**Level III/Level IV/Rural Committee**

**DRAFT FOR APPROVAL**

**Meeting Minutes**

Friday, July 18, 2024

8:30-9:30 A.M.

Zoom

[Link to Meeting Recording and Meeting Material](https://trauma.georgia.gov/events/2025-07-18/gtc-level-iii-and-iv-committee-meeting)

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| **Committee Members Present\*** | **Representing** |
| Amy Jordan | AdventHealth Redmond, Chief Nursing Executive |
| Nicole Sundholm | AdventHealth Redmond, Trauma Program Manager |
| Tifani Kinard | Atrium Health Floyd Polk Medical Center, VP of Rural Health |
| Dawn Truett | Atrium Health Floyd Polk Medical Center, TPM |
| April Dukes | Crisp Regional Hospital, CNO |
| Alicia Register | Crisp Regional Hospital, TMD |
| David Kiefer | Effingham Hospital, TMD |
| Olalekan Akinyokunbo | Emanuel Medical Center, TMD |
| Brooke J. Marsh | Emanuel Medical Center, TPM |
| Damien Scott | Emanuel Medical Center, CEO |
| Lynn Grant | Fairview Park Hospital, Trauma Program Director |
| Kim Brown | Hamilton Medical Center, TPM |
| Christie Mathis | Morgan Medical Center, TPM |
| Jonathan Horsager | Piedmont Augusta Hospital, RN, BSN PI Coordinator |
| Karen Barrett | Piedmont Cartersville, TPM |
| Paula Butts | Piedmont Henry Hospital, CNO |
| Stevanie Reynolds | Piedmont Walton, CNO |
| James Polston | Piedmont Walton, TPM |
| Chelsea Carter | SGMC Health, TPM |
| Erica Thrift | SGMC Health, Injury Prevention Coordinator |
| Adalynn Rath | Wellstar Douglas, Trauma Coordinator |
| Heather Loftus | Wellstar Spalding, TPM |
| Rachel Hand | Wellstar West Ga, TPM |
| Jan Tidwell | Piedmont Cartersville, CNO |
| Amy Jordan | AdventHealth Redmond, Chief Nursing Executive |
| Nicole Sundholm | AdventHealth Redmond, Trauma Program Manager |
| Tifani Kinard | Atrium Health Floyd Polk Medical Center, VP of Rural Health |
| Dawn Truett | Atrium Health Floyd Polk Medical Center, TPM |

**\*Attendance is pulled from the committee meeting QR code.**

| **STAFF MEMBERS &**  **OTHERS SIGNING IN** | **REPRESENTING** |
| --- | --- |
| Elizabeth Atkins  Gabriela Saye  Gina Soloman  Crystal Shelnutt  Allie Leitz  Megan Owens  Cheryle Ward  Rebecca Butler  Nita Ham | Georgia Trauma Commission, Executive Director  Georgia Trauma Commission, Business Operations Manager  Georgia Trauma Commission, GQIP Director  Georgia Trauma Commission, System Planner  Georgia Trauma Commission, Intern  Georgia Trauma Commission, Intern  Georgia Trauma Foundation, Executive Director  Coffee Regional Medical Center, BSN RN Trauma Program Manager  State Office of Rural Health, Executive Director |

**CALL TO ORDER**

Dr. Alicia Register opened the meeting and thanked attendees for being on time. Participants were asked to confirm attendance via QR code or link within the Zoom chat.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

*Presented by Dr. Register*

Dr. Register requested a motion to approve the April meeting minutes.

**MOTION LIII/IV Committee 2025-07-01:**

**Motion to approve April 25, 2025, meeting minutes as submitted.**

**MOTION BY**: Damien Scott

**SECOND BY**: Christie Mathis

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

**ACTION**: The motion ***PASSED*** with no objections or abstentions.

**GTC Update**

*Presented by Liz Atkins*

* **FY 2027 Budget Prep:** Preliminary budget submitted using current FY as a base due to anticipated changes during legislative session.
* **Strategic Planning:** Considering goal-setting for this workgroup using data from rural trauma needs assessments and recent surveys.
* **Q-Centrix Inter-Rater Reliability Program:** Morgan Hospital has completed all steps. Centers experiencing issues should contact Liz or Q-Centrix directly.
* **FY 2026 Contracts:** Contracts delayed due to significant edits to the state's contract boilerplate. Language updates reflect clearer purpose-based clauses, especially regarding performance-based payments. Level I contract is almost finalized and will serve as a model for others. Target release date: August 1.
* **Strategic Plan Edits:** Goals based on recent surveys may be developed for the group.

