

PATERSON, NJ [January 26, 2012] – St. Joseph's Regional Medical Center has received the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association's *Get With The Guidelines® Stroke Gold Plus achievement award* and named to the association's *Target: Stroke Honor Roll*

. These awards recognize St. Joseph's multidisciplinary team effort (medicine-neurology, emergency care, nursing, radiology, rehabilitative services, swallowing center, laboratory, pharmacy & other support services), strong commitment to top quality care, and success in implementing a high standard of stroke care by ensuring that stroke patients receive treatment according to nationally accepted standards and recommendations.

The Neurology-Stroke Center at St. Joseph's Regional Medical Center is a state designated Comprehensive Stroke Center that has developed a focused system for rapid diagnosis and treatment of stroke patients admitted to the emergency department. This includes always being equipped to provide brain imaging scans and having a stroke team available to conduct patient evaluations and using clot-busting medications when appropriate. In addition, The Neurology-Stroke Center at St. Joseph's has received Disease-Specific Certification for Stroke by the Det Norske Veritas (DNV), Primary Stroke Center certification.

To receive the Get With The Guidelines-Stroke Gold Plus achievement award, the multidisciplinary team at St. Joseph's Regional Medical Center achieved 85 percent or higher adherence to all Get With The Guidelines-Stroke Gold Plus 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.

In addition to the Get With The Guidelines-Stroke Gold Plus award, St. Joseph's Regional Medical Center has also been recognized as a recipient of the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association's Target: Stroke Honor Roll, for improving stroke care. Over the past quarter, at least 50 percent of eligible ischemic stroke patients have received IV

rt-PA within 60 minutes of arriving at the hospital (known as 'door-to-needle' time).

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.

"With a stroke, time lost is brain lost. Our goal is to provide leading edge care quickly and efficiently to treat stroke patients. We focus on saving each stroke patient's life and quality of life. The Get With The Guidelines—Stroke Gold Plus achievement award and Target: Stroke Honor Roll underscore St. Joseph's longstanding commitment to being one of the top hospitals in the country for providing aggressive, proven stroke care," said Avery Katz, MD, Medical Director of The Neurology-Stroke Center and Chief of Neurology at St. Joseph's Regional Medical Center.

"St. Joseph's Regional Medical Center is to be commended for its commitment to implementing standards of care and protocols for treating stroke patients," said Lee H. Schwamm, MD, 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."

"St. Joseph's is dedicated to providing superior quality stroke care to our patients. The number of acute ischemic stroke patients eligible for treatment is expected to grow over the next decade due to increasing stroke incidence and a large aging population," said Avery Katz, MD, Medical Director, The Neurology-Stroke Center, SJRMC.