



Arkansas Department of Health

4815 West Markham Street • Little Rock, Arkansas 72205-3867 • Telephone (501) 661-2000

Governor Mike Beebe

Nathaniel Smith, MD, MPH, Director and State Health Officer

January 31, 2014

To: Trauma Medical Directors/Trauma Program Managers

From: Bill Temple
Branch Chief
Trauma/Injury and Violence Prevention

Re: Telemedicine Program for Hand Injuries

I'd like to take a moment to briefly describe a new service that is being offered within the trauma system. Hand injuries have long been problematic for ED physicians and surgeons in Arkansas and other states. The goal of this program is to more accurately identify cases that require urgent treatment, such as micro vascular surgery and/or replantation, and to differentiate these cases from hand injuries that can be safely managed in the community or dealt with in a non-urgent manner.

The following is intended to assist you in those situations in which you need help with hand injuries. There are a limited number of hand surgeons in Arkansas. Seven have agreed to work as consultants to the Arkansas Trauma Communications Center (ATCC). Four are located in Little Rock and three are in Northwest Arkansas. Should you receive a patient with a hand injury that cannot be treated at your facility, you should simply call the ATCC as you would in any case involving a hospital-to-hospital transfer. The operator will provide information regarding how to connect, through your already available telemedicine unit, to the on-call hand surgeon. Through a technical infrastructure at the Center for Distance Health at UAMS in Little Rock, the surgeon will be able to view the injury and assist you in determining the proper course of treatment. The ATCC has identified several surgical centers in the state that are capable of treating hand injuries. It is noted that certain micro vascular and replantation cases have somewhat limited potential for treatment in Arkansas. The ATCC is therefore building relationships with centers in surrounding states that can treat complex hand injuries. This should drastically reduce the time spent in gaining acceptance at these facilities. A list of all hand specialists in Arkansas is also being developed and will be forwarded to EDs, which will be useful in ensuring that these patients receive the best care in the most convenient location.

Should you have any questions, please contact me at (501) 683-4029 or Jeff Tabor, Director of the ATCC, at (501) 301-1434, or by e-mail at jtabor@traumacomm.org. Thanks for everything you are doing for the Arkansas trauma system.