

HOSPITAL CHARACTERISTICS

**HAZLETON**  
**GENERAL**  
**HOSPITAL**

- ▶ Hazleton, PA
- ▶ 150 beds
- ▶ [www.ghha.org](http://www.ghha.org)

**S . T . E . E . E . P .**



**SAFE**

Performance on CT scan of the brain completion has increased markedly.



**TIMELY**

CT scan of the brain being completed within 20 minutes of order and being read within 20 minutes of completion of scan.



**PATIENT-CENTERED**

Been able to provide quality and safe care to our stroke patients at Hazleton General Hospital.

**TEAM MEMBERS**

**Andrea Andrews, RN**

Director Quality/Case Management, Team Facilitator

**Jack Barron**

CT Tech

**Melissa Marchetti**

Physical Therapy Manager

**Lynda Naperkowski, RN**

Nurse Manager Gunderson Rehab Unit

**Sophia Rush, RN**

ED Nurse

**Megan Scherer**

Director of Outpatient Rehabilitation, Fitness, and Occupational Health Services

**Anthony Valente, MD**

Vice President of Medical Affairs, Stroke Medical Director

# TEAMING UP TO PROVIDE STROKE CARE

## The Problem

Hazleton General Hospital is committed to providing compassionate, patient centered, quality health care services, and to the on-going development of a healthier community. We decided to focus on the care of our stroke patients, utilizing evidence-based standards of care, to provide the necessary interventions to expeditiously begin treatment of our identified stroke patients. This included timely completion of a CT scan of the brain and also having the availability of specialized services, including neurosurgery and neurology.

Administration at Hazleton General Hospital was very interested in providing our community with a service that allowed us to treat our stroke patients "at home" in our own community hospital and rehab unit. We decided to pursue this by becoming a primary stroke center in Northeastern Pennsylvania--focusing on the quality care given to our stroke patients.

## The Solution

We officially implemented our stroke alert program, in conjunction with Lehigh Valley Hospital, on July 25, 2007. Our team consisted of representatives from nursing, ED, lab, physical therapy, education, pharmacy, the Gunderson Rehab Center, quality management and administration. Since Hazleton General Hospital did not have a neurosurgeon on staff and only had one neurologist on staff, we entered into an agreement with Lehigh Valley Hospital to have our stroke cases with "bleeds" transferred to their facility for surgery. We also worked in collaboration with the neuroradiologists at Lehigh Valley Hospital in reviewing the CT scans done at Hazleton General Hospital and confirming an ischemic stroke and/or hemorrhagic stroke diagnosis. We continued to work with Lehigh Valley Hospital in determining which treatment options would best meet our stroke patient needs, so we could admit these stroke patients to Hazleton General Hospital. We purchased/leased a new updated CT scanner and increased CT scan staff coverage to 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

## Results

With an agreement with Lehigh Valley Hospital, Hazleton General Hospital began this stroke alert process in January of 2007, our baseline for a CT scan being completed within 20 minutes or less for stroke patients who presented to the ED was 13 percent. By September of 2007, utilizing our Accelerating Best Care quality improvement process and with our team collaboration with Lehigh Valley Hospital, our CT scan completion time rose to 100 percent compliance. (Goal to achieve for stroke certification was 85 percent compliance or better). We have sustained this 85 percent required compliance for all of 2008 and into 2009 (except for the months of February and June, 2009 to for July, 2009 we have again reached our compliance of 85 percent or better).

The ultimate result achieved was that our stroke patients received the quality care they deserved - every time, all the time - and we also became the first Primary Stroke Center in Northeastern Pennsylvania in February of 2008.