**MARCH PAWS Update**

*Presented by Alicia Register & Damien Scott*

* Partnership initiated between Dr. Courtney Terwilliger and Dr. Mabes (AU/Wellstar MCG) to merge simulation and MARCH PAWS efforts.
* Collaboration aims to resolve prior manpower shortages and will now utilize AU’s simulation infrastructure.
* Videography component being added to create educational materials and public-facing content explaining trauma system levels and community impact.
* Positive momentum with AU’s leadership aggressively coordinating launch logistics.

**PTSF Consult Visit and System Planning Discussion**

*Presented by Dr. Register*

* Two of the five original PTSF consult hospitals were revisited.
* Key strengths identified:
  + Strong commitment to trauma care and community outreach.
  + Widespread TNCC education among nursing staff.
* Areas for improvement:
  + Under-triage and inconsistent use of ATLS protocols.
  + Inconsistent trauma documentation in EMRs.
  + Need for improved use of databases for performance improvement (PI).
* Transfer challenges noted include lack of EMS availability, limited tertiary center feedback, and inefficient documentation workflows.
* Suggested: Creation of workgroups to improve PI, under-triage standardization, and transfer protocols.
* Liz recommended proposing educational needs to GTC for potential funding.

**Trauma Connections Group Update**

*Presented by Rachel Hand*

* PI, EMS transfer delays, and eFAST validation processes discussed.
* Geriatric CMS measures not applicable to CAHs but relevant to others.
* “Right Site” service discussed as a potential solution to non-emergent 911 call burden on EMS.
* Facilities exploring use of contracted EMS transport services.
* Facilities seeking more training in report writer tools and documentation workflows.
* Educational offerings:
  + Pediatric stabilization lecture (Dr. Alexis Smith, virtual, July 23).
  + Dr. Mabes simulation at Wellstar Douglas (Aug 29) and Spalding (Oct 30).
  + Mini ABLS course in Fayette County (Aug 8, with Grady).

**New Business Level III/IV Committee Priorities Survey Results**

*Presented by Allie Leitz & Megan Owens (GTC MPH Interns)*

* **Top Priorities:**
  + Standardization of trauma care (29% ranked it #1).
  + Rural patient transfers (43% ranked it #1).
* **Key Findings:**
  + 66% identified documentation as the workflow most in need of improvement.
  + Top training needs: trauma scoring, pediatric trauma, and trauma documentation.
  + Preferred education format: peer learning and simulation.
  + 73% believe teleconsultation would reduce unnecessary transfers; 86% would consider implementing it.
  + Most cited transfer barrier: EMS and air transport availability (79%).
  + Funding priorities: Education and training, followed by transport partnerships.
* **Workforce challenges** noted include staffing shortages, contracted provider disengagement, and lack of compliance with existing protocols.

**Work Group Formation**

*Presented by Dr Register*

Based on the survey and discussion, the following workgroups will be formed:

1. **Standardization and Trauma Protocols**
2. **Trauma Telehealth**
3. **Performance Improvement (PI)**
4. **Transfer Improvement**

Participants were encouraged to join only one workgroup and contact Dr. Register or Gabby with their preferences.

**Additional Discussion**

*Presented by D. Register*

**PI Improvement:**

* Attendees expressed strong interest, including from Brooke Marsh (Emanuel Medical Center).
* Under-triage tracking, reevaluation documentation, and use of registry PI tools highlighted as key tactics.

**Trauma Nurse Education Modules (STN):**

* GTC has purchased STN Orientation Modules for all trauma centers.
* These can be customized for in-house use and are especially useful for trauma bay nurses.
* Contact Gabby to access modules (requires signed attestation).

**Trauma Center Financial Viability – Damien Scott:**

* Advocated for improved readiness cost reimbursement for Level IVs.
* Emphasized rising operating costs and concern about trauma center sustainability.
* Liz Atkins confirmed a future Level III/IV readiness cost survey is planned and encouraged early advocacy.

**Trauma Billing & Reimbursement:**

* Discussion included trauma charge capture, documentation for billing, and use of 68X trauma activation codes.
* Potential partnership with TCAA for coding and finance education explored.

*Minutes Respectfully Submitted by Crystal Shelnutt*