

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Hazleton General Hospital receives
Get With The Guidelines Gold Plus Performance Achievement Award**

Award demonstrates Hazleton General Hospital's commitment to quality care for heart failure patients

HAZLETON, PA, 2010 — Hazleton General Hospital has received the Get With The Guidelines® Heart Failure Gold Plus Performance Achievement Award from the American Heart Association for its excellence in the treatment of patients with heart failure.

This award is given only to hospitals that achieve 85 percent or higher adherence to all Get With The Guidelines Heart Failure Performance Achievement indicators for two or more consecutive 12-month intervals and have achieved 75 percent or higher compliance with four of nine Get With The Guidelines Heart Failure Quality Measures to improve quality of patient care and outcomes.

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 improve outcomes, prevent future hospitalizations and prolong life.

Under Get With The Guidelines–Heart Failure, heart failure patients are started on aggressive risk reduction therapies such as cholesterol-lowering drugs, beta-blockers, ACE inhibitors, aspirin, diuretics, and anticoagulants in the hospital. They also receive alcohol/drug use and thyroid management counseling as well as referrals for cardiac rehabilitation before being discharged.

“The Hazleton General Hospital team is to be commended for this commitment to improving the quality of care for their patients,” said Lee H. Schwamm, M.D., 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 goal of the American Heart Association’s Get With The Guidelines program is to help healthcare providers implement appropriate evidence-based care and protocols that will reduce disability and death and improve the quality of life for patients.”

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 292,200 people will die of heart failure.

“Hazleton General Hospital is dedicated to being among the top hospitals nationwide in the care of heart failure patients and implementing the American Heart Association’s Get With The Guidelines–Heart Failure program is helping us accomplish this goal by making it easier for our professionals to improve the long-term outcome for our patients,” said Jim Edwards, Greater Hazleton Health Alliance President/CEO.

Get With The Guidelines–Heart Failure helps The Hazleton General Hospital’s staff develop and implement acute and secondary prevention guideline processes. The program provides hospitals with a web-based patient management tool, decision support, robust registry, real-time benchmarking capabilities and other performance improvement methodologies toward the goal of enhancing patient outcomes and saving lives.

This high-tech, evidence-based approach enables The Hazleton General Hospital to improve the quality of care it provides heart failure patients, save lives and ultimately, reduce healthcare costs by avoiding re-hospitalization.

For more information on Get With The Guidelines, visit www.americanheart.org/getwiththeguidelines

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