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Palmetto General Hospital Receives American Heart Association's Get With The Guidelines Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award

MIAMI (August 25, 2011) — Palmetto General Hospital has received the Get With The Guidelines[®]–Heart Failure Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award from the American Heart Association. The recognition signifies that Palmetto General Hospital 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 are started on aggressive risk reduction therapies such as cholesterol-lowering drugs, beta-blockers, ACE inhibitors, aspirin, diuretics and anticoagulants while in the hospital. They also receive alcohol/drug use and thyroid management counseling as well as referrals for cardiac rehabilitation before being discharged.

“The full implementation of national heart failure guideline recommended care is a critical step in preventing recurrent hospitalizations and prolonging the lives of heart failure 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, Mass. “The goal of the American Heart Association’s Get With The Guidelines program is to help hospitals like Palmetto General Hospital implement appropriate evidence-based care and protocols that will reduce disability and the number of deaths in these patients. Published scientific studies are providing us with more and more evidence that Get

With The Guidelines works. Patients are getting the right care they need when they need it. That's resulting in improved survival.”

“Palmetto General Hospital is dedicated to making our care for heart failure patients among the best in the country and 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,” said Ana Mederos, chief executive officer.

Get With The Guidelines–Heart Failure helps Palmetto General Hospital’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 will enable Palmetto General Hospital to improve the quality of care it provides heart failure patients, save lives and ultimately, reduce healthcare 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.

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About Palmetto General Hospital:

Palmetto General Hospital, part of Tenet's Miami-Dade/Broward Health Network, is a 360-bed acute-care hospital located at 2001 West 68th Street in Hialeah, Florida. The hospital has served the medical and health care needs of Northwest Miami-Dade and Southwest Broward counties for 40 years.

Palmetto General Hospital offers a broad range of services, including adult and pediatric emergency rooms, maternity, mental health, cancer center, hyperbaric, wound care, and sleep disorders center, a cardiac program that includes both medical and surgical services, a bariatric program that has been designated a Center of Excellence by the American Society for Bariatric Surgery and a Breast Imaging Center of Excellence as designated by the American College of Radiology. Palmetto General Hospital is fully accredited by The Joint Commission, the nation's oldest and largest hospital accreditation agency. For its Bariatric Surgery Program, Palmetto General Hospital is the Best-Rated Hospital in Miami-Dade County and has also ranked second in Florida for 2010/2011 and among the Top 5% in the Nation for Bariatric Surgery for three consecutive years in a row by HealthGrades, the nation’s leading health care quality ratings company. In addition, Palmetto General Hospital has received a 5-star rating for valve replacement surgery and stroke care for 2011 by HealthGrades.

In addition, the hospital received the 2010 American Heart Association Get With the Guidelines (GWTG) Gold Performance Achievement Award, and in 2009, the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association choose the “America’s Best Hospitals” issue (July 2009) in the US News and World Report to recognize the Palmetto General Hospital for Achievements in Get With The Guidelines Programs. Palmetto General Hospital is also one of only 34 hospitals nationwide to earn Solucient's 100 Top Hospitals designation six or more times.

To learn more about Palmetto General Hospital, visit www.palmettogeneral.com.

About Get With The Guidelines

Get With The Guidelines[®] is the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association's hospital-based quality improvement program that empowers healthcare teams to save lives and reduce healthcare costs by helping hospitals follow evidence-based guidelines and recommendations. For more information, visit heart.org/quality.