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After undergoing an on-site evaluation and demonstrating compliance with nationally developed standards for stroke care, Watauga Medical Center has earned The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval™ for certification as a Primary Stroke Center. Watauga Medical Center is the only hospital in the Northwest region of the state.
"We're proud to achieve this distinction from The Joint Commission," says Claire Cline, Vice President for Patient Care Services. "We are pleased to have The Joint Commission recognize our commitment to providing the best care to our patients and our community."
Each year about 795,000 people experience a new or recurrent stroke, which is the nation's third leading cause of death. On average, someone suffers a stroke every 40 seconds and someone dies of a stroke every 3.1 minutes. Stroke is a leading cause of serious, long-term disability in the United States, with about 4.7 million stroke survivors alive today.
If you suspect someone is having a stroke, act FAST. Check the following:

Face - Does one side of the face droop?

Arms - Is one arm weak or numb?

Speech - Is the person's speech slurred?

Time - if yes to any of these, call 911!

Joint Commission's Primary Stroke Center Certification is based on the recommendations for primary stroke centers published by the Brain Attack Coalition and the American Stroke Association's statements and guidelines for stroke care. The Joint Commission launched the program-the nation's first-in 2003. A list of programs certified by The Joint Commission is available at www.qualitycheck.org.

To learn more about Appalachian Regional Healthcare System, visit www.apprhs.org.