



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Virginia Mason Stroke Center Receives National Performance Award

SEATTLE – (Aug. 10, 2010) – Virginia Mason Medical Center’s Stroke Center has received the 2010 American Heart Association / American Stroke Association’s “Get With The Guidelines” Gold-Plus Performance Achievement Award, and is the only hospital in Seattle to receive the Gold-Plus award. The award recognizes Virginia Mason’s commitment and success in implementing excellent care for stroke patients, according to evidence-based guidelines.

To receive the award, Virginia Mason achieved 85 percent or higher adherence to all Get With The Guidelines Stroke Performance Achievement indicators for two or more consecutive 12-month intervals and achieved 75 percent or higher compliance with at least six of 10 Get With The Guidelines Stroke Quality Measures, which are reporting initiatives to measure quality of care. Those measures include aggressive use of medications, such as tPA, antithrombotics and anticoagulation therapy, cholesterol-reducing drugs and smoking cessation, all aimed at reducing death and disability and improving the lives of stroke patients.

“With a stroke, time lost is brain lost, and this award recognizes our commitment to being one of the top hospitals in the country for providing aggressive, proven stroke care,” said Michael Elliott, MD, medical director of the Neuroscience Institute at Virginia Mason. “We will continue our focus on providing care proven through medical evidence to quickly and efficiently treat stroke patients.”

“Virginia Mason is to be commended for its commitment to implementing standards of care and protocols for treating stroke 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 full implementation of acute care and secondary prevention recommendations and guidelines is a critical step in saving the lives and improving outcomes of stroke patients.”

Get With The Guidelines–Stroke uses the “teachable moment,” the time soon after a patient has had a stroke, when they are most likely to listen to and follow their healthcare professionals’ guidance. Studies demonstrate that patients who are taught how to manage their risk factors while still in the hospital reduce their risk of a second heart attack or stroke.

Through Get With The Guidelines–Stroke, customized patient education materials are made available at the point of discharge, based on patients’ individual risk profiles. The take-away materials are written in an easy-to-understand format and are available in English and Spanish. In addition, the Get With The Guidelines Patient Management Tool gives healthcare providers access to up-to-date cardiovascular and stroke science at the point of care.

According to the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association, stroke is the third leading cause of death in the United States and a leading cause of serious, long-term disability. On average, someone suffers a stroke every 45 seconds; someone dies of a stroke every three minutes; and 795,000 people suffer a new or recurrent stroke each year.

For more information, visit www.americanheart.org/getwiththeguidelines.

About Virginia Mason Medical Center

Virginia Mason Medical Center, founded in 1920, is a non-profit comprehensive regional health care system in Seattle that combines a primary and specialty care group practice of more than 440 physicians with a 336-bed acute-care hospital. Virginia Mason operates a network of clinics throughout the Puget Sound area; manages Bailey-Boushay House, a nursing residence and Chronic Care Management program for people living with HIV and AIDS; and operates Benaroya Research Institute at Virginia Mason, internationally recognized in autoimmune disease research. Virginia Mason is known for applying manufacturing principles to health care to improve quality and patient safety. For more information, visit VirginiaMason.org or [Facebook/VMcares](https://www.facebook.com/VMcares) or follow @VirginiaMason on Twitter.

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