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HMH Cardiovascular Services Growing to Meet Regional Demand for Heart, Stroke Care

Patients benefiting from dramatic improvements in cardiac care

ELIZABETHTOWN, Ky. – At today’s Board of Trustees meeting, Hardin Memorial Health (HMH) officials reported on the healthcare system’s growing cardiovascular services which rank in the 90th percentile nationwide in many key quality indicators.

HMH leaders specifically pointed to the success of the STEMI program in treating heart attack patients. STEMI stands for ST-Elevation, Myocardial Infarction - a very serious type of heart attack where one of the heart’s major arteries are blocked.

Jamie Wilkerson, HMH Director of Critical Care, credited what the American Heart Association (AHA) calls the “system of care” for the program’s success.

“From EMS to the nurses, techs and physicians in the HMH Emergency Department to the team in the catheterization lab and our highly skilled cardiologists, this program is saving patient lives,” said Wilkerson. “Providing immediate, life-saving care is especially critical in the event of a heart attack or stroke.”

The goal is that fewer than 90 minutes pass from the time the EMS team begins treating a heart attack patient to the time they are treated in the HMH catheterization lab.

“In 2016, HMH averaged 82.5 minutes,” said Wilkerson.

Once in the catheterization lab, an interventional cardiologist uses a catheter to clear a blocked or narrowed artery. Wilkerson called last year’s addition of Central Cardiology Associates (CCA) to the HMH family a very positive move.

HMH recruited an additional interventional cardiologist to the practice last year and is actively recruiting another to join the CCA team.

“That will allow us to have round-the-clock coverage 365 days a year,” said Greg Rovinski, HMH Assistant Vice President of Patient Care Services.

HMH Chief of Staff Krishnan Challappa, M.D., a cardiologist at CCA, emphasized HMH’s commitment to avoid unnecessary interventional cath lab procedures. “Over the past year, we have had zero unnecessary interventional procedures,” said Challappa. “We take great pride in that because it reduces risk to our patients and that’s what matters most.”

Rovinski said that the data reported to the National Cardiovascular Data Registry (NCDR®) determines how HMH ranks amongst hospitals across the country. The NCDR® is the American College of Cardiology’s suite of cardiovascular data registries that helps hospitals measure and improve the quality of care they provide.
Rovinski said that HMH’s success did not go unnoticed. In 2016 HMH earned American Heart Association (AHA) and American Stroke Association (ASA) distinctions for outstanding care for heart attack and stroke patients. The two awards, the 2016 Mission: Lifeline® Receiving Center SILVER Recognition Award and the Get With The Guidelines-Stroke Bronze Award, recognize HMH’s excellent patient care and outcomes for STEMI heart attack and stroke patients.

Rovinski encouraged anyone who thinks they are experiencing heart attack symptoms to call 911. “Too many of our patients drive themselves to the hospital,” said Rovinski. “When minutes matter, that puts you at much greater risk.”

Rovinski added that HMH’s commitment to heart attack patients extends beyond the walls of the hospital and he pointed to HMH’s investment in the PulsePoint app. HMH partnered with Hardin County EMS and Hardin County 911 to bring the PulsePoint app to Hardin County, only the second community in the state to do so. The app alerts those who have downloaded it when someone is having a cardiac incident in their vicinity. Since its launch, more than 3,500 people have downloaded the app.

“It’s a tool that can be used to save lives even before an ambulance arrives,” said Rovinski.

In other board news:

Financials.

HMH Chief Financial Officer Lennis Thompson reported an unfavorable variance to the budget of $872,000 in the month of February. Thompson pointed to lower inpatient volumes despite being what is often considered the height of cold and flu season. “While volumes remain ahead of last year, they weren’t as high as we had planned,” said Thompson.

Year to date, HMH remains $670,000 ahead of budget with an operating income of $5.1 million versus a budgeted $4.4 million.

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About HMH: Hardin Memorial Health (HMH) is an integrated system of healthcare providers throughout a 10-county region of Central Kentucky. HMH is committed to delivering the highest-quality patient-centered healthcare to the more than 400,000 people it serves. With more than 2,100 medical professionals including approximately 400 first-in-class physicians and advanced practice clinicians in over 45 specialties and primary care and a 300-bed hospital, HMH provides comprehensive healthcare close to home for the residents of Hardin, Meade, Nelson, LaRue, Breckinridge, Grayson, Hart, Bullitt, Green and Taylor counties. HMH is a county-owned system under a management contract with Kentucky’s Baptist Health, headquartered in Louisville, Kentucky.