

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



J. Robert Galvin, M.D., M.P.H.
Commissioner

M. Jodi Rell
Governor

RE: Primary Stroke Center Designation

Dear Administrator:

The Connecticut Department of Public Health (CT DPH) is pleased to inform you of our intent to recognize designated Primary Stroke Centers statewide to improve health outcomes for people at risk for a diagnosis of stroke and patients with a presumptive diagnosis of stroke. Stroke is the third leading cause of death in Connecticut and a major cause of disability. Connecticut is committed to reducing the mortality and morbidities associated with strokes by establishing standards for stroke prevention and quality care for patients with presumptive diagnosis of stroke.

In March 2006, the CT DPH administered a survey to acute care hospitals to identify the capacity to provide comprehensive stroke services to presumptive stroke patients. The results were that stroke care services differ across Connecticut hospitals. Although most of the adult acute care hospitals in Connecticut reported having a formal stroke protocol, only fifty-two percent of hospitals surveyed have an acute "stroke team" or multi-disciplinary group available to evaluate suspected stroke patients within 15 minutes of the patient's arrival. Regardless of the current stroke services offered, hospitals expressed widespread support for a designation program sponsored by the CT DPH for all Connecticut acute care hospitals that meet certain standards of care related to primary stroke services.

The criteria for Primary Stroke Center designation was developed by consensus with Connecticut clinicians and stakeholders invested in improving stroke related morbidities and mortalities. The group adapted criteria from the American Stroke Association practice standards for the treatment of acute stroke patients and recommendations from the Brain Attack Coalition Guidelines.

This is a formal invitation to all licensed acute care hospitals in Connecticut to apply to the CT DPH for designation as a Primary Stroke Center. Participation in the statewide stroke center certification process is voluntary. There are no required fees to apply. Submission of a completed application to become a CT DPH designated Primary Stroke Center demonstrates a commitment of the hospital to provide quality stroke care services for the targeted community (Attachment A, Application Process and Instructions).

The CT DPH encourages all acute hospitals to apply for this designation. We share your commitment to promoting best practice standards for stroke care in Connecticut.

Sincerely,


J. Robert Galvin, M.D., M.P.H., M.B.A.
Commissioner



PHONE: (860) 509-7101 FAX: (860) 509-7111
410 CAPITOL AVENUE - MS#13COM, P.O. BOX 340308, HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06134-0308
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