

Model and Integrate Medical Resource Availability into Verifiably Correct Executable Medical Guidelines

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Abstract—Improving effectiveness and safety of patient care is an ultimate objective for medical cyber-physical systems. A recent study shows that the patients' death rate can be reduced by computerizing medical guidelines [20]. Most existing medical guideline models are validated and/or verified based on the assumption that all necessary medical resources needed for a patient care are always available. However, the reality is that some medical resources, such as special medical equipment or medical specialists, can be temporarily unavailable for an individual patient. In such cases, safety properties validated and/or verified in existing medical guideline models without considering medical resource availability may not hold any more.

The paper argues that considering medical resource availability is essential in building verifiably correct executable medical guidelines. We present an approach to explicitly and separately model medical resource availability and automatically integrate resource availability models into an existing statechart-based computerized medical guideline model. This approach requires minimal change in existing medical guideline models to take into consideration of medical resource availability in validating and verifying medical guideline models. A simplified stroke scenario is used as a case study to investigate the effectiveness and validity of our approach.

I. INTRODUCTION AND RELATED WORK

Medical guidelines play an important role in today's medical care. Over past two decades, significant amount of efforts have also been made in obtaining various computer-interpretable models and developing tools for the management of medical guidelines, such as Asbru [4], GLIF [22], GLARE [23], EON [24], and PROforma [8]. Along with the well development and use of formal techniques on system design [18], [17], [26], our previous work [11] also designed a platform to model medical guidelines with statecharts and automatically transform statecharts [12] to timed automata [1] for formal verification. Furthermore, runtime verification is proposed and well adapted to working directly on the medical guidance systems [16], [15], [9] to improve the system performance. All these work is based on medical guidelines presented in medical handbooks.

However, medical guidelines often focus on medical procedures and with implicit assumption that all required medical resources for treatments are always available. By medical resources, we mean medical professionals, supplies, and equipments¹. Most existing computer-based medical guideline models inherit the implicit assumption and are validated and/or verified based on that all required medical resources are constantly available. Unfortunately, the reality is that some medical resources, such as special medical equipments or medical specialists, can be temporarily unavailable for patients. In such cases, some processes of medical guideline models may be blocked and safety properties validated and/or verified may fail and

put patients in danger. We use a simplified stroke scenario to illustrate the cases as follows. For illustration purpose, we ignore some medical details from computer science perspective in the simplified stroke scenario.

An ischemic stroke occurs when a clot or a mass blocks a blood vessel, cutting off blood flow to a part of the brain and results in a corresponding loss of neurologic function [2]. The goal of acute treatment is to keep the amount of brain injury as small as possible. The only FDA approved drug to treat ischemic stroke is tissue plasminogen activator (tPA), a clot busting drug [2]. However, the tPA must be given within 3 hours from the onset of stroke symptoms [3]. According to the stroke treatment guideline [14], giving tPA has two preconditions: (1) CT scan does not show hemorrhage and (2) systolic and diastolic blood pressure should not be larger than 185 mm Hg and 110 mm Hg, respectively.

In the simplified stroke scenario, there are two medical properties needed to be guaranteed in the patient care:

- **P1:** the tPA is injected only if a CT scan shows no hemorrhage and systolic and diastolic blood pressure are smaller than or equal to 185 mm Hg and 110 mm Hg;
- **P2:** the tPA administration is completed within 3 hours from onset of symptoms.

Assume a stroke patient's onset time is 0 and a physician orders CT scan for the patient at time 20 (minutes). If the CT machine is always available, the tPA administration can be completed within the 3-hour window. However, if the CT machine is unavailable until 200 minutes. In such case, the tPA administration can not be completed within 3 hours due to temporarily unavailable CT machines. Hence, modeling medical resources in existing medical guideline models and validating and verifying safety properties with consideration of medical resource availability are essential for improving patient care safety.

