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Rappahannock General Hospital receives American Heart Association's Get With The Guidelines Gold Performance Achievement Award

Rappahannock General Hospital (RGH) has received the Get With The GuidelinesSM–Heart Failure Gold Performance Achievement Award from the American Heart Association. The recognition signifies that RGH has reached an aggressive goal of treating heart failure patients with 85% 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 in the hospital. They also receive alcohol/drug use and thyroid management counseling as well as referrals for cardiac rehabilitation before being discharged. RGH has successfully implemented these quality measures since June 2005.

“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 Gregg C Fonarow, M.D., National Chairman of the Get With The Guidelines Steering Committee and Director of Ahmanson-UCLA Cardiomyopathy Center. “The goal of the American Heart Association’s Get With The Guidelines program is to help hospitals like RGH implement appropriate evidence-based care and protocols that will reduce disability and the number of deaths in these patients.”

According to the American Heart Association, about 5.7 million people suffer from heart failure. Statistics also show each year more than 292,200 people will die of heart failure.

“Rappahannock 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 James M. Holmes, Jr., President & CEO of RGH.

Get With The Guidelines–Heart Failure helps RGH’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 RGH 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.

A reception was held to honor the hospital for this outstanding achievement on Monday, June 28, 2010. For more information on this award or any of our services, please contact the RGH Marketing Department at 435-8662.

