

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE FROM SOUTHEAST MISSOURI HOSPITAL

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For the second year in a row, Southeast Missouri Hospital ranks in the top 10 in Missouri for treatment of stroke. More specifically, the Hospital ranks seventh statewide, according to the latest ratings by HealthGrades®, the nation's leading independent, healthcare ratings organization.

Southeast Missouri Hospital is the only provider of stroke care in the southeast Missouri region to receive this Top 10 ranking.

HealthGrades® will formally recognize the Hospital's Five-Star rated stroke program at a ceremony on Tuesday, December 8, at 2 p.m. in the Hospital Lobby. Mary Sweet, a provider services consultant with HealthGrades, will make the presentation. This is the second consecutive year that Southeast has received a Five-Star rating for stroke care.

The Five-Star rating is the highest rating issued by HealthGrades®. That's important for stroke patients. According to HealthGrades®, Five-Star rated hospitals have far lower patient mortality rates than One-Star rated hospitals.

"It means better outcomes," Sweet says. "Survival rates are linked to early detection and rapid response," she adds.

"The HealthGrades recognition and Top 10 ranking affirms the expertise and dedication of Southeast Missouri Hospital's physicians, nurses and other staff associated with the Southeast Stroke Center and Hospital leadership. Thanks to their efforts, Southeast Missouri Hospital is able to provide vital, life-saving stroke care to communities throughout the region," says E. Lee Taylor, MD, JD, Southeast's Vice President/Chief Medical Officer.

Further confirmation of this exceptional stroke care is seen with the Hospital's designation by The Joint Commission as a certified Primary Stroke Center.

"Recognition by The Joint Commission and now HealthGrades is a visible sign to physicians throughout the community and our patients that we have one of the best stroke programs in the country," says Randall Stahly, DO, Medical Director of Southeast's Stroke Center.

At Southeast Missouri Hospital, neurologists and neurosurgeons are available 24/7 to care for stroke patients. Patients suspected of having a stroke are fast-tracked, receiving a complete evaluation, undergoing laboratory and x-ray testing, and receiving appropriate treatment based upon these findings.

In 2007, Southeast established a rapid response Acute Stroke Team, dedicated to responding to suspected stroke patients within the Hospital. This team, consisting of registered nurses and respiratory therapists, responds at any hour and facilitates rapid care. A portable CT scanner can be moved where needed in the Hospital to rapidly evaluate a patient for stroke.

Rapid response is important in stroke cases, Dr. Stahly says. "Time lost is brain lost," he explains. For every minute that brain cells are deprived of oxygen, the probability of brain damage rises.