One approach to address the medical resource availability issue in existing medical guideline models is to directly add medical resource availability as guards to corresponding transitions or as state constraints. We call this method as direct modification approach. The timed and resource-oriented statecharts [19] takes the direct modification approach by specifying required resource information in states. Christov *et al.* [6], [7] uses Little-JIL to model the processes in medical guidelines and represents resource as preconditions of process steps. The mentioned work has shown that adding medical resource availability as transition guards, state constraints, or process preconditions is a practicable approach to address medical resource temporal unavailable issue in medical guideline models. But these approaches also face the following challenges. First often times, a medical guideline represents a generalized treatment procedure for a disease, it is not defined for a specific hospital. As medical

¹Patients are not considered as medical resources. They can be treated as preconditions of treatments and can be validated with the protocol presented in [25].

resource availabilities at different medical facilities can be significantly different, to use such direct modification approaches, we would have to build different medical guideline models for different medical facilities. Second, even within a same medical facility, medical resource availability can change over time, therefore the corresponding medical guideline models need to be changed as well. Third, for a failed safety property, identifying the errors that cause the failure becomes more challenging as errors both in medical resource availabilities and medical guideline model itself could cause the safety property to fail. Forth, medical guideline models with medical resource built in would increase the difficulty for medical professionals to understand and clinically validate the models, and would unnecessarily require medical staffs to know the medical resource availability at medical facilities.

In this paper, we present an approach to model and integrate medical resource availability into executable medical guideline models. Our approach separates resource models from medical guideline models to minimize the change impact of both guidelines and resources, as well as leaving the syntax and semantics of medical guideline models unchanged. In particular, we first define the procedures that how physicians to annotate required resources for actions in medical guideline models. To explicitly take medical resource availability into medical guideline system design, we represent an approach to explicitly and separately model medical resource availability. The medical resource availability models are then integrated into medical guideline models so that the integrated medical guideline models can be validated and safety properties in the presence of temporarily unavailable resources can be formally verified. A simplified stroke scenario is used as a case study to explain the proposed approach. The main contributions of the paper are:

- Take medical resource availability into consideration in validating and verifying executable medical guideline models.
- Present an approach to explicitly and separately model medical resource availability with statecharts.
- Develop an approach to automatically integrate resource availability models with verifiably correct executable medical guideline models.

The rest of the paper is organized as following: we introduce a framework for building verifiably correct executable medical guideline models in Section II. Section III describes the approaches for explicitly and separately modeling medical resources and their variabilities. Section IV defines the procedure for integrating medical resource availability models into medical guideline models. We draw conclusions and point out future work in Section V.

II. VERIFIABLY CORRECT EXECUTABLE MEDICAL BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES

Our previous work [11] designed a platform to build verifiably correct executable medical guidelines. The high level abstract of the platform is depicted in Fig. 1. In particular, we use statecharts [12] to model medical guidelines and interact with medical professionals to validate the correctness of the medical guideline models. The statecharts built with Yakindu tool [13] are then automatically transformed to timed automata [1] by the developed Y2U² tool, so that the safety properties required by the model, UPPAAL timed automata [5] in particular, can be formally verified. We use the simplified stroke scenario presented in Section I as an example to illustrate our previous

approaches on how to build verifiably correct executable medical guidelines.

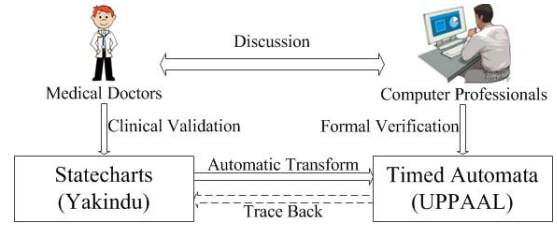


Fig. 1. A Platform for Building Verifiably Correct Executable Medical Guidelines

We use Yakindu statecharts to model the stroke treatment guideline [14]. For illustration and easy understanding purpose, we show a simplified stroke statechart model in Fig. 2, which only focuses on the CT scan and tPA administration procedures and omits details of other medical procedures. The full version of stroke statechart model is available in our technical report [10]. Hypertension is present in up to 84% of patients presenting with acute stroke [21]. In the simplified statechart shown in Fig. 2, we assume that upon patient arrival, treatments to control blood pressure have been immediately performed. A patients blood pressure is either quickly brought within the range or not possible.

In the statechart shown in Fig. 2, two medical actions CTscan and givetPA are modeled by Yakindu statechart *events*. In Yakindu statecharts, *events* can be raised by both states and transitions. For instance, the *entry action* of state “CT” (*entry/raise CTscan*) raises *event CTscan* when state “CT” is entered. The *event givetPA* is raised by the transition from state “tPACheck” to state “tPA” if tPA is administrated (the value of boolean variable tPAad is true). In the simplified stroke statechart model (Fig. 2), the two timing related variables curT and onsetT represent the current system time and the onset time of stroke symptoms, respectively. We assume that the time unit in the simplified stroke statechart model is minute. Hence, the remaining time of the 3-hour tPA treatment window can be calculated by formula $180 - (curT - onsetT)$.

