

More than 1200 lives changed...



Dr. Frank Silver connects remotely to patient's physician team.

Dizziness. Weakness. Headache. These are among the classic signs of stroke and the need to respond to them immediately is absolutely critical.

But what happens when you live in an area of the province where your health facility doesn't have medical staff familiar with treating stroke?

Telestroke is an emergency telemedicine application supported by the Ontario Telemedicine Network (OTN.) Telestroke uses live, two-way television and digital image transfer to "connect" local stroke patients and their emergency physicians with remote neurologists located at larger urban

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health care facilities to obtain urgent diagnosis and management advice. OTN is able to provide the service using eHealth Ontario's ONE network, which provides the reliable, high-speed communications backbone that enables the Telestroke service.

Telestroke neurologists can even recommend the administration of the clot-busting drug t-PA, a highly effective stroke treatment that, if used within the first three to four hours of the onset of a hyper acute stroke, may dramatically reduce its debilitating effects.

“Telestroke makes it possible for a neurologist to be at the patient’s bedside - even when that patient is hundreds of miles away - and assist the local physician with determining the most effective therapy possible,” says Dr. Frank Silver, Medical Director, Toronto West Stroke Network and Medical Director, OTN Telestroke Program. “Without Telestroke, these patients would not have access to this effective treatment.”

Eugene LeClair is convinced that were it not for the quick treatment he received through Telestroke, he would be unable to use his left arm.

According to Mr. LeClair, “As soon as I arrived at the hospital, I was sent for a CT Scan. When I returned to the ER, I was greeted on a video screen by a neurologist at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre in Toronto. After evaluating my situation, she confirmed that I qualified for tPA and instructed the ER staff about how to administer this treatment. My family and I are so very thankful for Telestroke.”

“16,000 people experience a stroke in Ontario each year, at a cost to the economy of \$1B in medical and other stroke-related costs,” notes Dr. Ed Brown, OTN’s Chief Executive Officer. “Telestroke not only provides access to a standard of care for patients who currently don’t have access to it, but also makes more effective and efficient use of scarce health human resources by providing support for physicians in smaller communities to assess and treat these patients.”

Thanks to Telestroke, more than 1200 patients who have experienced a stroke have survived its debilitating efforts.



Dr. Frank Silver examining digital images.

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