



**CHRISTIANA CARE
HEALTH SYSTEM**

Immediate release

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Christiana Care's Rapid Response Teams

save precious minutes in delivering critical care

Teams are a new trend in acute-care hospitals

Wilmington, DE. (March 10, 2006) -- One night, Carole Derr, a nurse at Christiana Hospital, noticed that one of her patients, a man in his 80s, appeared more fragile and weak than usual. Although his vital signs were not setting off any alarms, she sensed that something was wrong. "I called the Rapid Response Team number and they were here in a snap."

Saving minutes in delivering care

It was good that she did. The Rapid Response Team, a new trend in acute care hospitals, confirmed that the patient had suffered a stroke. Derr's decision to call for help, and more than 600 similar calls made since the Rapid Response Program began a year ago under a pilot program, prove that precious minutes can be saved for patients undergoing worrisome changes in status.

The Rapid Response Team program is established on all inpatient Medical and Surgical units at both Christiana and Wilmington hospitals. The teams are comprised of a critical care physician, a critical care-trained registered nurse and a respiratory therapist. The team responds within five minutes to requests for help in cases where patients' conditions are a cause for immediate concern.

Reducing cardiac arrest responses

"The goal of the Rapid Response Team is to 'rescue' patients sooner, rather than later, when we might have to resuscitate them," says Keith Doram, M.D., Christiana Care's chief medical officer. "Literature demonstrates that patients show early signs of deteriorating conditions approximately six hours before they occur," he says.

Data Christiana Care has collected supports the effectiveness of the program. Sixty-one percent of patients cared for by a Rapid Response Team did not need to be moved to an Intensive Care Unit and the overall mortality rate at Christiana Care is down as a result. Cardiac arrest responses, or Code Blues, have been reduced by 15 percent.

“Floor nurses are extremely satisfied with the Rapid Response Team,” adds Sharon Anderson, Christiana Care’s senior vice president of Performance Improvement & Care Management. “They appreciate not only the immediate clinical support for their patients, but also the educational opportunity to work with an experienced ICU nurse in managing an acutely deteriorating patient.”

Christiana Care Health System, which dates back to 1888, is one of the region's largest not-for profit health care providers, serving the people of Delaware as well as neighboring areas of Maryland, Pennsylvania and New Jersey. A teaching hospital, Christiana Care is recognized as a regional center for excellence in cardiology, cancer and women's health services, as well as Level-I trauma care and Level-3 neonatal intensive care (both highest intensity). Christiana Care operates two hospitals, transitional care services, preventive medicine and rehabilitation services, a network of primary care physician offices and an extensive range of outpatient and home health services. Christiana Care provided \$ 25.2 million of charity care last year.