



Advancing Stroke Care Through Telemedicine

When it comes to treating a stroke, every second counts. The quicker a neurologist sees a patient with stroke symptoms, and a treatment plan is put into place, the better the outcome.

In the spring of 2015, Summa Health introduced advanced InTouch Health robots into the Emergency Departments at Summa Health System – Akron and Barberton campuses, which has helped to cut down on the door-to-drug time for these patients. When the on-call neurologist is alerted to a possible stroke, he or she can log in from a remote location to activate the robot and immediately bring it right to the patient's bedside for a full examination.

If the neurologist determines the patient is a candidate for tPA, a time sensitive, clot-busting drug for acute stroke, it can be quickly administered.

At the Akron Campus, the stroke robot moves by itself. The robot in Barberton is equally impressive, but does not move independently. One advantage of the Barberton robot is that it is extremely light and can be easily taken on elevators and moved to different floors.

Thanks to hard work from the stroke response teams and the introduction of the robot, Summa Health has significantly improved its patient response times. While the national benchmark for door-to-drug time for tPA is 60 minutes, at the end of 2016, Summa Health System – Akron Campus was at 47 minutes.

