

PALM DRIVE CERTIFIED AS PRIMARY STROKE CENTER

Palm Drive Hospital was certified as a Primary Stroke Center on May 27, making it one of only two hospitals in all of Sonoma County to meet strict national standards for fast, effective treatment of stroke patients.

Stroke is the third leading cause of death in the U.S. and the leading cause of serious, long-term disability. Strokes are most often caused by blood clots, which shut off the supply of blood to the brain, causing brain cell death.

If clot-busting drugs are administered in time, the patient may recover with no ill effects at all. But there is only a short window of time in which to administer the drugs.

Certification means Palm Drive has exceeded the standards set by the American Stroke Association and the American Heart Association for treatment of stroke patients. Palm Drive's medical personnel have received advanced training in stroke; clot-busting drugs and neurologists are accessible 24/7; and a stroke patient can be examined, diagnosed and begin treatment within one hour of arriving at the emergency room. The standard is three hours.

"The reason this certification is so critical and important is because we now know that time – the time between when one has a stroke and when care commences -- is absolutely critical to a person's ability to recover from stroke," said Nancy Dobbs, president of the hospital's Board of Directors.