

Taslin Alfonzo
Media Relations Specialist
(504) 349-1130
taslin.alfonzo@wjmc.org

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**West Jefferson Medical Center Qualifies for
American Heart Association's
Mission: Lifeline Recognition for Heart Attack Care**

(MARRERO, June 22, 2011) — West Jefferson Medical Center (WJMC) recently qualified for the American Heart Association's Mission: Lifeline Bronze Quality Achievement Award. The award recognizes West Jeff's commitment and success in implementing a higher standard of care for heart attack patients that effectively improves the survival and care of STEMI (ST Elevation Myocardial Infarction) patients.

Every year, almost 250,000 people experience the STEMI type of heart attack. Unfortunately, a significant number don't receive prompt reperfusion therapy, which is critical in restoring blood flow. Mission: Lifeline seeks to save lives by closing the gaps that separate STEMI patients from timely access to appropriate treatments. Mission: Lifeline is focusing on improving the system of care for these patients and at the same time improving care for all heart attack patients.

Hospitals involved in Mission: Lifeline strive to improve care in both acute treatment measures and discharge measures. Systems of care are developed that close the gap of timely access to appropriate, life-saving treatments. Before they are discharged, appropriate patients are started on aggressive risk reduction therapies such as cholesterol-lowering drugs, aspirin, ACE inhibitors and beta-blockers in the hospital and receive smoking cessation counseling.

Hospitals that receive the Mission: Lifeline Bronze Performance Achievement Award have demonstrated for 90 consecutive days that at least 85 percent of eligible STEMI patients (without contraindications) are treated within specific time frames upon entering the hospital and discharged following the American Heart Association's recommended treatment guidelines.

"West Jefferson is dedicated to making our cardiac unit among the best in the country, and the American Heart Association's Mission: Lifeline program is helping us accomplish that by making it easier for our professionals to improve the outcomes of our cardiac patients," said Monica Bologna, WJMC's Senior Director of the Cardiology Service Line. "We are pleased to be recognized for our dedication and achievements in cardiac care."

About Mission: Lifeline

The American Heart Association's Mission: Lifeline program helps hospitals and emergency medical services develop systems of care that follow proven standards and procedures for STEMI patients. The program works by mobilizing teams across the continuum of care to implement American Heart Association/American College of Cardiology clinical treatment guidelines. For more information, visit heart.org/missionlifeline, and heart.org/quality.