



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

CONTACT: Regina Hudson  
(850) 494-4960  
regina.hudson@hcahealthcare.com

**West Florida Healthcare Awarded  
Advanced Certification for Primary Stroke Centers**

June 29, 2016 (Pensacola, FL) West Florida Healthcare has earned The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval® and the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association's Heart-Check mark for Advanced Certification for Primary Stroke Centers. The Gold Seal of Approval® and the Heart-Check mark represent symbols of quality from their respective organizations.

West Florida Healthcare recently underwent a rigorous onsite review in which Joint Commission experts evaluated compliance with stroke-related standards and requirements, including program management, the delivery of clinical care and performance improvement.

"West Florida Healthcare has thoroughly demonstrated the greatest level of commitment to the care of stroke patients through its Advanced Certification for Primary Stroke Centers," said Michele Sacco, M.S., interim executive director, Certification Programs. "We commend West Florida Healthcare for becoming a leader in stroke care, potentially providing a higher standard of service for stroke patients in its community."

"We congratulate West Florida Healthcare for achieving this designation," said Nancy Brown, chief executive officer, the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association. "By adhering to this very specific set of treatment guidelines, West Florida Healthcare has clearly made it a priority to deliver high quality care to all patients affected by stroke."

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“West Florida Healthcare is pleased to receive advanced certification from The Joint Commission and the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association,” said Brian Baumgardner, President and CEO of West Florida Healthcare. “The certification provides us with the opportunity to highlight the exceptional stroke care we provide as well as to continually strive to advance our care even further.”

Established in 2003, Advanced Certification for Primary Stroke Centers is awarded for a two-year period to Joint Commission-accredited acute care hospitals. The certification was derived from the Brain Attack Coalition’s “Recommendations for the Establishment of Primary Stroke Centers” (JAMA, 2000) and the “Revised and Updated Recommendations for the Establishment of Primary Stroke Centers” (Stroke, 2011). Stroke is the number five cause of death and a leading cause of adult disability in the United States, according to the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association. On average, someone suffers a stroke every 40 seconds; someone dies of a stroke every four minutes; and 795,000 people suffer a new or recurrent stroke each year.

**About The Joint Commission:**

Founded in 1951, The Joint Commission seeks to continuously improve health care for the public, in collaboration with other stakeholders, by evaluating health care organizations and inspiring them to excel in providing safe and effective care of the highest quality and value. The Joint Commission accredits and certifies more than 20,500 health care organizations and programs in the United States, including hospitals and health care organizations that provide ambulatory and office-based surgery, behavioral health, home care, laboratory and nursing home services. An independent, not-for-profit organization, The Joint Commission is the nation’s oldest and largest standards-setting and accrediting body in health care. The Joint Commission has two nonprofit affiliate organizations: The Joint Commission Center for Transforming Healthcare aims to solve health care’s most critical safety and quality problems and Joint Commission Resources (JCR) provides consulting services, educational services and publications. Joint Commission International, a division of JCR, accredits and certifies international health care organizations. Learn more about The Joint Commission at [www.jointcommission.org](http://www.jointcommission.org).

**About the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association:**

The American Heart Association and the American Stroke Association are devoted to saving people from heart disease and stroke—America’s No. 1 and No. 5 killers. We

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team with millions of volunteers to fund innovative research, fight for stronger public health policies, and provide lifesaving tools and information to prevent and treat these diseases. The Dallas-based American Heart Association is the nation's oldest and largest voluntary organization dedicated to fighting heart disease and stroke. The American Stroke Association is a division of the American Heart Association. To learn more or to get involved, call 1-800-AHA-USA1, visit [heart.org](http://heart.org) or call any of our offices around the country. Follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

The familiar Heart-Check mark now helps consumers evaluate their choices in hospital care. Each mark given to a hospital is earned by meeting specific standards for the care of patients with heart disease and/or stroke. The Heart-Check mark can only be displayed by hospitals that have achieved and defined requirements set by the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association. For more information on the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association Hospital Accreditation Program visit [www.heart.org/myhospital](http://www.heart.org/myhospital).

### **About West Florida Healthcare**

The first hospital in the area to offer all private rooms, West Florida Healthcare proudly provides market-leading quality outcomes performance. Named for the second year in a row as one of the "100 Top Hospitals" in the nation by Truven Health Analytics, the facility has also been recognized as a Top Performer on Key Quality Measures for five years in a row by The Joint Commission and earned an "A" rating in patient safety from The Leapfrog Group. The area's first Accredited Chest Pain Center and Breast Imaging Center of Excellence, West Florida Hospital is also the first hospital in the state of Florida to have earned Atrial Fibrillation with Electrophysiology Services Accreditation. The hospital is also an Advanced Primary Stroke Center and offers specialized Emergency Department services tailored specifically to the needs of seniors as well as a Kids' ER dedicated to serving the emergency medical needs of children. The West Florida Healthcare campus includes the all private room acute care hospital, the area's only comprehensive, CARF-accredited physical rehabilitation hospital, and a mental health facility. Affiliated with HCA, the nation's leading provider of healthcare, West Florida Healthcare meets the community's healthcare needs in major services such as cardiology, cardiovascular surgery, oncology, orthopedics, robotic-assisted surgery, critical care, neurology/neurosurgery, emergency care, urology, behavioral health, gastroenterology, obstetrics, pulmonary, and rehabilitative medicine. For more information, visit [www.westfloridahospital.com](http://www.westfloridahospital.com) or call (850) 494-3212.

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