# **Upstate University Hospital helps Ogdensburg hospital with stroke** treatment via telemedicine

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OGDENSBURG — Upstate University Hospital is using telemedicine to assist Claxton-Hepburn Medical Center (CHMC) in Ogdensburg in St. Lawrence County in the treatment of stroke symptoms.

CHMC's emergency department will use a telemedicine program to connect its physicians with neurologists at Upstate's "comprehensive stroke center," Upstate said in a news release issued June 16.

Upstate University Hospital in early 2015 earned certification as a "comprehensive stroke center" from Milford, Ohio-based DNV GL Healthcare Inc., a hospital-accreditation organization. The hospital is also recognized as a primary stroke center as designated by the New York State Department of Health.

"Our telemedicine network allows the North Country access to expert stroke care regardless of geography," Jennifer Schleier, RN and program manager of Upstate's Stroke Center, said. "We have come to think of this program as stroke care without borders. It is our mission to close the gap between expert medical care and location of the patient, increase access to stroke treatments in rural communities, and to provide educational opportunities to any of our referring hospitals regarding stroke care."

When a patient arrives at CHMC's emergency department with what the health-care team has determined are symptoms consistent with stroke, Claxton-Hepburn can consult with an Upstate neurologist.

"Distance should never be a barrier to getting the best stroke care for patients," Dr. Gene Latorre, Upstate neurologist, said in the Upstate news release. "Claxton-Hepburn's emergency department providers will be encouraged and supported to keep uncomplicated patients in Ogdensburg. Should a patient need to be transported, consultation with the Upstate comprehensive stroke center specialist will be provided."

Within minutes, the neurologist will be able to view the X-ray computed tomography (CT) scan, examine the patient, and talk with the patient, his or her family, and physician about possible treatment.

"We are excited to begin this partnership with Upstate to provide more advanced stroke care in our emergency department to our patients," Nate Howell, CEO of Claxton-Hepburn Medical Center, said in the Upstate release. "Now we are able to provide a quicker diagnosis, which decreases a potential delay in treatment. Thanks to this technology in the treatment of stroke patients, our rural location is less of a barrier to care."

### **North Country hospitals**

The addition of Claxton-Hepburn Medical

Claxton-Hepburn Medical Center (CHMC) and Upstate University Hospital have announced a partnership to provide stroke services via telemedicine. The technology enables neurologists at Upstate to confer with physicians at CHMC, view X-ray computed tomography (CT) scans, and speak with patients. From left to right, representing CHMC are Julianne Sciorra, registered nurse (RN), director of emergency room nursing services, and Dr. Andre Bonnet, medical director of the emergency room. Representing Upstate are Jennifer Schleier, RN and stroke-program manager; Joshua Onyan, RN, stroke program outreach coordinator; and Catherine Stephens, assistant director of nursing for inpatient services

Center brings to three the number of area hospitals that are partnering with Upstate University Hospital on stroke care.

Through the use of telemedicine, our collaboration on stroke care with Claxton-Hepburn Medical Center in Ogdensburg, River Hospital in Alexandria Bay and Carthage Area Hospital in Carthage broadens the reach of our formally designated comprehensive stroke center and enables us to partner with physicians across the state to enhance medical care for patients many miles from Upstate," Dr. John McCabe, CEO of Upstate University Hospital, said. "We are grateful for these partnerships and for the work of the Fort Drum Regional Health Planning Organization [FDRHPO] in helping to deploy the equipment necessary to make these connections possible.'

Upstate has teamed up with FDRHPO, which deployed the telemedicine equipment to several North Country hospitals in an effort to expand the telemedicine network.

"Our telemedicine network allows the North Country access to expert stroke care regardless of geography," said Schleier.

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