

N e w s R e l e a s e

www.pennstatehershey.org
Wednesday, July 25, 2012

MEDIA CONTACT:
Scott Gilbert 717-531-1887
sgilbert1@hmc.psu.edu

PENN STATE HERSHEY MEDICAL CENTER BEGINS USING TELEMEDICINE TO TREAT STROKE

First LionNet partner is St. Joseph Medical Center in Reading, with more hospitals to follow
HERSHEY, PA—Physicians at Penn State Hershey Stroke Center now have the ability to see and communicate with stroke patients at St. Joseph Medical Center in Reading thanks to LionNet, a system utilizing on-demand patient data and live two-way audio and video. LionNet is the first telemedicine system for stroke to be implemented in south-central Pennsylvania.

The audio-visual technology allows Penn State Hershey neurologists and neurosurgeons to aid in the rapid diagnosis and treatment of stroke patients at St. Joe’s by examining and talking with patients, reviewing patient information and communicating with family members and clinicians.

“With LionNet, patients can receive optimal care in a timely manner at their local hospitals, and most have the benefit of staying in their own communities,” said Kevin M. Cockroft, M.D., co-director, Penn State Hershey Stroke Center. “Patients with more severe strokes can be transferred to Penn State Hershey more quickly for advanced treatments.”

Stroke is the fourth-leading cause of death in the United States and the leading cause of serious long-term disability in adults. Stroke specialists often say “time is brain” because millions of brain cells can die within hours after a stroke. Early clinical data suggest telemedicine systems at other leading U.S. hospitals have led to improved treatment for acute strokes, including increased use of the intravenous ‘clot buster’ drug, tPA.

“The main benefit of this partnership is the ability to provide community hospitals with advanced stroke care and therefore improved patient outcomes,” said Ray Reichwein, M.D., co-director, Penn State Hershey Stroke Center.

The Penn State Hershey LionNet team will also collaborate with partner hospitals to educate people within their surrounding communities about the symptoms of stroke and the importance of getting to the hospital in a timely manner.

Penn State Hershey plans to grow its network of LionNet partners. The technology will soon be in place at other community hospitals, including Hanover Hospital in York County and Mount Nittany Medical Center in Centre County.

Founded in 1963 through a gift from The Milton S. Hershey Foundation, **Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center** is one of the leading teaching and research hospitals in the country. The 491-bed Medical Center is a provider of high-level, patient-focused medical care. The Medical Center campus also includes Penn State College of Medicine (Penn State's medical school), Penn State Hershey Cancer Institute, and Penn State Hershey Children's Hospital—the region's only children's hospital. The Medical Center campus is part of Penn State Hershey Health System, which also includes the Pennsylvania Psychiatric Institute, Penn State Hershey Rehabilitation Hospital, and other specialty facilities.