St. Francis Medical Center Earns Get With The Guidelines-Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award

American Heart Association Award recognizes St. Francis Medical Center’s commitment to quality stroke care for the third year in a row.

TRENTON, NJ—St. Francis Medical Center recently received the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association’s Get With The Guidelines®-Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award for the third year in a row. The award recognizes the hospital’s long-term commitment to ensuring stroke patients receive the most appropriate treatment according to nationally recognized, research-based guidelines based on the latest scientific evidence.

St. Francis earned the award by meeting specific quality achievement measures for the diagnosis and treatment of stroke patients at a set level for a designated period. These measures include evaluation of the proper use of medications and other stroke treatments aligned with the most up-to-date, evidence-based guidelines to help speed recovery and reduce death and disability for stroke patients. Before discharge, patients should also receive education on managing their health, get a follow-up visit scheduled, as well as other care transition interventions.

“Earning this award for the third year in a row demonstrates St. Francis’ long-term commitment to providing the best possible stroke care,” said Daniel P. Moen, President and Chief Executive Officer, St. Francis Medical Center. “Our physicians and staff strive for excellence, and we are proud to work with the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association to ensure that our patients receive the highest quality stroke care.”

St. Francis is noted for having the first accredited Stroke Center in Mercer County. The Stroke program combines highly trained staff, advanced technology and patient education to bring quality and comprehensive care to the residents of Mercer County. The medical center’s Stroke Team consists of neurologists, emergency room staff, nurses, primary care physicians, as well as radiologists, who are on-call 24 hours-a-day, 7 days-a-week, to provide rapid care to those affected by stroke.

“Our multidisciplinary team works together to ensure that stroke patients receive the most advanced quality care during and after their stroke,” said Charles Kososky, MD, Chair of Neurology at St. Francis Medical Center. “We also work hard to educate patients and the community about ways to prevent stroke.”
“We are pleased to recognize St. Francis Medical Center for their commitment to stroke care,” said Lee H. Schwamm, M.D., national chairperson of the Quality Oversight Committee and Executive Vice Chair of Neurology, Director of Acute Stroke Services, Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, Massachusetts. “Research has shown that hospitals adhering to clinical measures through the Get With The Guidelines quality improvement initiative can often see fewer readmissions and lower mortality rates.”

According to the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association, stroke is the No. 5 cause of death and a leading cause of adult disability in the United States. On average, someone in the U.S. suffers a stroke every 40 seconds and nearly 795,000 people suffer a new or recurrent stroke each year.

Early warning signs of stroke include:
- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- Sudden, severe headache with no known cause

If you experience any of these symptoms, call 911 right away for immediate medical treatment.

**Caption:** St. Francis Medical Center has earned the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association’s Get With The Guidelines®-Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award for the third year in a row. Pictured from the St. Francis team is (l – r) Daniel P. Moen, President and Chief Executive Officer; Charles Kososky, MD, neurologist; C. James Romano, MD, Chief Medical Officer; and Eric Yuscavage, Director of Quality and Performance Improvement. Not pictured is Rebecca Petruccelli, Sepsis/Stroke Coordinator.

**About St. Francis Medical Center**
St. Francis Medical Center, a member of Trinity Health, is an acute care teaching hospital recently ranked by Consumer Reports as one of the top ten hospitals in New Jersey for safety and number one in Mercer County. Most noted for its Cardiac Surgery program and the first accredited Stroke Center in Mercer County, St. Francis features regional services including the Heart Hospital, a Regional Cancer Center, a Sleep Disorder Center and an extensive Community Outreach Program. St. Francis’ partner in care is LIFE St. Francis (Living Independently For Elders). St. Francis Medical Center has served the South Jersey community for nearly 150 years. For more information, visit [www.stfrancismedical.org](http://www.stfrancismedical.org).

**About Get With The Guidelines®**
Get With The Guidelines® is the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association’s hospital-based quality improvement program that provides hospitals with tools and resources to increase adherence to the latest research-based guidelines. Developed with the goal of saving lives and hastening recovery, Get With The Guidelines has touched the lives of more than 6 million patients since 2001. For more information, visit [heart.org](http://heart.org)