The simplified stroke statechart model in Fig. 2 is transformed to UPPAAL time automata as shown in Fig. 3 with our Y2U² tool [11]. The properties **P1** and **P2** are verified in UPPAAL by formula (1) and formula (2), respectively.

$$A[] \text{Stroke.tPA} \text{ imply } systolicBP \leq 185 \ \&\& \ diastolicBP \leq 110 \ \&\& \ ! \text{hemorrhage} \quad (1)$$

$$A[] \text{Stroke.tPACheck} \text{ imply } tpaT - onsetT \leq 180 \quad (2)$$

As medical guideline handbooks often assume that all required medical resources are available. With the assumption, both clinical validation results of stroke Yakindu model in Fig. 2 and formal verification results of stroke UPPAAL model in Fig. 3 show that both properties **P1** and **P2** are satisfied. However, the assumption on medical resource availability may not always hold in reality. For example, the CTscan medical action in state “CT” of the stroke statechart model in Fig. 2 requires CT machines and CT technicians. If both CT machines and CT technicians are available after 200 minutes from onset of the symptoms, the stroke statechart is then blocked at state “CT” for 200 minutes. In this scenario, the safety property **P2** fails.

²The Y2U tool is available at www.cs.iit.edu/~code/software/Y2U/index.html.

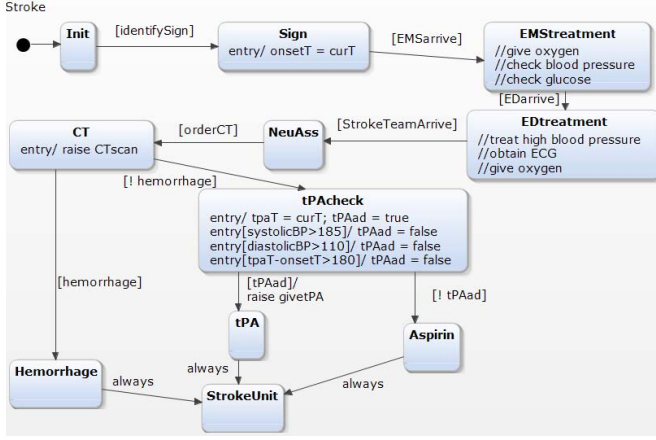


Fig. 2. Simplified Stroke Yakindu Statechart Model

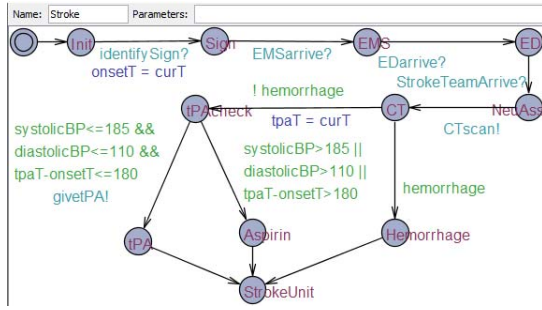


Fig. 3. Simplified Stroke UPPAAL Model

The example reveals a fact that safety properties validated and verified in medical guideline models based on the assumption that medical resources are always available can fail because of temporarily unavailable resources. Hence, taking into consideration of medical resource availability in developing verifiable medical guideline models is essential in validating and verifying the safety properties of the guideline models. We model medical resource availability with statecharts and integrate medical resource availability models with medical guideline statecharts to validate and verify safety properties in the following two sections.

III. MODEL MEDICAL RESOURCE AVAILABILITY WITH STATECHARTS

In this section, we model medical resource availability with statecharts in two steps: (1) automatically annotate required medical resources in executable medical guidelines and (2) explicitly model medical resource availability with statecharts based on resource annotations and given availability information.

A. Annotate Medical Resources in Executable Medical Guideline Models

To model medical resource availability, we need to identify which resources are required by which medical actions and represent the required resources in executable medical guidelines.

