

News Release

PENNSTATE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, November 22, 2006

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**PENN STATE HERSHEY MEDICAL CENTER'S STROKE CARE PROGRAM IS
FIRST IN CAPITAL REGION TO EARN JOINT COMMISSION CERTIFICATION**

Certification demonstrates hospital's commitment to excellence

HERSHEY, PA—Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center has become the first hospital in the Capital region to earn the Gold Seal of Approval™ for stroke care. The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations has awarded the Medical Center Primary Stroke Center Certification following its on-site review of the hospital in September.

The certification is based on the recommendations for primary stroke centers published by the Brain Attack Coalition and the American Stroke Association's statements/guidelines for stroke care. It signifies that the stroke care provided at Penn State Hershey Medical Center has the critical elements necessary to achieve long-term success in improving outcomes. It also indicates that the quality care provided by the Medical Center's multidisciplinary stroke program is effectively managed to meet the unique and specialized needs of stroke patients.

"Penn State Hershey Medical Center demonstrated that its stroke care program follows national standards and guidelines that can significantly improve outcomes for stroke patients," said Charles A. Mowll, the Joint Commission's executive vice president, business development, government, and external relations.

"We're proud to achieve the distinction," said Harold L. Paz, M.D., senior vice president for health affairs, dean of the College of Medicine and chief executive officer of the Medical

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Center. "Joint Commission Primary Stroke Center Certification recognizes our commitment to provide outstanding care to our patients and our community."

Each year about 700,000 people in the United States experience a new or recurrent stroke, which is the nation's third leading cause of death. On average, someone suffers a stroke every 45 seconds and someone dies of a stroke every 3.1 minutes. Stroke is a leading cause of serious, long-term disability in the United States, with about 4.7 million stroke survivors alive today.

Founded in 1963 through a gift from The Milton S. Hershey Foundation, Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center is one of the leading teaching and research hospitals in the country. The 499-bed Medical Center is a provider of high-level, patient-focused medical care. Annually the Medical Center admits more than 26,000 patients, accepts more than 766,000 outpatient visits, receives nearly 48,000 patients for emergency room visits and performs more than 23,000 surgical procedures. The Medical Center campus also includes Penn State College of Medicine (Penn State University's medical school), Penn State Cancer Institute, and Penn State Children's Hospital—the region's only children's hospital.

Founded in 1951, the Joint Commission seeks to continuously improve the safety and quality of care provided to the public through the provision of health care accreditation and related services that support performance improvement in health care organizations. The Joint Commission evaluates and accredits nearly 15,000 health care organizations and programs in the United States, including more than 8,000 hospitals and home care organizations, and more than 6,800 other health care organizations that provide long term care, assisted living, behavioral health care, laboratory and ambulatory care services. The Joint Commission also accredits health plans, integrated delivery networks, and other managed care entities. In addition, the Joint Commission provides certification of disease-specific care programs and primary stroke centers. An independent, not-for-profit organization, the Joint Commission is the nation's oldest and largest standards-setting and accrediting body in health care.