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For Immediate Release

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH DESIGNATES MORRISTOWN MEMORIAL AS COMPREHENSIVE STROKE CENTER

HOSPITAL BECOMES REGIONAL HUB FOR STROKE TREATMENT

MORRISTOWN, NJ, JANUARY 17, 2008 - The New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services has named [Morristown Memorial Hospital](#) as a Comprehensive Stroke Center, a designation that gives the hospital a leadership role in providing the most advanced treatment of stroke patients while achieving the most positive possible outcome.

The Comprehensive Stroke Center designation reflects Morristown Memorial's extensive, round-the-clock neurology, neuroradiology and neurosurgery abilities, use of state-of-the-art equipment, and the high level of training that its staff uses to respond to stroke patients and will use to train other hospitals and healthcare professionals.

"Morristown Memorial provides the fastest, most complete stroke care to patients through training, technology and education," said Stuart Fox, MD, chairman of the department of neuroscience and director of the stroke program for Morristown Memorial. "The designation as a Comprehensive Stroke Center recognizes Morristown Memorial as a standout facility in the region."

The designation gives Morristown Memorial regional stroke center status, so more complex stroke emergencies are transferred to Morristown Memorial from a surrounding network of medical centers. The designation requires Morristown Memorial clinical staff to teach other hospitals how to provide primary stroke care. Morristown Memorial also is committed to educating rescue squads and other healthcare providers on stroke care, in addition to continuing its research about stroke.

Morristown Memorial has treated more than 400 patients for stroke in 2007, and has a stroke intervention rate of approximately 10 percent, while the national average is less than 5 percent. The hospital was designated earlier by the Joint Commission as a Primary Stroke Center, and will be receiving a Bronze Award recognizing consistent, timely recognition and management of stroke patients from the American Stroke Association at the International Stroke Conference in New Orleans in February.

Morristown Memorial's designation as a Comprehensive Stroke Center comes in the same year as Atlantic Health's Overlook Hospital in Summit, New Jersey, which was the first hospital in the state to gain the designation. The designation of Morristown Memorial as a Comprehensive Stroke Center has helped the Department of Health and Senior Services to develop an extensive network of exemplary stroke care throughout the state.

(more)

THE PASSION TO LEAD

Part of the Gagnon Heart Hospital, a 250,000-square-foot facility under construction on the Morristown Memorial campus, will include a bi-plane neuroangiography suite that will be used by the stroke center. The suite provides images of the brain from multiple angles at the same time to help physicians quickly identify and clear blocked arteries. The Gagnon Heart Hospital will be completed in late 2008.

“The addition of new facilities, like Gagnon Heart Hospital, and new technologies, in our new operating rooms designated for interventional procedures, help advance the complexity of care we can deliver at Morristown Memorial Hospital as the region’s premier medical facility.” said Joanne Conroy, MD, executive vice president, Atlantic Health, chief operating officer, Morristown Memorial.

As part of its initial stroke center designation by the Joint Commission, Morristown Memorial Hospital instituted a Code Grey for rapid stroke response -- the stroke equivalent of the rapid response protocols used for cardiac and trauma emergencies. Stroke demands rapid-fire, yet carefully calibrated decisions because the window for clearing the clogged arteries responsible for stroke is a mere three hours. After that, doctors can no longer administer the only drug effective for halting stroke’s damage: a clot-buster called tPA. Many people with suspected stroke arrive at the Emergency Department with just enough time for a medical team to diagnose and treat them. Time is not only essential — it is vital.

Key to a fast stroke response is early communication with first responders, such as EMT’s and paramedics. Atlantic Ambulance provides a seamless emergency transport system, including helicopter transport of stroke patients to both Morristown Memorial and Overlook.

About Morristown Memorial Hospital

Part of Atlantic Health, atlanticealth.org, Morristown Memorial is a non-profit 629-licensed-bed hospital in Morristown, NJ. Morristown Memorial’s specialties include cardiology and cardiac surgery, adult and pediatric oncology, critical and emergency care and inpatient rehabilitation and neonatal intensive care services. Morristown Memorial is also a Level II Regional Trauma Center and a Level III Regional Perinatal Center. Home to the largest cardiac surgery center in the state, Morristown’s other services include the Goryeb Children’s Hospital, Carol G. Simon Cancer Center, and Atlantic Rehabilitation Institute. In 2008, Atlantic Health will complete the new Gagnon Heart Hospital, a 250,000 square-foot facility that will consolidate all cardiovascular services at Morristown Memorial Hospital. Morristown Memorial is designated as a Magnet Hospital for Excellence in Nursing Service, the highest level of recognition by American Nurses Credentialing Center available to facilities that provide acute care services.

Atlantic Health also includes Overlook Hospital in Summit. Atlantic Health is the primary academic and clinical affiliate in New Jersey of Mount Sinai School of Medicine and The Mount Sinai Hospital. The hospital is accredited by The Joint Commission.

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