
For Immediate Release

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Mercy Comprehensive Stroke Center Achieves AHA's Highest Level Recognition for 8th Year in a Row

November 13, Buffalo, NY – For the eighth consecutive year, the Mercy Hospital Comprehensive Stroke Center has received the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association's ***Get With The Guidelines® - Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award and Target: Honor Roll Elite Plus***—the AHA's highest level of hospital recognition—for its commitment to quality stroke treatment based on nationally recognized, research-based guidelines for care.

“With a stroke, every moment counts, and the Stroke Gold Plus Quality Award demonstrates Mercy Hospital's commitment to being one of the top hospitals in the country for providing exceptional stroke care,” said Eddie Bratko, Mercy Hospital President. “This recognition from the ***Get With The Guidelines*** program further reinforces our team's hard work and ongoing efforts to deliver advanced stroke treatments to patients quickly and safely.”

Mercy Hospital earned the award by meeting and exceeding seven designated quality achievement measures for the diagnosis and treatment of stroke patients for a period of 24 consecutive months. These measures include evaluation of the proper use of medications and other stroke treatments aligned with the most up-to-date, evidence-based standards of care with the goal of speeding recovery and reducing death and disability for stroke patients. Hospitals are also reviewed for pre-discharge procedures that provide patients with education on managing their health, scheduling a follow-up visit, as well as other care transition interventions.

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To achieve the association's **Target: Stroke Elite PlusSM Award**, hospitals must meet quality measures developed to reduce the time between the patient's arrival at the hospital and treatment with the clot-buster tissue plasminogen activator, or [tPA](#), the only drug approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to treat strokes caused by a blocked blood vessel to the brain.

In addition, Mercy Hospital earned the **Advanced Therapy Honor Roll Award**, which evaluates the time between a stroke patient's arrival at the hospital and being treated with endovascular therapy to remove a clot in the brain through a blood vessel in the arm or groin.

In 2013, Mercy Hospital became the first hospital in Western New York and among the first in New York State to be named a Comprehensive Stroke Center by The Joint Commission, offering 24/7 emergency care with specially trained physicians and medical personnel, advanced imaging capabilities and specially -equipped operating facilities to diagnose and treat the most complex stroke cases. Every two years, the hospital undergoes a rigorous review and survey process to maintain its certification. The hospital recently achieved its third re-accreditation as a Joint Commission Comprehensive Stroke Center that is effective through 2021.

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, someone dies of a stroke every four minutes, and nearly 800,000 people suffer a new or recurrent stroke each year.

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About Mercy Hospital

Mercy Hospital is home to the Catholic Health Heart Center, providing a full range of cardiac care services including heart surgery and the latest minimally invasive cardiac procedures, and serves as a Joint Commission -accredited Comprehensive Stroke Center with physician experts and capabilities to diagnose and treat the most complex stroke cases. The hospital is also home to the state-of-the-art Mercy Emergency Center featuring 32 private treatment rooms and a rooftop heliport, as well as the Family BirthPlace providing a full spectrum of maternity/child services and a neonatal intensive care unit. Mercy also offers a wide array of outpatient, primary care and rehabilitation services at convenient locations throughout the area, including 24/7 emergency care available at the Mercy Ambulatory Care Center in Orchard Park. Founded over 100 years ago by the Sisters of Mercy, the hospital is committed to medical excellence with an ongoing mission to reveal the healing love of Jesus to those in need.

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.