

August 25, 2020**For Immediate Release****Contact:** JoAnn Cavanaugh, Director Public Relations**Office:** (716) 706-2061 | **Cell:** (716) 228-4886 | **Email:** kjc4281@chsbuffalo.org

Catholic Health hospitals receive *Get With The Guidelines*[®] *Gold Plus Awards* for delivering high quality stroke care

All four Catholic Health hospitals – Mercy Hospital of Buffalo, Mount St. Mary’s, Kenmore Mercy and Sisters of Charity – were recently recognized with the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association’s (AHA/ASA) *Get With The Guidelines*[®]- *Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award*. The awards recognize Catholic Health’s commitment to excellence by ensuring stroke patients receive the highest quality care according to nationally-recognized, research-based guidelines.

The hospitals, which are all New York State Designated Stroke Centers, achieved the *Stroke Gold Plus Award* by meeting specific quality measures for the diagnosis and treatment of stroke patients at a set level for a designated period. These measures include the proper use of medications and other stroke treatments, with the goal of speeding recovery and achieving the best outcomes.

Additionally, Mercy Hospital of Buffalo, Catholic Health’s Comprehensive Stroke Center, received the *Target: Stroke Honor Roll Elite Plus Award*. To qualify for this additional recognition, hospitals must meet specific quality measures developed to reduce the time between the patient’s arrival at the hospital and treatment with clot-busting tPA (tissue plasminogen activator), the only drug approved by the Food and Drug Administration to treat ischemic strokes.

“These independent, national awards recognize our stroke program’s commitment to ensure patients who come from all over the Buffalo/Niagara area and beyond receive the most appropriate treatment at the nearest designated stroke center,” said Hans Cassagnol, MD, MMM, Executive Vice President & Chief Physician Executive for Catholic Health. “This approach ensures that patients get the care they need quickly and safely, including lifesaving, clot-busting medications; and when needed, have immediate access to all the resources of an Elite Plus Comprehensive Stroke Center at Mercy Hospital.”

According to the AHA/ASA, 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 800,000 people suffer a new or recurrent stroke each year.

“By following evidenced-based guidelines endorsed by the AHA/ASA, we are not only improving our quality outcomes for stroke care delivered within Catholic Health, we are improving the quality of life for thousands of patients throughout our community,” Dr. Cassagnol added.