We use the simplified stroke statechart model shown in Fig. 2 as an example to illustrate medical resources required by medical guidelines. In the state “CT”, a medical action CTscan which is modeled as an *event* in Yakindu statecharts is raised by the *entry action* of the “CT” state. According to medical professionals, the

CTscan medical action requires CT machines and CT technicians. Similarly, a medical action givetPA is raised by the *action* of the *transition* from state “tPAcheck” to state “tPA”. The givetPA medical action requires tPA fluid. The examples show that (1) medical actions are modeled as statechart *events* and can be raised in both *states* and *transitions* and (2) medical resources required by medical actions are implicit and not represented in medical guideline statecharts. They need to be provided by medical professionals.

As medical professionals participate in model building and clinical validation processes of medical guideline statecharts, one intuitive method to represent required resources in medical guideline statecharts is that medical professionals review each *state* and *transition* of medical guideline statecharts and manually annotate required medical resources in each *state* and *transition*. The intuitive method works but has a disadvantage that medical professionals need to check all *states* and *transitions* in guideline statecharts when validating the correctness of annotated resource information.

To avoid the disadvantage, we propose an approach to annotate medical resources in executable medical guidelines with two steps: (1) represent medical actions required resources given by medical professionals by a map structure and (2) automatically annotate required medical resources in *states* and *transitions* according to the resource map and raised medical actions in corresponding *states* and *transitions*. Compared to the above intuitive resource annotation method, the proposed approach has an advantage that medical professionals only need to check the resource map when validating the correctness of medical resource information.

In the resource map structure (*key, value*), the *key* is medical actions that are represented by corresponding *event* names in the medical guideline statecharts. The *value* of the resource map is required medical resources of the corresponding *key* (medical action). As a medical action may require multiple resources, we use an array of all required medical resources to represent the *value* in the resource map structure. In the resource array, we replace spaces in resource names with underscores (_). In current work, we only consider the multiple resources required by the same medical action are pairwise independent and leave dependent resources as our future work. As multiple resources are independent, the sequence of multiple resources in a resource array is not important. We give the formal definition of the resource map structure in Definition 1 and show the resource map of the simplified stroke scenario in Example 1.

Definition 1: Given an executable medical guideline model \mathcal{G} , a set of medical actions $A = \{a_1, a_2, \dots, a_n\}$ in the medical guideline \mathcal{G} , and a set of medical resources $R_i = \{r_1^i, r_2^i, \dots, r_m^i\}$ required by the medical action a_i , the medical resource map \mathcal{M} is defined as

$$\mathcal{M} = \{(a_1, [r_1^1, r_2^1, \dots, r_{m_1}^1]), (a_2, [r_1^2, r_2^2, \dots, r_{m_2}^2]), \dots, (a_n, [r_1^n, r_2^n, \dots, r_{m_n}^n])\}. \quad (3)$$

Example 1: The simplified stroke statechart model shown in Fig. 2 has two medical actions CTscan and givetPA. Suppose the CTscan medical action requires CT machines and CT technicians and the givetPA medical action requires tPA. According to Definition 1, the resource map of the simplified stroke scenario is

$$\{(CTscan, [CT_machine, CT_technician]), (givetPA, [tPA])\}. \quad (4)$$

The required medical resource information represented in the map \mathcal{M} is independent of executable medical guideline models. To model

medical resource availability, we also need to annotate the required resources in executable medical guideline models. With the purpose of not affecting execution behaviors and validation/verification results of medical verifiably correct executable medical guideline models, we annotate medical resources by Yakindu statechart *comments*. The annotation is defined as follows.

Definition 2: Given a state S (or a transition T) in a executable medical guideline model \mathcal{G} , a set of medical actions $A_S = \{a_1, a_2, \dots, a_k\}$ modeled in state S (or transition T), and a medical resource map \mathcal{M} of \mathcal{G} , the annotation of state S (or transition T) is represented as

$$//@RES : r_1^1, \dots, r_{m_1}^1, \dots, r_1^2, \dots, r_{m_2}^2, \dots, r_1^k, \dots, r_{m_k}^k. \quad (5)$$

Based on the medical resource map and the medical resource annotation definitions, we annotate required medical resources in executable medical guideline statecharts with following two steps: first search each *state* S (and transition T) in the given medical guideline statechart \mathcal{G} ; second, if the actions of state S (or transition T) contain medical actions in the given medical resource map \mathcal{M} , add annotation, i.e., formula (5), to state S (or transition T). Algorithm 1 gives the details of the annotation procedure, where the operation $R + R'$ in Line 6 returns the concatenation of R and R' . The time complexity of Algorithm 2 is $O(L * M * N)$, where L is the element number of the medical resource map \mathcal{M} , M is the number of medical resources required by the medical guideline model \mathcal{G} , and N is the sum of states' number and transitions' number in \mathcal{G} .

