

December 1, 2006

ST. FRANCIS MEDICAL CENTER PRIMARY STROKE CENTER
AWARDED JCAHO CERTIFICATION

St. Francis Medical Center today announced that it has earned the Gold Seal of Approval for stroke care from the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organization (JCAHO). This Disease-Specific Certification was awarded to the Primary Stroke Center based on the results of a recent on-site review.

"St Francis Medical Center's certification is indicative of the program's compliance with national standards and effective use of established clinical practice guidelines to manage and optimize care," said Russell P. Massaro, MD FACPE, Joint Commission Executive Vice-President, Division of Accreditation and Certification Operations.

St. Francis has worked tirelessly to create one of the best primary stroke centers in the region, and we are proud to achieve this distinction," noted Jerry Jablonowski, President and CEO of St. Francis Medical Center.

The St. Francis Primary Stroke Center was developed under the direction of Charles Kososky, M.D., Medical Director of stroke evaluation at SFMC, working with a team of St. Francis Physicians, Magnet Nurses, and Hospital Administrators.

Working hand in hand with St. Francis's Emergency Department the primary stroke center brings together a 24-hour-on-call team with stroke-trained physicians from multiple specialties, including neurology, neurosurgery, radiology, and emergency medicine. The team utilizes state-of-the-art technology to provide evaluation and management of patients who exhibit signs of a stroke or what is increasingly referred to as "brain attack."

The Joint Commission's Primary Stroke Center Certification is based on recommendations for primary stroke centers published by the Brain Attack Coalition and the American Stroke Association's statements/guidelines for stroke care. JCAHO launched the program in 2003, and currently about 166 hospitals nationwide and only nine in Pennsylvania have received the Joint Commission's Primary Stroke Center Certification, with St. Francis being the first and only one in Mercer County.