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Daryl Cole: 706-272-6168

Hamilton Medical Center nationally recognized for commitment to providing high-quality stroke care

DALTON, Ga. (July 21, 2025) – Hamilton Medical Center (HMC) has received the American Heart Association’s Get With The Guidelines® - Stroke Gold Plus quality achievement award for its commitment to ensuring stroke patients receive the most appropriate treatment according to nationally recognized, research-based guidelines, ultimately leading to more lives saved and reduced disability.

Stroke is the No. 5 cause of death and a leading cause of disability in the U.S. A stroke occurs when a blood vessel that carries oxygen and nutrients to the brain is either blocked by a clot or bursts. When that happens, part of the brain cannot get the blood and oxygen it needs, so brain cells die. Early stroke detection and treatment are key to improving survival, minimizing disability and accelerating recovery times.

Get With The Guidelines puts the expertise of the American Heart Association and American Stroke Association to work for hospitals nationwide, helping ensure patient care is aligned with the latest research- and evidence-based guidelines. Get With The Guidelines – Stroke is an in-hospital program for improving stroke care by promoting consistent adherence to these guidelines, which can minimize the long-term effects of a stroke and even prevent death.

“Hamilton is committed to providing excellent patient care,” said Meagan Darnell, neurosciences manager. “Get With The Guidelines makes it easier for our teams to put proven knowledge to work on a daily basis, which studies show can help patients recover better. The end goal is to continue providing quality healthcare, ensuring more people in this area can experience longer, healthier lives.”

Each year, program participants qualify for the award by demonstrating how their organization has committed to providing quality care for stroke patients. In addition to following treatment guidelines, Get With The Guidelines participants also educate patients to help them manage their health and recovery at home.

“We are incredibly pleased to recognize Hamilton Medical Center for its commitment to caring for patients with stroke,” said Steven Messe, MD, volunteer chairperson of the American Heart Association Stroke System of Care Advisory Group and professor of neurology and director of fellowships of neurology at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. “Participation in Get With The Guidelines is associated with improved patient outcomes, fewer readmissions and lower mortality rates – a win for health care systems, families and communities.”

HMC also received the American Heart Association’s Target: Stroke Honor Roll Elite Plus and Target: Type

2 Diabetes Honor Roll awards. Target: Type 2 Diabetes aims to ensure patients with Type 2 diabetes, who might be at higher risk for complications, receive the most up-to-date, evidence-based care when hospitalized due to stroke.

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Photo: Hamilton Medical Center (HMC) was recently recognized for high-quality stroke care. Members of the HMS Stroke Team are pictured.