



Tri-City Medical Center

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Tri-City Medical Center receives 'Get With The Guidelines' Gold Plus Performance Achievement Award for Stroke Care

OCEANSIDE – Tri-City Medical Center has received the 2010 American Heart Association/American Stroke Association's Get With The Guidelines® Stroke Gold Plus Performance Achievement Award. The award recognizes Tri-City's commitment and success in implementing excellent care for stroke patients, according to evidence-based guidelines. Tri-City is the only hospital in North San Diego County to attain this level of distinction for stroke care.

To receive the award, Tri-City achieved 85 percent or higher adherence to all Get With The Guidelines-Stroke Performance Achievement indicators for two or more consecutive 12-month intervals and achieved 75 percent or higher compliance with six of 10 Get With The Guidelines-Stroke Quality Measures, which are reporting initiatives to measure quality of care.

These measures include aggressive use of medications, such as tPA, anti-thrombotics, anticoagulation therapy, DVT prophylaxis, cholesterol reducing drugs and smoking cessation, all aimed at reducing death and disability and improving the lives of stroke patients.

Tri-City is a Joint Commission Designated Stroke Center and has been working to achieve the Gold-Plus award from the American Stroke and Heart Associations for the last two years.

"Tri-City has been a leader in stroke care since the early '90s when the hospital participated in a national trial that produced the only FDA-approved medical treatment (TPA) for stroke patients to date," said Dr. Jack Schim, Medical Director of the Tri-City Medical Center Stroke Program. "This award further demonstrates Tri-City's commitment to the prevention, education and treatment of strokes for our community members."

“Tri-City Medical Center is to be commended for its commitment to implementing standards of care and protocols for treating stroke patients,” said Lee H. Schwamm, M.D., chair of the Get With The Guidelines National Steering Committee and director of the TeleStroke and Acute Stroke Services at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. “The full implementation of acute care and secondary prevention recommendations and guidelines is a critical step in saving the lives and improving outcomes of stroke patients.”

Get With The Guidelines–Stroke uses the “teachable moment,” the time soon after a patient has had a stroke, when they are most likely to listen to and follow their healthcare professionals’ guidance. Studies demonstrate that patients who are taught how to manage their risk factors while still in the hospital reduce their risk of a second heart attack or stroke.

Through Get With The Guidelines–Stroke, customized patient education materials are made available at the point of discharge, based on patients’ individual risk profiles. The take-away materials are written in an easy-to-understand format and are available in English and Spanish. In addition, the Get With The Guidelines Patient Management Tool gives healthcare providers access to up-to-date cardiovascular and stroke science at the point of care.

“This award is a wonderful confirmation of the consistent ongoing effort that all our staff -nurses, therapists and physicians - have been making to ensure the best care for our stroke patients,” said Dr. Schim.

As a Joint Commission Designated Primary Stroke Center, Tri-City physicians, nurses and medical staff are specially trained to identify the symptoms of stroke and are available 24/7. The Tri-City Emergency Department is equipped with the latest in stroke technology, including a CT scanner with specialized perfusion imaging that can reveal the severity of strokes. Tri-City is also combining state-of-the-art interventional radiology to employ sophisticated techniques for the treatment of strokes, including removing and dissolving strokes directly.

According to the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association, stroke is the third leading cause of death in the United States and a leading cause of serious, long-term disability. On average, someone suffers a stroke every 45 seconds; someone dies of a stroke every three minutes; and 795,000 people suffer a new or recurrent stroke each year.

For more information on Get With The Guidelines, visit www.americanheart.org/getwiththeguidelines.

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