Algorithm 1 ANNOTATION

Input: An executable medical guideline model \mathcal{G} and a medical resource map \mathcal{M} (formula (3)).

Output: The annotated medical guideline model \mathcal{G}' .

```

1: for each state  $S$  or transition  $T$  in  $\mathcal{G}$  do
2:   Define a resource array  $R = []$ 
3:   for each raised action  $a$  in  $S$  or  $T$  do
4:     Find  $R'$  with key  $a$  in  $\mathcal{M}$ 
5:     if  $R'$  is not NULL then
6:        $R = R + R'$ 
7:     end if
8:   end for
9:   if  $R$  is not empty then
10:    Add an annotation in the format of formula (5) to state  $S$ 
    or transition  $T$ 
11:   end if
12: end for
13: return  $\mathcal{G}$ 

```

Example 2: Given the simplified stroke statechart model shown in Fig. 2 and a resource map of formula (4). The state “CT” has a medical action CTscan. We use CTscan as the key to search the resource map given by formula (4) and find resource array [CT_machine, CT_technician]. According to Definition 2, we add the annotation “//@RES : CT_machine, CT_technician” to state “CT”. Similarly, we add the annotation “//@RES : tPA” to the transition from state “tPACheck” to state “tPA”. The annotated stroke statechart model by Algorithm 1 is depicted in Fig. 4, where the annotated states and transitions are marked by red rectangle.

B. Model Medical Resource Availability with Statecharts

Given a resource map \mathcal{M} and resource availability information, we develop statecharts to model medical resource availability in three steps: (1) design a Timer statechart to record current system time; (2) declare a boolean variable for each resource to denote its

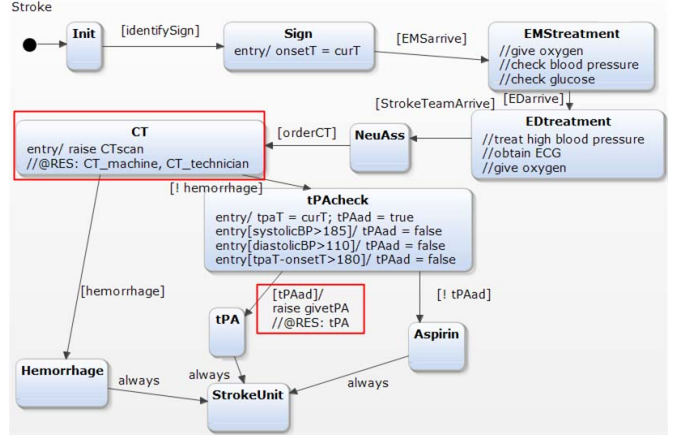


Fig. 4. Annotated Stroke Yakindu Model

availability at current time; and (3) build a statechart for each resource to represent its given availability information.

For the Timer statechart, we use an integer variable $curT$ to denote current system time and let a Timer statechart to increase current time $curT$. The Timer statechart only contains one state which has a self-loop transition to increase current time $curT$ by 1 every one time unit. Fig. 5 shows an example Timer statechart with time unit minute, which increases $curT$ by 1 every 60s.

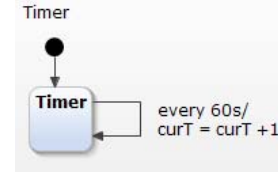


Fig. 5. Timer Statechart

To represent resource availability related variables, we declare an interface named RES. For each unique resource r in a given resource map \mathcal{M} , we declare a boolean variable V_r in the interface RES to denote the resource r 's availability at current system time. The variable V_r has the same name as the corresponding resource r and default value **false** that means the resource r is not available initially. For example, the resource map of the simplified stroke scenario given in formula (4) contains three medical resources CT_machine, CT_technician, and tPA. The declared resource availability variables of the simplified stroke scenario is shown in Fig. 6.

```

interface RES:
var CT_machine : boolean = false
var CT_technician : boolean = false
var tPA : boolean = false

```

Fig. 6. Resource Availability Variables

For each unique resource r in the given resource map \mathcal{M} , we build a statechart to represent its given availability information. Each resource statechart contains only one state S that has a self-loop transition T with guard **true**. The transition T ensures that the resource r 's availability is checked at each statechart execution cycle and maintains the latest value. The entry actions of the state S check the resource r 's availability at current time $curT$ based on given resource availability information. If the resource r is available, the entry action assigns **true** value to the corresponding resource boolean

variable V_r ; otherwise, the resource variable V_r is assigned as **false**. We use Example 3 to show resource statecharts for the simplified stroke scenario.

