

**West Jefferson EMS - First Hospital-Based EMS in Region
to Receive American Heart Association's
Mission: Lifeline EMS Recognition Award**

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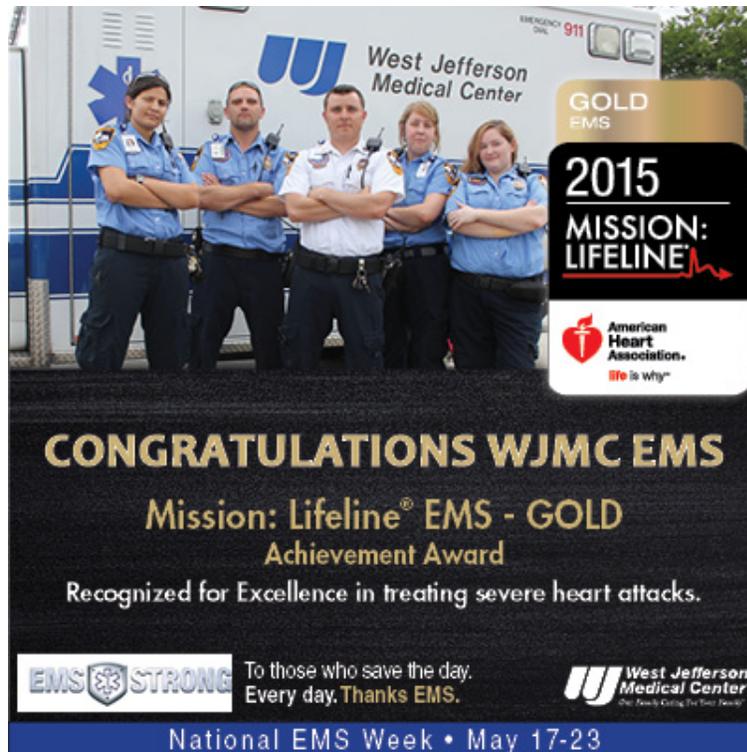
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(MARRERO, LA – MAY 20, 2015) — In the midst of National EMS Week (May 17 – 23), **West Jefferson Medical Center's (WJMC)** EMS is the **FIRST** hospital-based EMS in the region to receive the American Heart Association's Mission: Lifeline® EMS Gold Award for implementing quality improvement measures for the treatment of patients who experience severe heart attacks.

Every year, more than 250,000 people experience a STEMI, or ST Elevation Myocardial Infarction, a type of heart attack caused by a complete blockage of blood flow to the heart that requires timely treatment. To prevent death, it's critical to restore blood flow as quickly as possible, either by surgically opening the blocked vessel or by giving clot-busting medication.

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's EMS recognition program recognizes those emergency

responders for their efforts in improving STEMI systems of care and improving the quality of life for these patients.

Emergency Medical System providers are vital to the success of Mission: Lifeline. EMS agencies provide access to 12-lead ECG machines (devices that measure the electrical activity of the heartbeat and can help medical personnel determine if a heart attack has occurred), and follow protocols derived from American Heart Association/American College of Cardiology guidelines. The correct tools and training allow EMS providers to rapidly identify the STEMI, promptly notify the medical center, and trigger an early response from the awaiting hospital personnel.

Agencies that receive the Mission: Lifeline Gold award have demonstrated at least 75 percent compliance for each required achievement measure for two years and treated at least eight STEMI patients for each year.

“EMTs and paramedics play a vital part in the system of care for those who have heart attacks,” said Nancy Brown, Chief Executive Officer of the American Heart Association/ American Stroke Association. “Since they often are the first medical point of contact, they can shave precious minutes of life-saving treatment time by activating the emergency response system that alerts hospitals. We applaud West Jefferson Medical Center’s EMS for achieving this award that shows it meets evidence-based guidelines in the treatment of people who have severe heart attacks.”

“West Jefferson EMS is dedicated to making our unit among the best in the country, and the American Heart Association’s Mission: Lifeline program is helping us accomplish that by implementing processes for improving STEMI systems of care with the goal of improving the quality of care for all STEMI patients,” said William Daviss, Director of EMS for West Jefferson Medical Center. “We are pleased to be recognized for our dedication and achievements in emergency medical care for STEMI patients.”

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About West Jefferson Medical Center

Founded in 1956, West Jefferson Medical Center (WJMC) is a community hospital located in Marrero, LA, just 10 minutes from downtown New Orleans. As a full service medical center, WJMC offers comprehensive programs for preventive, emergency, acute and rehabilitative care with a medical staff of more than 400 physicians and a complement of 1900 employees and many volunteers. WJMC serves a community of more than 180,000 people. Located near vast industrial quarters, the medical center also serves business and industry across the Gulf South. Clinical excellence divisions include: neurosciences, cardiovascular services, and an academic community cancer center. To meet the community needs, West Jefferson Medical Center Physician Services includes both primary care and specialty clinics located across the West Bank of Jefferson Parish. The medical center enjoys awards for clinical excellence across many of its subspecialties.

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.