

## **Press Release**

For Immediate Release

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## **Morgan Memorial Hospital Designated a Remote Treatment Stroke Center**

**MADISON, Ga.** – June 12, 2016 - Morgan Memorial Hospital has been designated as Georgia's newest Remote Treatment Stroke Center by the Georgia Department of Public Health, Office of EMS/Trauma.

Morgan Memorial joins a group of only seven hospitals in Georgia who have obtained such title. The designation recognizes quality care for stroke patients, including partnerships with Augusta University in Augusta and Athens Regional Health System in Athens, to provide state of the art diagnostics and emergency stroke treatment.

"The Department commends you and your staff for the commitment to excellence in stroke care that is being provided at your facility," stated J. Patrick O'Neal, M.D., the Department of Public Health's Director of Health Protection. "Reducing the incidence and impact of strokes on individuals in Georgia is exceedingly important, and is in keeping with Public Health's desire to protect and improve the health and lives of individuals throughout our state."

"The certification process for this designation is rigorous and highly detailed," said Ralph Castillo, Morgan Memorial CEO. "I'm grateful to our physicians, staff, and clinical partners for the efforts they put forward to obtain it and for their commitment to providing exceptional care for our patients and community."

At Morgan Memorial Hospital, Emergency Department physicians have instant access to stroke experts at Augusta University through the REACH tele-stroke system. REACH combines secure audio and video technology with remote physician access to diagnostic scans and lab results. As a result, neurologists in Augusta can consult with physicians at Morgan Memorial, review images and tests, and talk to and examine the patient in real time. The system brings the full knowledge and skill level of board-certified neurologists to Morgan Memorial 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Following review by a neurologist, physicians at Morgan Memorial are able to administer Alteplase, a clot-busting drug. Alteplase is the only medication approved by the FDA for the treatment of acute ischemic stroke. It can only be administered to patients who meet strict screening criteria, and must be given within three hours of the onset of symptoms.

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“You have become an integral part of a comprehensive and growing stroke care system throughout the state,” Dr. O’Neal shared. “The Department applauds Morgan Memorial Hospital for this achievement and appreciates the contribution that you make to the health and well-being of Georgians, as well as to those visiting our state.”

To demonstrate further commitment to providing the highest quality of care possible for stroke patients, Morgan Memorial also requires all Emergency Department nursing staff and associated members of the Stroke Team to be certified in Advanced Stroke Life Support. This is specialized training for rapid recognition of the five major stroke syndromes, training in the use of a specialized neurological exam, education regarding the use of thrombolytic therapy in acute ischemic stroke patients, and detailed discussions of the acute care of stroke patients in the hospital, including prevention of other medical complications.

Morgan Memorial is also a member of the Georgia Coverdell Acute Stroke Registry, the result of an award from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and participates in the “Get with the Guidelines-Stroke” program through the American Stroke Association.

In addition to the REACH telestroke system and Alteplase capabilities, Morgan Memorial’s stroke services include:

- 16-slice CT scanning, providing highly detailed images of the brain in minutes to allow doctors to diagnose stroke and check for bleeding
- Partnerships with air and ground ambulance services for patients who require immediate transportation to a stroke specialty center
- High quality inpatient care with all-private inpatient rooms and telemetric monitoring
- Complete rehabilitation services, including inpatient and outpatient physical, occupational, and speech-language therapy
- Region renown swing-bed program, allowing patients who need nursing care and extended rehabilitation services to receive the care they need close to home
- Commitment from staff for continued training

### **Warning signs of stroke**

In a stroke, time is brain. It’s essential to know the symptoms and call 911 as soon as they appear.

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking, or understanding
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Sudden trouble walking; dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause