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**West Jefferson Receives Get With The Guidelines –  
Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award  
with Target: Stroke Honor Roll Elite**



*American Heart Association recognizes **West Jefferson's** commitment to quality stroke care*

**(MARRERO, LA – JUNE 8, 2016)** — [West Jefferson Medical Center](#) (WJMC) received the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association's Get With The Guidelines®-Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award with Target: Stroke<sup>SM</sup> Honor Roll Elite. The award recognizes the hospital's commitment to providing the most appropriate stroke treatment according to nationally recognized, research-based guidelines based on the latest scientific evidence.

Hospitals must achieve 85 percent or higher adherence to all Get With The Guidelines-Stroke achievement indicators for two or more consecutive 12-month periods and achieve 75 percent or higher compliance with five of eight Get With The Guidelines-Stroke Quality measures to receive the Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award.

To qualify for the Target: Stroke Honor Roll Elite, hospitals must meet quality measures developed to reduce the time between the patient's arrival at the hospital and treatment with the clot-buster tissue plasminogen activator, or [tPA](#), the only drug approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to treat [ischemic stroke](#). If given intravenously in the first three hours after the start of stroke symptoms, tPA has been shown to significantly reduce the effects of stroke and lessen the chance of permanent disability. West Jefferson earned the award by meeting specific quality achievement measures for the diagnosis and treatment of stroke patients at a set level for a designated period.

These quality measures are designed to help hospital teams follow the most up-to-date, evidence-based guidelines with the goal of speeding recovery and reducing death and disability for stroke patients.

“A stroke patient loses 1.9 million neurons each minute stroke treatment is delayed. This recognition further demonstrates our commitment to delivering advanced stroke treatments to patients quickly and safely,” said Nancy R. Cassagne, CEO of West Jefferson Medical Center. “West Jefferson continues to strive for excellence in the acute treatment of stroke patients. The recognition from the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association’s Get With The Guidelines-Stroke further reinforces our team’s hard work.”

“The American Heart Association and American Stroke Association recognize West Jefferson Medical Center for its commitment to stroke care,” said Paul Heidenreich, M.D., M.S., national chairman of the Get With The Guidelines Steering Committee and Professor of Medicine at Stanford University. “Research has shown there are benefits to patients who are treated at hospitals that have adopted the Get With The Guidelines program.”

While training for New Orleans’ *Man Up Triathlon*, 59-year-old Jay Gould abruptly lost peripheral vision in both eyes. Shrugging it off, he went to work.

“I knew something was going on neurologically, said Gould. “But I never thought it was stroke.” Gould was diagnosed with ischemic stroke caused by undiagnosed atrial fibrillation (AFib). In AFib the heart’s upper chambers do not pump properly, causing blood in the heart to form clots. One such clot had lodged in Gould’s brain.

After being treated with tPA, Gould’s vision improved almost immediately. He is now taking medication for his AFib and has resumed physical training.

“I knew I had an irregular heartbeat,” said Gould. “But I never connected that to a risk of stroke.” I don’t know what might have happened if the doctors at WJMC hadn’t acted as quickly as they did, but I do know it wouldn’t have been good. I would advise anyone that’s having a stroke to go straight to West Jefferson.”

According to the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association, stroke is the No. 5 cause of death and a leading cause of adult disability in the United States. On average, someone in the U.S. suffers a stroke every 40 seconds, someone dies of a stroke every four minutes, and nearly 800,000 people suffer a new or recurrent stroke each year.

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***About West Jefferson:***

Founded in 1956, (WJMC) is a 435-bed community hospital located in Marrero, La. 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 1,700 employees and many volunteers. The medical center enjoys national awards for clinical excellence across many of its subspecialties. WJMC is a proud member of LCMC Health, a Louisiana-based, not-for-profit hospital system serving the healthcare needs of the Gulf Coast region. LCMC Health currently manages award-winning community hospitals including Children’s Hospital, Touro, New Orleans East Hospital, University Medical Center New Orleans and West Jefferson Medical Center.

***About Get With The Guidelines®***

Get With The Guidelines® is the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association’s hospital-based quality improvement program that provides hospitals with tools and resources to increase adherence to the latest research-based guidelines. Developed with the goal of saving lives and hastening recovery, Get With The Guidelines has touched the lives of more than 6 million patients since 2001. For more information, visit [heart.org](http://heart.org).