

St. Vincent's Medical Center Among First in Nation Selected for American College of Cardiology Patient Navigator Program

Inaugural cardiology program designed to support myocardial infarction (heart attack) and heart failure patients to reduce hospital readmissions

BRIDGEPORT, Connecticut-February 5, 2015 - St. Vincent's Medical Center is one of 35 hospitals in the country selected to participate in the American College of Cardiology (ACC) Patient Navigator Program, the first program of its kind in cardiology designed to support hospitals in providing personalized services to heart disease patients and help them avoid a quick return to the hospital. St. Vincent's was selected from among nearly 400 hospitals that were eligible for the program, based on readmission rates, having recognized leaders in cardiology on staff, an established culture of quality already part of the hospital infrastructure, and varied geographic location.

"This distinguished honor is a testament to the outstanding work and dedication of our professionals who deliver person-centered care every day in order to improve the cardiovascular health and well-being of all of our patients," explained Lawrence S. Schek, Senior Vice President, Chief Medical Officer, and Chairman, Cardiovascular Services, St. Vincent's Medical Center. "We are grateful for the important work of the American College of Cardiology and wish to thank them for this opportunity to be a part of their patient navigator initiative."

Nearly one in five patients hospitalized with heart attack and one in four patients hospitalized with heart failure are readmitted within 30 days of discharge, often for conditions seemingly unrelated to the original diagnosis. Readmissions can be related to issues like stresses within the hospital, fragility on discharge, lack of understanding of discharge instructions, and inability to carry out discharge instructions.

The ACC created the Patient Navigator Program to support a team of caregivers at selected hospitals to help patients overcome challenges during their hospital stay and in the weeks following discharge when they are most vulnerable. Hospitals chosen are given funding to establish a program that supports a culture of patient-centered care that can serve as a model for other hospitals in the future.

"The ACC Patient Navigator Program provides evidence-based approaches to reducing hospital readmissions by meeting the unique needs of each patient," said ACC President Patrick O'Gara, M.D., FACC. "St. Vincent's Medical Center's dedication to quality is a key component of this program, which emphasizes a team approach to help patients make a seamless and secure transition from the hospital to the home."

Hospitals in the program were selected based on their commitment to quality as demonstrated through participation in the National Cardiovascular Data Registry ACTION Registry-Get With The Guidelines and Hospital to Home Initiative. AstraZeneca is the founding sponsor of the ACC Patient Navigator Program.

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About St. Vincent's Medical Center

Founded by the Daughters of Charity in 1903, St. Vincent's Medical Center is a mission-driven organization committed to exceptional health care for all with special consideration for the poor and underserved. St. Vincent's Medical Center is a subsidiary of St. Vincent's Health Services, and a member of Ascension Health, the nation's largest Catholic and largest non-profit healthcare system, and is at the forefront in patient safety and quality, with a focus on creating holistic, compassionate environments. St. Vincent's has been ranked for the second consecutive year as a Best Hospital in Fairfield County and in all of Western Connecticut for 2013-2015 by U.S. News & World Report in its annual "Best Hospitals" survey. Recently the recipient for the third year in a row and sixth consecutive time of the "A" Hospital Safety Score" from the Leapfrog Group, St. Vincent's Medical Center is one of two hospitals in the state to hold both the Leapfrog "A" and Nursing Magnet® Recognition, the highest national award for nursing excellence. In 2013 St. Vincent's Medical Center was named Top Performer on Key Quality Measures®, by the Joint Commission, the leading accreditor of health care organizations in America, and has been recognized by both the Joint Commission and OSHA as a model of a highly reliable organization. The American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer awarded St. Vincent's an Outstanding Achievement Award with Accreditation in 2012, and it has also earned its designation from the National Accreditation Program for Breast Cancer. For more information on programs and services, call the toll-free Care Line at 877-255-SVHS (7847) or visit www.stvincents.org.

About The American College of Cardiology

The American College of Cardiology is a 47,000-member medical society that is the professional home for the entire cardiovascular care team. The mission of the College is to transform cardiovascular care and improve heart health. The ACC leads in the formation of health policy, standards and guidelines. The College operates national registries to measure and improve care, provides professional medical education, promotes cardiovascular research and bestows credentials on cardiovascular specialists who meet stringent qualifications. For more information, visit cardiosource.org/ACC.