

News

John Muir's emergency department receives six awards from VHA

The two hospital campus of John Muir Walnut Creek and John Muir Concord are the recipients of several West Coast Region VHA awards, including team collaboration, physician/nurse champion, passion, and patient satisfaction in their emergency departments.

VHA is a nationwide alliance network of healthcare organizations that share their successes and insights to help members become top performers. John Muir will be recognized in VHA's 2009 Fall Summit & Member Spotlight Awards Event, which recognizes West Coast members for achieving superior outcomes in various areas and sharing those experiences with members in their region.

In addition to the VHA awards, both John Muir emergency departments recently received the American Stroke Association's Gold Plus Award for their 'Get with the Guidelines' (GWTG) stroke program. This program ensures continuous quality improvement of acute stroke treatment and ischemic stroke prevention.

VHA Team Collaboration award

John Muir's Chest Pain Team earned the VHA Team Collaboration recognition due to the processes they put into place to ensure smooth patient flow and quality care. And it truly was a team effort amongst departments and cross-campus sharing of best practices.

With the support of CEP America, one of the largest providers of emergency department management and staffing solutions in the nation, John Muir has seen their door to balloon times drop to below 60 minutes from over 100 minutes prior. It's been a tremendous collaborative effort on the parts of the cardiology and emergency department (ED) medical staffs, the Cath Lab and ED nurses and technicians, pharmacy, registration, and the multiple EMS agencies that bring patients to hospitals.

Improved processes

To facilitate these necessary changes in the process, the team had weekly STEMI huddles, allowing them to analyze each case, look at every delay, and try to devise ways of minimizing the effect on door to balloon times. This also included the creation of a STEMI box with the basic supplies. A policy was also instituted where the Emergency Department physician would call in the Cath Lab simultaneously while alerting the cardiologist that there was a STEMI case. What's more, the committee worked with the county and established field EKG capabilities. They also instituted a policy to activate the Cath Lab based on a field EKG that showed a STEMI.

"By working so closely together on this collaboration, the Emergency Department and Cath Lab staff came to really understand the needs of each other", said John Burke, M.D., Emergency Department representative on John Muir's STEMI Committee. "Each side was able to make the necessary changes that would ensure the entire process would operate smoothly and efficiently, with excellent results that we could all be proud of."

In addition to the Chest Pain Team Collaboration Award, the VHA also recognized John Muir with a Physician and Nurse Champion Performance Achievement Award, patient satisfaction, passion, and a Team Collaboration award for its Capacity Management Committee.

John Muir Concord and John Muir Walnut Creek emergency departments are a part of CEP America, a national leader in developing and implementing ED programs that excel in clinical quality, service excellence, and collaborative leadership; helping to reduce wait times and improve patient satisfaction scores for their client hospitals.