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Media Advisory

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Wuesthoff Health System receives American Heart Association's Get With The Guidelines Gold Performance Achievement Award

Brevard County, FL (November 2, 2009) — Wuesthoff Health System has received the American Heart Association's Get With The Guidelines –Coronary Artery Disease Gold Performance Achievement Award. The award recognizes Wuesthoff's commitment and success in implementing a higher standard of cardiac care that effectively improves treatment of patients hospitalized with coronary artery disease.

Under the Get With The Guidelines –CAD program, 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/weight management counseling as well as referrals for cardiac rehabilitation before they are discharged. Hospitals receiving the Get With The Guidelines -CAD Gold Performance Achievement Award have demonstrated for 24 consecutive months that at least 85 percent of its eligible coronary patients (without contraindications) are discharged following the American Heart Association's recommended treatment guidelines.

“The American Heart Association applauds Wuesthoff Health System for its success in implementing the appropriate evidence-based care and protocols to reduce the number of recurrent events and deaths in cardiovascular disease patients,” said Gregg C Fonarow, MD, National Chairman of the Get With The Guidelines Steering Committee and Director of Ahmanson-UCLA Cardiomyopathy Center. “Wuesthoff has achieved a high level of performance in terms of implementing these life-prolonging treatments.”

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“Wuesthoff is dedicated to making our cardiac unit among the best in the country, and the American Heart Association’s Get With The Guidelines program is helping us accomplish that by making it easier for our professionals to improve the long-term outcomes of our cardiac patients,” said Lisa Crites, Wuesthoff Health System Associate Director of Media Strategy. “We are pleased to be recognized for our dedication and achievements in cardiac care.”

The American Heart Association’s Get With The Guidelines –CAD program helps hospitals increase the use of and adherence to the association’s secondary prevention guidelines for coronary artery disease. Developed to assist healthcare professionals follow proven standards and procedures before patients are discharged, Get With The Guidelines –CAD can help Wuesthoff reduce the risk of recurrent heart attacks and death in treated patients. The program, which works by mobilizing teams in acute care hospitals to implement American Heart Association/American College of Cardiology secondary prevention guidelines.

According to the American Heart Association, approximately 610,000 people suffer a new heart attack and 325,000 experience a recurrent heart attack each year. Statistics also show 1.26 million individuals are affected by CAD* each year. Additionally, one in five deaths in the United States is caused by CAD.

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*CAD data was taken from 2009 AHA CHD Statistical Update

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