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Lee Health Hospitals' Stroke Care Earns Quality Achievement Awards

(Fort Myers, Fla. – Sept. 17, 2018) --- Cape Coral Hospital, Gulf Coast Medical Center, HealthPark Medical Center and Lee Memorial Hospital each earned the American Heart Association (AHA)/American Stroke Association's (ASA) Get With The Guidelines® - Stroke Gold Plus Target Stroke Elite Plus Quality Achievement Award. The award recognizes success in implementing evidence-based guidelines and delivering excellent care for stroke patients. These awards acknowledge hospitals' exceptional performance in administration of clot-busting tPA medication, which significantly reduces disability after stroke.

"We are so proud that all four adult hospitals earned Get With The Guidelines – Stroke Gold Plus Target Stroke Elite Plus Quality Achievement Award," said Cindy Drapal, DNP, System Director, Lee Health Neurosciences. "Time matters when treating stroke and by continuing to implement the very best evidence-based guidelines into our processes, we ensure outpatients receive the best treatment."

According to the Centers for Disease Control, stroke is one of the leading causes of death and serious, long-term disability in the United States. On average, someone suffers a stroke every 40 seconds; someone dies of a stroke every four minutes; and 795,000 people suffer a new or recurrent stroke each year.

Get With The Guidelines – Stroke uses the "teachable moment" after a patient has a stroke and when they are most likely to listen to and follow their health care professionals' guidance. Studies show that patients who are taught how to manage their risk factors while still in the hospital reduce their risk of a second stroke. Additionally, customized patient education materials are provided at discharge, and are based on each patient's individual risk profiles.

To receive the Get With The Guidelines – Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award hospitals must achieve 85% or higher adherence to all guideline indicators and 75% or higher compliance with six of the 10 guideline measures. The Gold level is awarded for 24 consecutive months of performance achievement. These measures include aggressive use of medications, preventative treatments, cholesterol-reducing drugs and smoking cessation—all aimed at reducing death and disability and improving the lives of stroke patients.

To achieve the Target: Stroke Honor Roll – Elite Plus recognition, hospitals must administer clot-busting medication within 60 minutes of arrival to the facility in 75% or more of eligible acute ischemic strokes and within 45 minutes of arrival in 50% of eligible acute ischemic stroke patients treated with IV tPA.

Offering 24/7 neurointerventional coverage with a full team of specialists, support staff, a dedicated neuroscience intensive care unit for stroke patients and a dedicated neurointerventional suite equipped with state-of-the-art biplane angiography systems, Gulf Coast Medical Center provides lifesaving care around-the-clock and close to home. Gulf Coast Medical Center also is Lee County's only certified Comprehensive Stroke Center.

Cape Coral Hospital and Lee Memorial Hospital are Primary Stroke Centers, which means they are recognized nationally for providing state-of-the-art care while focusing on quality, innovation and continual improvement. The stroke certification is a voluntary process that has elevated the level of care available in the community. Drapal said.

Photo Cutlines:

Cape Coral Hospital

L to R: Jim English, Neurology Supervisor; Stephanie Gass, Neurology Supervisor, Jeffrey Walker, American Heart Association/American Stroke Association Director, Quality & Systems Improvement Greater Southeast Affiliate; Lynda Knox, Radiology Director; Cindy Drapal, System Director, Lee Health Neurosciences; Rebekah Jernstedt, Neurology Nursing Director; Amy Hiteman, ICU Director, Tito Valverde, Emergency Department Supervisor; Jenny Bayne, Rehabilitation Services Manager; Theresa King, ICU Supervisor and Keith Hall, Lead CT Technologist

HealthPark Medical Center

L to R: Sandra Simmons, ICU Director; Cindy Brown, Vice President-Patient Care Services; Becky Eliassen, HPMC Stroke Coordinator/Nursing Director; Cindy Drapal, System Director, Lee Health Neurosciences; Zannon Garza, American Heart Association/American Stroke Association Heart Ball Director; Jeffrey Walker, American Heart Association/American Stroke Association Director, Quality & Systems Improvement Greater Southeast Affiliate; Chelsea Carey, Cardiac Decision Unit Supervisor; Eric Appelgren, Acute Care Medical Officer

Lee Memorial Hospital

L to R: Scott Kashman, Chief Acute Care Officer; Crystal Lawson, Director Food Services; Lori Thies, Radiology Director; Michelle Standard, Rehabilitation Services Manager; Jeffrey Walker, American Heart Association/American Stroke Association Director, Quality & Systems Improvement Greater Southeast Affiliate; Cindy Drapal, System Director, Lee Health Neurosciences

Gulf Coast Medical Center

Front Row L to R: Rebecca Hilger, Speech and Language Pathologist; Nancy Monderie-Rogala, Speech and Language Pathologist and Lead Therapist at GCMC; Lucia Campbell, Director of Care Management; Marcelle Sizemore, Director Radiology; Cindy Drapal, System Director, Lee Health Neurosciences; Linda Odnaha, Nursing Director-Neurosciences; Christy Tallent, Physical Therapist Assistant; Clarissa Ferreria, Physical Therapist; Stephanie Casale, Supervisor Stroke Unit; Jeffrey Walker, American Heart Association/American Stroke Association Director, Quality & Systems Improvement Greater Southeast Affiliate; Abby Krebbs, Stroke Unit Supervisor; Lauren Nutter, American Heart Association; Holly Muller, Vice President – Patient Care Services.