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The Nebraska Medical Center Recognized Nationally For Stroke Care

Omaha, Neb. – The Nebraska Medical Center has been recognized by the American Heart Association and the American Stroke Association for leading the nation in following evidence-based guidelines for treating patients with stroke. The Nebraska Medical Center is the only hospital in the state to receive the Annual Performance Achievement award for stroke care, a distinction given by the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association’s Get With the GuidelinesSM (GWTG) program.

The GWTG program is a quality-improvement program that helps hospitals ensure that patients consistently receive stroke care in accordance with the latest guidelines and recommendations. Hospitals are recognized for performance achievement if at least 85 percent of stroke patients are treated and discharged according to the AHA/ASA’s guidelines and recommendations for 12 consecutive months.

“This accomplishment signifies that The Nebraska Medical Center has exceeded the nationally accepted standards, or guidelines, to improve quality patient care by turning guidelines into lifelines,” said Pierre Fayad, M.D., Director of the Stroke Center at The Nebraska Medical Center and Reynolds Centennial Professor & Chairman of Neurological Sciences at UNMC. “Rapid assessment, treatment and intensive acute care is vital for stroke patients to help them gain back as much of their lives as possible and prevent complications.”

Dr. Fayad adds that the GWTG program addresses the important element of time. “With a stroke, time lost is brain lost,” said Dr. Fayad. The Nebraska Medical Center has developed a comprehensive system for rapid diagnosis and treatment of stroke patients admitted through the emergency department or transferred from other hospitals. The medical center ensures the prompt availability and coordination of medical professionals, personnel and equipment 24 hours

a day, seven days a week. Highlights of its expertise include: rapid brain and blood vessel imaging; neurologists, neurosurgeons, emergency physicians, radiologists and pharmacists available to conduct acute patient evaluations; and use of clot-busting medications and interventional clot removal techniques when appropriate.

Get With the Guidelines also helps ensure that the patients treated and discharged receive quality care in accordance with guidelines that will reduce the risk of a second stroke. Patients who have had a stroke are at highest risk for another stroke. According to the American Heart Association, each year about 700,000 people suffer a stroke; 200,000 of which are second strokes. But studies show that patients who are taught how to manage their risk factors while still in the hospital reduce their risk of a second stroke.

The stroke center at The Nebraska Medical Center was Nebraska's first and is Omaha's only, nationally certified stroke center dedicated to the prevention and management of stroke. The stroke center has received the "Gold Seal of Approval" from the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations for the past three years.

The Nebraska Medical Center is one of 64 hospitals in the United States being recognized with the "Annual Performance Achievement Award" for stroke care in the "Best Hospitals" issue of *US News & World Report* by the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association's Get With the Guidelines (GWTG) program in an ad for its performance achievement in cardiac and stroke patient care.

With a reputation for excellence, innovation and extraordinary patient care, The Nebraska Medical Center has earned J.D. Power and Associates' Hospital of Distinction award two consecutive years. It also received the 2006 Consumer Choice Award, a mark of patient satisfaction as selected by healthcare consumers and has achieved Magnet recognition status for nursing excellence, as well as the Award of Progress from the state of Nebraska's Edgerton Quality Awards Program. As the teaching hospital for the University of Nebraska Medical Center, this 689 licensed bed academic medical center has an international reputation for providing solid organ and bone marrow transplantation services and is well known nationally and regionally for its oncology, neurology and cardiology programs. The Nebraska Medical Center can be found online at www.nebraskamed.com

About GWTG:

Get With The GuidelinesSM (GWTG) is the American Heart Association/ American Stroke Association's hospital-based program designed to ensure that patients are consistently treated and discharged according to evidence-based guidelines for coronary artery disease, heart failure, and stroke. This quality improvement program empowers healthcare teams to save lives and reduce healthcare costs through helping hospitals follow evidence-based guidelines and recommendations for treating coronary artery disease, heart failure, and stroke. Experience has shown that 80,000 lives could be saved annually if the coronary artery disease (GWTG-CAD) module alone of Get With The GuidelinesSM were implemented nationwide. GWTG was the first hospital-based program to receive the prestigious Innovation in Prevention Award from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in 2004. Currently more than 1,350 hospitals use one or more GWTG modules. GWTG-CAD is supported by an unrestricted educational grant from the Merck/Schering-Plough Pharmaceutical Partnership and GWTG- Heart Failure is supported by an unrestricted grant from Glaxo Smith Kline, Inc. For more information, visit americanheart.org/getwiththeguidelines.