Example 3: For the simplified stroke scenario, given the resource map as formula (4) and resource availability information as follows: (1) both CT_machine and CT_technician are available after 200 minutes and (2) the tPA is always available. For resource CT_machine, we build the “CT_machine” statechart with only one state named “CT_machine” which has a self-loop transition with guard **true**. According to given resource availability information that the CT_machine is available after 200 minutes, we add two entry actions to the state “CT_machine”:

- 1) `entry[curT > 200]/RES.CT_machine = true` assigns variable CT_machine as true if current time curT is larger than 200 minutes and denotes that the resource CT_machine is available after 200 minutes;
- 2) `entry[curT ≤ 200]/RES.CT_machine = false` assigns variable CT_machine as false if current time curT is smaller than or equal to 200 minutes and denotes that the resource CT_machine is not available until 200 minutes.

Similarly, we build two statecharts for resource CT_technician and tPA, respectively. The resource statecharts are shown in Fig. 7.

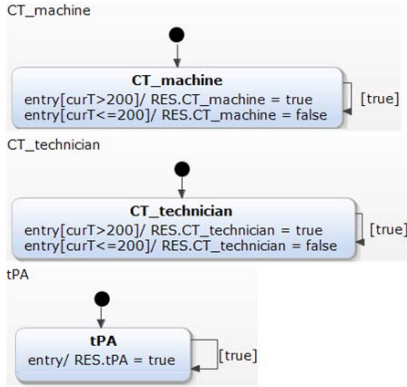


Fig. 7. Resource Statecharts

IV. INTEGRATE MEDICAL RESOURCE AVAILABILITY MODELS WITH MEDICAL GUIDELINE STATECHARTS

To clinically validate and formally verify the safety of medical guideline models with consideration of medical resource availability, we need to integrate medical resource availability models with medical guideline statecharts.

According to the medical resource availability modeling approach presented in Section III-B, for each resource r , a boolean variable V_r is declared. We use the declared resource availability variable V_r to bridge the communication between medical resource availability models and medical guideline statecharts and modify medical guideline statecharts with following integration rules.

- **Integration Rule 1:** For each transition T with guard G , if it is annotated by “//@RES : r_1, r_2, \dots, r_n ”, the guard G is modified by $G = G \ \&\& \ V_{r_1} \ \&\& \ V_{r_2} \ \&\& \ \dots \ \&\& \ V_{r_n}$;
- **Integration Rule 2:** For each state S , if it is annotated with “//@RES : r_1, r_2, \dots, r_n ”, apply **Integration Rule 1** to all incoming transitions of the state S with the annotation.

Algorithm 2 gives the integration procedure. The time complexity of Algorithm 2 is $O(M * N^2)$, where M is the number of medical resources required by the medical guideline model \mathcal{G} and N is the

sum of states’ number and transitions’ number in \mathcal{G} . Example 4 illustrates how we apply the integration rules to integrate the CT machine, CT technician, and tPA fluid availability models with the simplified stroke statechart.

Algorithm 2 INTEGRATION

Input: An annotated medical guideline model \mathcal{G} .

Output: The integrated medical guideline model \mathcal{G}' .

```

1: for each state  $S$  in  $\mathcal{G}$  do
2:   if  $S$  is annotated with “//@RES :  $r_1, r_2, \dots, r_n$ ” then
3:     for each incoming transition  $T$  with guard  $G$  of state  $S$  do
4:        $G = G \ \&\& \ V_{r_1} \ \&\& \ V_{r_2} \ \&\& \ \dots \ \&\& \ V_{r_n}$ 
5:     end for
6:   end if
7: end for
8: for each transition  $T$  with guard  $G$  in  $\mathcal{G}$  do
9:   if  $T$  is annotated with “//@RES :  $r_1, r_2, \dots, r_n$ ” then
10:     $G = G \ \&\& \ V_{r_1} \ \&\& \ V_{r_2} \ \&\& \ \dots \ \&\& \ V_{r_n}$ 
11:  end if
12: end for
13: return  $\mathcal{G}$ 

