



**CAROLINAS HOSPITAL SYSTEM CHEST PAIN CENTER:  
FIRST IN THE REGION TO RECEIVE ACCREDITATION**



Carolinas Hospital System's Chest Pain Center is the first in northeastern South Carolina to be accredited and one of only nine in the state to achieve this distinction. Carolinas received full Cycle II accreditation with PCI from the Accreditation Review Committee on April 13, 2009. Accreditation expires April 12, 2012.

"We have worked diligently over a long period of time to achieve our Chest Pain Center accreditation. This accomplishment assures a system-wide commitment to the care of patients with chest pain. From EMS activation until discharge, we have demonstrated that we provide exceptional care to the patient who presents to our hospital with chest pain," said William L. Cauthen, Jr., Chief of Emergency Services for Carolinas Hospital System, who also serves as medical director of the Florence County EMS.

Brenda O'Connell, RN, BSN, Trauma/Chest Pain Center Coordinator, said, "I am ecstatic that our Chest Pain Center has received full accreditation with PCI. This was accomplished due to the hard work of our hospital staff and the Florence County EMS. We are so excited to be providing such an important service to our community and will continue to provide excellent cardiac care in an effort to decrease cardiovascular disease and save lives."

Heart attacks are the leading cause of death in the United States, with 600,000 dying annually of heart disease. More than five million Americans visit hospitals each year with chest pain. The goal of the Society of Chest Pain Centers is to significantly reduce the mortality rate of these patients by teaching the public to recognize and react to the early symptoms of a possible heart attack, reduce the time that it takes to receive treatment and increase the accuracy and effectiveness of treatment.

The Chest Pain Center's protocol driven and systematic approach to patient management allows physicians to reduce time to treatment during the critical early stages of a heart attack, when treatments are most effective, and to better monitor patients when it is not clear whether they are having a coronary event. Such observation helps ensure that a patient is neither sent home too early nor needlessly admitted.



With the rise of Chest Pain Centers came the need to establish standards designed to improve the consistency and quality of care provided to patients. The Society's accreditation process insures centers meet or exceed quality-of-care measures in acute cardiac medicine.

The Chest Pain Center at Carolinas Hospital System has demonstrated its expertise and commitment to quality patient care by meeting or exceeding a wide set of stringent criteria and completing on-site evaluations by a review team from the Society of Chest Pain Centers. Key areas in which a Chest Pain Center must demonstrate expertise include:

- Integrating the Emergency Department with the local emergency medical system
- Assessing, diagnosing, and treating patients quickly
- Effectively treating patients with low risk for acute coronary syndrome and no assignable cause for their symptoms
- Continually seeking to improve processes and procedures
- Ensuring Chest Pain Center personnel competency and training
- Maintaining organizational structure and commitment
- Having a functional design that promotes optimal patient care
- Supporting community outreach programs that educate the public to promptly seek medical care if they display symptoms of a possible heart attack

Carolinashospital.com is a leading 420-bed acute care facility, comprised of more than 1,700 employees and nearly 300 physicians representing all major specialties. Taking the initiative to receive Chest Pain Center accreditation is just one more example of the "Carolinashospital.com Difference" which is a dedicated commitment to offer our community outstanding medical care, the latest technology and care that is compassionate, respectful and unsurpassed in the region. For more information, please visit our website at [www.carolinashospital.com](http://www.carolinashospital.com) or call Harriet Parker, Director of Marketing Services at (843) 674-2613.

### **About the Society of Chest Pain Centers (SCPC)**

The Society of Chest Pain Centers is a patient centric non-profit international professional organization focused upon improving care for patients with acute coronary syndromes and other related maladies. Established in 1998, the Society is dedicated to patient advocacy and focusing on ischemic heart disease. Central to its mission is the question, "What is right for the patient?" In answer, the Society promotes protocol based medicine, often delivered through a Chest Pain Center model to address the diagnosis and treatment of acute coronary syndromes, heart failure, and to promote the adoption of process improvement science by healthcare providers. To best fulfill this mission, the Society of Chest Pain Centers provides accreditation to facilities striving for optimum Chest Pain Center care. SCPC is headquartered in Columbus, Ohio.

For more information on the Society of Chest Pain Centers visit [www.scpcp.org](http://www.scpcp.org), or contact Robert Lipetz, Executive Director at (614) 442-5950 or [director@scpcp.org](mailto:director@scpcp.org).