



Saint Anthony Hospital Awarded Primary Stroke Center Certification from The Joint Commission

As underserved communities face hospital closings and expanding health care deserts, two hospitals are working together to provide more access to higher level care

CHICAGO – In its ongoing effort to maintain the highest quality health care standards and bring more advanced health care options to a predominantly underserved Medicaid patient population, Saint Anthony Hospital sought certification as a primary stroke center to meet the needs of the community and provide neurological care closer to home, when every second counts.

In early 2018, Saint Anthony Hospital formed a partnership with Northwestern Memorial Hospital to provide expanded general and advanced neurology services to the community. Patients have access to specialists 24/7 for the acute diagnosis and treatment of strokes within just minutes of being at the Saint Anthony emergency department by an on-site neurologist or through telestroke technology.

“As a neurologist that works at both Saint Anthony and Northwestern Memorial Hospital, I can see the disparities in health care, even within only a 5-mile distance,” says Dr. Yvonne Curran, Stroke Medical Director at Saint Anthony Hospital. “I feel privileged to try and improve stroke care with this population at a hospital which has a very reputable infrastructure within the west and southwest side communities.”

Risk factors for stroke include diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease, all of which are prevalent in Saint Anthony Hospital’s primary service area. COVID-19 is also increasing instances of stroke, specifically in African American adults who are already at higher risk for both stroke and COVID-19.

Becoming a primary stroke center affiliated with Northwestern provides the community access to care from one of the state’s finest neurological programs, while also helping overcome patient barriers including language, transportation and insurance.

The program had to meet several best practice standards in patient care developed by the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association and The Joint Commission as well as go through a rigorous onsite review.

“As a non-trauma center, stroke can now be another critical care area of focus for our hospital. This certification provides us with the opportunity to provide higher level of stroke care,” said Sherrie Spencer, VP of Patient Care and Chief Nursing Officer at Saint Anthony Hospital, “and demonstrate the continued commitment Saint Anthony Hospital has made to this community.”