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A first in San Antonio: Stroke ready status for CHRISTUS Santa Rosa's Freestanding ER

(SAN ANTONIO, TX – December 8, 2016) — CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Emergency Center – Alon is the **FIRST**, freestanding emergency room to be recognized as “Stroke Ready” in San Antonio. The certification means the Emergency Center is equipped to treat stroke patients with timely, evidence-based care prior to transferring them to a Primary or Comprehensive Stroke Center.

“We are delighted our Emergency Center received Acute Stroke Ready Hospital Certification from The Joint Commission and the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association,” said Dr. Mark Ogden, CHRISTUS Santa Rosa’s Regional Director of Emergency Medicine. “This certification demonstrates our commitment to providing a higher standard of service to stroke patients outside of the typical hospital environment, while also addressing the gap in access to acute stroke services by delivering this quality care.”

Stroke is the fifth leading cause of death and a leading cause of adult disability in the United States. This certification demonstrates CHRISTUS Santa Rosa’s commitment to providing a higher standard of service to stroke patients who seek treatment at our convenient health care environment located in the Alon Town Center shopping mall.

“Currently, nearly half of the population in the United States live 60 miles or more away from a Primary Stroke Center or Comprehensive Stroke Center,” said Lee H. Schwamm, MD, American Stroke Association. “If patients who experience an acute ischemic stroke can get treated with clot-busting medications quickly, more lives would be saved and more patients would have improved outcomes.”

CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Emergency Center – Alon underwent a rigorous onsite review to assess its compliance with the Joint Commission’s Advanced Disease-Specific Care certification requirements, including:

- A dedicated stroke-focused program
- Staffing by qualified medical professionals trained in stroke care
- Collaboration with local emergency management agencies
- 24/7 ability to perform rapid diagnostic and laboratory testing
- Ability to administer intravenous clot-busting medications to eligible patients
- Availability of telemedicine technology

“This new certification acts as an important bridge and will be a key component in an evolving system of stroke care,” said Patrick Phelan, interim executive director, Hospital Business Development, The Joint Commission. “A Joint Commission and American Heart Association/American Stroke Association certified Acute Stroke Ready Hospital will be the foundation for acute stroke care in many communities, allowing it to be the first stop on a patient’s acute stroke journey.”

Established in 2015, Acute Stroke Ready Hospital Certification is awarded for a two-year period to Joint Commission-accredited hospitals and critical access hospitals. The certification was derived from the Brain Attack Coalition's "Recommendations for Comprehensive Stroke Centers" (Stroke, 2005), "Metrics for Measuring Quality of Care in Comprehensive Stroke Centers" (Stroke, 2011) and recommendations from a multidisciplinary advisory panel of experts in complex stroke care.

CHRISTUS Santa Rosa's Hospitals at Medical Center, Westover Hills and New Braunfels are recognized as Comprehensive Stroke Centers with advanced care, imaging capabilities, 24/7 availability, and Associates specifically trained in care for complex stroke patients.

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About CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Health System

Founded in 1869 by the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word of Houston and San Antonio, CHRISTUS Santa Rosa is a Catholic, faith-based, nonprofit health and wellness ministry dedicated to extending the healing ministry of Jesus Christ and providing the highest quality medical care and services available. As one of the top health care organizations in South-Central Texas, CHRISTUS Santa Rosa has five hospital campuses. The Children's Hospital is located in downtown San Antonio. We also have hospitals located in the South Texas Medical Center, New Braunfels, Westover Hills, and a surgical hospital in Alamo Heights. CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Health System also owns a majority interest in CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Physicians Ambulatory Surgery Centers – San Antonio, LLC, a joint venture physician partnership which is comprised of two outpatient surgery centers in San Antonio with facilities in Stone Oak and the Medical Center. Additionally, CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Health System owns a majority interest in the CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Physicians Ambulatory Surgery Center in New Braunfels and San Marcos, a joint venture physician partnership. For additional information on CHRISTUS Santa Rosa, visit www.christussantarosa.org. Find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/christussantarosa and follow us on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/CSRHS>.

The Joint Commission

Founded in 1951, The Joint Commission seeks to continuously improve health care for the public, in collaboration with other stakeholders, by evaluating health care organizations and inspiring them to excel in providing safe and effective care of the highest quality and value. The Joint Commission accredits and certifies more than 21,000 health care organizations and programs in the United States. An independent, nonprofit organization, The Joint Commission is the nation's oldest and largest standards-setting and accrediting body in health care. Learn more about The Joint Commission at www.jointcommission.org.

The American Heart Association/American Stroke Association

The American Heart Association and the American Stroke Association are devoted to saving people from heart disease and stroke – America's No. 1 and No. 5 killers. We team with millions of volunteers to fund innovative research, fight for stronger public health policies, and provide lifesaving tools and information to prevent and treat these diseases. The Dallas-based American Heart Association is the nation's oldest and largest voluntary organization dedicated to fighting heart disease and stroke. The American Stroke Association is a division of the American Heart Association. To learn more or to get involved, call 1-800-AHA-USA1, visit heart.org or call any of our offices around the country. Follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

The familiar Heart-Check mark now helps consumers evaluate their choices in hospital care. Each mark given to a hospital is earned by meeting specific standards for the care of patients with heart disease and/or stroke. The Heart-Check mark can only be displayed by hospitals that have achieved and defined requirements set by the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association. For more information on the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association Hospital Accreditation Program visit www.heart.org/myhospital.