Mercy Health System Hospitals earn Get With The Guidelines Quality Achievement Awards

By Haywood Brewster
Staff Reporter

Recently, all three of Mercy Health System’s hospitals – Mercy Fitzgerald Hospital, Mercy Philadelphia Hospital and Nazareth Hospital – were recognized by the American Stroke Association (ASA) and American Heart Association (AHA) as Get with The Guidelines Achievement Award winners. Each Mercy Health System hospital earned the AHA Get with the Guidelines Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award. Mercy Fitzgerald and Mercy Philadelphia hospitals earned the AHA Get with the Guidelines Heart Failure Gold Quality Achievement Award, while Nazareth Hospital earned the Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award. These awards exemplify Mercy's commitment to ensuring improved recovery times and reducing hospital readmission rates for stroke and heart failure patients throughout the Philadelphia area.

Mercy hospitals earned the awards by meeting specific quality achievement measures for the diagnosis and treatment of heart failure and stroke patients at a set level for a designated period. For all patients, these measures include evaluation of the proper use of medications. For heart failure patients, these measures also include aggressive risk-reduction therapies. For stroke patients, these measures consist of other stroke treatments aligned with the most up-to-date, evidence-based guidelines with the goal of speeding recovery and reducing death and disability. Before discharge, heart failure and stroke patients also receive education on managing their overall health, have a follow-up visit scheduled, as well as other care transition interventions.

"Mercy Health System is dedicated to improving the quality of care for our patients by implementing the Get with The Guidelines initiatives for heart failure and stroke patients," said Sharon Carney, M.D., Chief Medical Officer at Mercy Health System. "The tools and resources provided help us track and measure our success in meeting evidenced-based clinical guidelines developed to improve patient outcomes."

Get with The Guidelines-Stroke and Get with The Guidelines-Heart Failure are in-hospital programs for improving care by promoting consistent adherence to the latest scientific treatments guidelines. "We are pleased to recognize Mercy Health System hospitals for their commitment to heart failure and stroke care," said Eric E. Smith, M.D., national chairman of the Get with The Guidelines Steering Committee and an associate professor of neurology at the University of Calgary in Alberta, Canada. "Research has shown that hospitals adhering to clinical measures through the Get with The Guidelines quality improvement initiative often see fewer readmissions and lower mortality rates."

According to the AHA, more than 6.5 million adults in the United States are living with heart failure, although many heart failure patients can lead a full, enjoyable life when their condition is managed with proper medications or devices and with healthy lifestyle changes. In addition, according to the ASA, stroke is the No. 5 cause of death and a leading cause of adult disability. 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.