Objectives
Describe the components of the follow-up report for referring hospitals.
Discuss the processes that were improved as a result of the feedback and education.

Introduction
For providers within the emergency department (ED), their contact often ends at the time the patient is admitted or transferred to another facility. With the focus on comprehensive stroke centers, more patients are being transferred from community hospitals to tertiary facilities for advanced intervention options. With this pattern of care, tertiary facilities have a responsibility to provide education and feedback to referring hospitals.

Implementation
Format development based on the following:
- Informal survey of partner hospitals of what information they would like to receive
- Review of literature and opportunities for process improvement
- Review of samples available from other organizations

Referring hospitals receive information pertaining to the patients that were transferred either by email (preferred) or by regular mail. Details include brief history of the care at referring hospital, transfer times, interventions performed, and outcome data at discharge.

Discussion
This concise format promotes communication between providers and can be shared with all staff involved including the pre-hospital caregivers. Feedback from our partners:
- It serves as constructive feedback regarding their own ED processes
- It has raised awareness of what advanced treatment options are available “…I never really thought about what else could be done” was stated by one of the ED physicians
- It has facilitated improved assessment of appropriate candidates for transfer

Conclusions
This concise, comprehensive follow-up report closes the loop in the care path and emphasizes the vital link between referring hospitals, pre-hospital staff, and tertiary hospitals in timely appropriate stroke care. With an increased focus on continuum of care in stroke management and education throughout the community, this process demonstrates to referring hospitals and pre-hospital staff the vital role they play in stroke care and emphasizes the collaborative effort between hospitals.

References