

News Release

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Bridgeport Hospital First In State To Earn National Geriatric Emergency Department Accreditation

BRIDGEPORT, CT (June 18, 2019) – Bridgeport Hospital is the first hospital in Connecticut to earn Geriatric Emergency Department Accreditation (GEDA) from the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP). The accreditation means that the Bridgeport Hospital Emergency Department (ED) is focused on the highest standards of care for older adults.

“This is a major accomplishment in our evolution of providing age-friendly care to our community,” said Vivian Argento, MD, Bridgeport Hospital’s executive director of Geriatric and Palliative Care. “This accreditation gives us visibility and motivation to keep challenging ourselves to do better.”

“Having geriatric care experts in our ED helps foster a better dialog with patients and families so we can understand them better and provide better care to maximize their lives,” said Rockman Ferrigno, MD, chair, Emergency Medicine at Bridgeport Hospital.

“We’re having great conversations with patients, he said. “We help reduce their health risks and can help keep them out of the hospital. We’re partnering with them to give them a better life.”

Dr. Ferrigno said Bridgeport Hospital established a specialized Geriatric Emergency Medicine Service (GEMS) 10 years ago with a dedicated team of geriatric physicians and advanced practice nurses.

“We developed the service from there,” Dr. Ferrigno said. “The result was a self-sustaining resource in the ED at the ready for our geriatric patients.”

“We are committed to providing safe, high quality care that meets the needs of all members of our community,” Dr. Argento added. “Our Geriatric ED is just one component of care we have in place to provide care to older adults, along with outpatient care, home-based care, and psychiatric, surgical and trauma care.”

The voluntary GEDA program is the culmination of years of progress in emergency care of older adults. In 2014, ACEP along with the Society for Academic Emergency Medicine, Emergency Nurses Association, and American Geriatrics Society, developed and released geriatric ED guidelines, recommending measures ranging from adding geriatric-friendly equipment and specialized staff to more routine screening for delirium, dementia and fall risk, among other vulnerabilities.

An accredited emergency department must incorporate many of these best practices, along with providing interdisciplinary geriatric education and having geriatric-appropriate equipment and supplies available.

“Our geriatric care experts are there not only to partner with the ED but also with primary care providers,” said Dr. Ferrigno. “The partnership helps foster a better dialog with patients and families so we can understand them better and provide better care. The question we ask is ‘how can we get the most out of your life?’”

Bridgeport Hospital, part of Yale New Haven Health, is a non-profit 501-bed acute care hospital with two campuses (plus 42 beds licensed to Yale New Haven Children’s Hospital). Both Bridgeport Hospital and the Milford Campus of Bridgeport Hospital serve patients throughout Fairfield and New Haven counties. The hospital admits more than 23,000 patients and provides nearly 350,000 outpatient treatments annually. The Connecticut Burn Center at Bridgeport Hospital is the only burn center in the state and one of only 64 verified burn centers in the United States. Bridgeport Hospital is committed to providing safe, compassionate and cost efficient care its patients and the community. www.bridgeporthospital.org