission approved: FY2024 Proposed Budget
- Dr. Ashley and Liz Atkins will start assigning specific recommendations to groups or create new groups if needed. We need an outline of how we want to do that and begin engaging stakeholders by the next Commission meeting.

*Minutes Respectfully Submitted by Gabriela Saye*