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## Primary Stroke Center Certification

by The Joint Commission

The Joint Commission's Primary Stroke Center Certification Program is based on the recommendations published by the Brain Attack Coalition and the American Heart Association / American Stroke Association. The certification decision was reached after a thorough review of The Medical Center's:

1. Compliance with consensus-based national standards of emergency and acute stroke care;
2. Effective use of evidence-based clinical practice guidelines to manage and optimize care; and
3. Performance measurement and ongoing quality improvement activities.

Some of the highlights of the Stroke Program that directly benefit you and your patients include:

1. EMS pre-hospital stroke assessment and pre-notification to the ED;
2. Emergency protocols for rapid evaluation/treatment of stroke and eligibility screening for IV t-PA including STAT CT, Labs and Neurology consultation (for both ED patients and In-House Rapid Response);
3. Specialized Stroke Care Units; and
4. Standardized Acute Stroke Admission Orders that incorporate current evaluation, treatment and prevention guidelines for ischemic and hemorrhagic stroke and TIA (AHA/ASA guidelines).

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**Bowling Green, Kentucky**  
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## The Medical Center awarded certification as Primary Stroke Center

Great news for you and your patients! The Medical Center has been officially certified as a Primary Stroke Center following an on-site review by The Joint Commission. The Medical Center is now the only certified Primary Stroke Center between Louisville/Lexington and Nashville, and becomes the seventh acute care facility in Kentucky to achieve this prestigious designation.

The following evidence-based clinical practice guidelines, national consensus-based standards of care, and quality performance indicators are recommended for preventing complications and improving patient outcomes in Acute Ischemic Stroke (items in bold are incorporated in the Acute Stroke Admission Orders).

- Use of standardized stroke care order sets is recommended (*ask nurse to "Initiate stroke protocol"*)
- **Admission to specialized Stroke Care Units (5B, 4B, ICU/ISC, CCU/CCU)**
- **Simple RN bedside dysphagia screen prior to any PO intake. For a positive dysphagia screen:**
  - Keep strict NPO, consider alternative medication routes (PR, NG, IV, IM)
  - SLP comprehensive swallow evaluation and nutritional assessment
- **DVT prophylaxis by day 2 if patient not ambulating (SCD/TED if not on Lovenox)**
- Antithrombotic by the end of hospital day 2 (ASA, Aggrenox, Plavix)
- Anticoagulation therapy for patient with existing or new onset A-fib (Coumadin or heparin)
- **Assessment for rehabilitation services on all stroke patients (PT/OT and/or ST as indicated)**
- **Smoking cessation counseling (if smoked within past year)**
- Discharge on antithrombotic drug (ASA, Aggrenox, Plavix)
- Discharge on cholesterol reducing drug (if LDL > 100 or previous statin as home med)
- **Patient / caregiver education on:**
  - Signs and symptoms of TIA / Stroke
  - Activation of EMS 9-1-1 for any signs and symptoms
  - Risk Factors for TIA/Stroke (modifiable and individualized)
  - Medications prescribed at discharge to prevent secondary stroke
  - Follow-up care / appointments

As part of our emphasis on continuous quality improvement, performance data is abstracted on all stroke patients each month and reported to the Stroke Workgroup to evaluate compliance with the consensus-based standards of care listed above and to evaluate the effectiveness of the stroke systems and processes (i.e. use of IV-tPA if < 3 hrs, use of protocols/order sets, CT and Lab turnaround time).

We are extremely proud of the collaboration with our Medical Staff in providing our patients and our communities the best stroke care available in South Central Kentucky. If you have any questions about the Stroke Program or any of these recommendations, please do not hesitate to contact our Stroke Program's Medical Director Dr. Jianhua Zhu or any of our Neurologists. A Clinical Reference Manual is also available for your use on all Stroke Units.