```

Example 4: We integrate the resource availability models in Fig. 7 with the annotated stroke statechart model in Fig. 4. The transition T_1 from state “tPAcheck” to state “tPA” is annotated with “//@RES : tPA” and has guard $G_1 = \text{tPAAd}$. Based on **Integration Rule 1**, the transition T_1 ’ guard is set as $G_1 = \text{tPAAd} \ \&\& \ \text{RES.tPA}$. The state “CT” is annotated by “//@RES : CT_machine, CT_technician” and only has one incoming transition T_2 with guard $G_2 = \text{orderCT}$ from state “NeuAss”. According to **Integration Rule 2**, we apply **Integration Rule 1** to the transition T_2 and set the guard as $G_2 = \text{orderCT} \ \&\& \ \text{RES.CT_machine} \ \&\& \ \text{RES.CT_technician}$. Fig. 8 shows the integrated stroke statechart, where the modified transitions are marked by red rectangle.

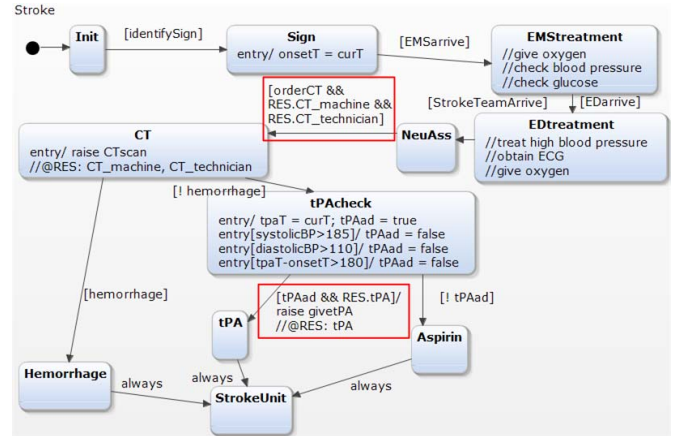


Fig. 8. Integrated Stroke Yakindu Model

To clinically validate and formally verify the safety of the stroke statechart with the consideration of resource availability, we run simulations of the integrated stroke model (Fig. 8) through Yakindu, transform it to integrated stroke UPPAAL model (Fig. 9), and verify the two safety properties (P1 and P2) in UPPAAL. The resource availability is given in Example 3, i.e., both CT_machine and CT_technician are available after 200 minutes, the tPA is always available. Both simulation and verification results show that

the property **P1** holds while **P2** fails. The case study demonstrates that the proposed approach to model and integrate medical resource availability into medical guidelines are effective in capturing safety property fails caused by temporarily unavailable resources in both clinical validation and formal verification process.

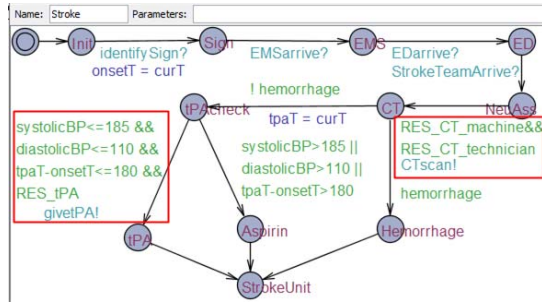


Fig. 9. Integrated Stroke UPPAAL Model

V. CONCLUSION

Medical guidelines often assume that all required medical resources are available. Unfortunately, the reality at medical facilities is that some medical resources can be temporarily unavailable. Hence, taking into consideration of medical resource availability in developing verifiable medical guideline models is essential in validating and verifying safety properties. The paper presents an approach to separately model medical resource availability with statecharts and automatically integrate medical resource availability statecharts with verifiably correct executable medical guideline models. The proposed approach allows to minimize the change impact on medical guideline models caused by resource availability variations. The applying separation of concern methodology in our approach further allows different professionals to focus on only their own domains, e.g., medical professionals and resource administrators focus on medical guidelines and medical resource availability information, respectively. The separation also improves model understandability for both medical professionals and resource administrators. In addition, this approach can be easily implemented in our existing platform [11] with which the medical guideline models with the consideration of resource availability can be clinically validated by medical professionals and formally verified with existing tools. We also use a simplified stroke scenario as a case study to investigate the effectiveness and validity of our approach. In this paper, we consider the multiple resources required by the same medical action are pairwise independent. Our future work is to extend the presented approach to support dependent resources.

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