



CHRISTIANA CARE HEALTH SYSTEM

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Christiana Care Health System receives American Heart Association's Get With The Guidelines Gold Quality Achievement Award For the Third Consecutive Year

WILMINGTON, DEL, MAY 2, 2012 — Christiana Care Health System's Center for Heart & Vascular Health has received the Get With The Guidelines[®]–Heart Failure Gold Quality Achievement Award from the American Heart Association for the third year in a row.

The recognition signifies that Christiana Care has reached an aggressive goal of treating heart failure patients with 85 percent compliance for at least 24 months to core standard levels of care as outlined by the American Heart Association/American College of Cardiology secondary prevention guidelines for heart failure patients. Get With The Guidelines is a quality improvement initiative that provides hospital staff with tools that follow proven evidence-based guidelines and procedures in caring for heart failure patients to prevent future hospitalizations.

Under Get With The Guidelines–Heart Failure, heart failure patients receive guideline based medical therapies and participate in a multi-disciplinary team approach to improve their outcomes and reduce the risk of readmission. Patients also receive counseling to minimize tobacco use, improve dietary habits, manage depression and anxiety and they receive referrals for home care services before leaving the hospital as appropriate.

“Christiana Care is dedicated to making our care for heart failure patients among the best in the country,” said Timothy J. Gardner, M.D., medical director of the Center for Heart & Vascular Health and past national president of the American Heart Association. “Implementing the American Heart Association's Get With The Guidelines–Heart Failure program will help us accomplish this goal by making it easier for our professionals to improve the long-term outcome for these patients.”

“Ongoing achievement of the Gold Quality Achievement Award is the culmination of a tremendous team effort within the Center for Heart & Vascular Health and across the entire Christiana Care Health System,” added Mitchell Saltzberg, M.D., medical director

of the Heart Failure Program. “Patients are getting the right care they need when they need it. That’s resulting in improved survival. There is no need for heart failure patients to leave the state to get the highest quality care.”

Get With The Guidelines–Heart Failure helps Christiana Care’s staff develop and implement acute and secondary prevention guideline processes. The program includes quality-improvement measures such as care maps, discharge protocols, standing orders and measurement tools. This quick and efficient use of guideline tools enables Christiana Care to improve the quality of care it provides heart failure patients, save lives and ultimately, reduce health care costs by lowering the recurrence of heart attacks.

According to the American Heart Association, about 5.7 million people suffer from heart failure. Statistics also show that, each year, 670,000 new cases are diagnosed and more than 277,000 people will die of heart failure.

The Center for Heart & Vascular Health is one of the most technologically advanced cardiovascular care centers in the United States. In 2011, it was the only hospital in Delaware and one of just 33 in the United States to earn The Joint Commission’s Gold Seal of Approval™ for its heart failure program. It has also earned The Joint Commission’s Gold Seal of Approval™ for its treatment of stroke and a three-star rating for heart surgery, the highest available, from the Society of Thoracic Surgeons. The American Heart Association has recognized the Center for Heart & Vascular Health with Get With The Guidelines Awards for sustained quality achievement and exceeding national standards in the treatment heart attack, heart failure and stroke.

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