



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE

HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital Highland re-designated by IDPH
as an Acute Stroke Ready Hospital

Remember to act FAST if you suspect someone is having a stroke

HIGHLAND, Ill. — HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital Highland was recently re-designated as an Acute Stroke Ready Hospital by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH). IDPH identifies hospitals capable of providing emergent stroke care and directs EMS providers to transport possible acute stroke patients to these hospitals.

Patrick Small, emergency department manager, shared, "We are proud to have received this re-designation which recognizes that our emergency stroke care policies and procedures are aligned with nationally recognized, evidence-based standards and criteria. Our emergency department is able to immediately, and appropriately, respond to stroke patients when they arrive," Small explained. "Having this high-level re-designation reaffirms our commitment to provide exceptional emergency care to area residents."

Outlined criteria to receive the Acute Stroke Ready designation includes developing and adhering to written emergency stroke protocols and the ability, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to provide all the following:

- Brain image testing (CT scans)
- Blood coagulation studies
- Use of Tenecteplase (TNK) medicine to break up or dissolve blood clots (if appropriate)

Additionally, St. Joseph's Hospital uses telemedicine to help rapidly diagnose stroke patients. Through this program, a telemedicine cart and monitor stationed in St. Joseph's emergency department is used by physicians to allow a tele-neurologist to examine a patient suffering a stroke to help expedite treatment decisions, reduce disability, help avoid unnecessary transfers, and ultimately save lives.

Act FAST

HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital Highland joins with the American Heart Association and American Stroke Association in suggesting everyone remember the letters in FAST to spot stroke signs and know when to call 9-1-1.

- **F - Face drooping:** Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face droop or is it numb?
- **A - Arm weakness:** Is one arm weak or numb? Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?
- **S - Speech difficulty:** Is speech slurred, are they unable to speak, or are they hard to understand? Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence like, "The sky is blue." Is the sentence repeated correctly?
- **T - Time to call 9-1-1:** If the person shows any of these symptoms, even if the symptoms go away, call 9-1-1 and get them to the hospital immediately.

For more information about HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital Highland, visit stjosephshighland.org.

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Photo Caption: (Left to right) HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital Highland emergency department RN's Alyson and Colleen; Carol Lowery, team lead; and Patrick Small, emergency department manager, with the telemedicine cart and monitor used by St. Joseph's Hospital to help rapidly diagnose stroke patients by connecting with a tele-neurologist for examination.

About Hospital Sisters Health System

Hospital Sisters Health System's (HSHS) mission is to reveal and embody Christ's healing love for all people through our high-quality Franciscan health care ministry. HSHS provides state-of-the-art health care to our patients and is dedicated to serving all people, especially the most vulnerable, at each of our physician practices and 15 local hospitals in two states – Illinois (Breese, Decatur, Effingham, Greenville, Highland, Litchfield, O'Fallon, Shelbyville and Springfield) and Wisconsin (Chippewa Falls, Eau Claire, Oconto Falls, Sheboygan and two in Green Bay). HSHS is sponsored by Hospital Sisters Ministries, and [Hospital Sisters of St. Francis](http://HospitalSistersofSt.Francis) is the founding institute. For more information about HSHS, visit hshs.org. For more information about Hospital Sisters of St. Francis, visit hospitalsisters.org.