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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Asteria Health Receives Recognition for Participation in Post-Acute Care Initiative for Stroke Patients

Participating centers create confidence in the quality-of-care stroke patients receive during rehabilitation and recovery

Wadena, June 2026 — Astera Health has received recognition for its participation in the American Heart Association’s Mission: Lifeline Stroke post-acute care initiative to enhance guideline-based care for stroke patients, ultimately improving and prolonging lives.

Stroke is a leading cause of serious long-term disability in the U.S. and approximately 800,000 people each year experience a new or recurrent stroke, according to the American Heart Association’s 2025 statistical update. Participation in the American Heart Association’s post-acute care initiative can help facilities support faster and more effective recovery from stroke through standardized coordination, adherence and implementation of evidence-based care.

Evidence-based rehabilitation and secondary prevention interventions improve recovery after stroke and reduce secondary complications. However, stroke rehabilitation expertise, processes of care, and educational resources vary among sites where post-acute care is delivered. The American Heart Association, the world’s leading nonprofit organization focused on heart and brain health for all, developed quality standards based on the Association’s 2016 Guidelines for Adult Stroke Rehabilitation and Recovery to address these gaps.

The post-acute care initiative provides a framework for assisting facilities to improve care according to the American Heart Association’s rigorous science-based requirements for stroke rehabilitation, including program management, patient and caregiver education and support, care coordination, clinical management and quality improvement.

Participation in this program benefits the patient and the facility by standardizing care practices. When there are evidence-based processes during every phase of care, patients have the best opportunity for positive outcomes. This initiative helps patients and their loved ones know participating facilities follow these important best practices.

Facilities participating in the post-acute care initiative receive a participation stipend and site-specific quality improvement support and process improvement ideas surrounding quality standards for stroke recovery, rehabilitation and secondary prevention. Facilities also can be part of a learning collaborative, working with experts in stroke rehabilitation to build tools and share and create best practices. Participation improves collaboration between post-acute care facilities and others involved in stroke care, including hospitals and outpatient providers.

“Astera Health is committed to improving patient care by adhering to the latest guidelines,” Rehabilitation Services Director, Meghan Current-Cary said. “The post-acute care initiative makes it easier for our teams to put proven knowledge and guidelines to work every day, which studies show can help patients recover better. The end goal is to ensure more people in the communities we serve can experience longer, healthier lives.”

Mission: Lifeline Stroke is the American Heart Association’s community-based initiative to develop systems of care to improve outcomes for stroke patients. The program launched in Minnesota in September 2024 with the support of a \$4 million grant from the Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust. The goal of Mission: Lifeline stroke is to bring together hospitals, emergency medical services and first responders, rehabilitation facilities, communications and regulatory agencies, state and local government, and payers to forge a proactive system of stroke care that saves and improves lives.

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ABOUT ASTERA HEALTH

Astera Health is a private, not-for-profit health care system based in Wadena, Minnesota. It offers care services such as primary health, surgery, cancer care, diagnostic imaging, obstetrics, orthopedics and rehabilitation. Astera Health operates a hospital and medical clinic in Wadena, and serves the counties of Wadena, Todd and Otter Tail through five satellite clinics in Bertha, Henning, Ottertail, Sebeka and Verndale. Visit asterahealth.org.

ABOUT THE AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION

The American Heart Association is a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives. We are dedicated to ensuring equitable health in all communities. Through collaboration with numerous organizations, and powered by millions of volunteers, we fund innovative research, advocate for the public’s health and share lifesaving resources. The Dallas-based organization has been a leading source of health information for a century. During 2024 - our Centennial year - we celebrate our rich 100-year history and accomplishments. As we forge ahead into our second century of bold discovery and impact our vision is to advance health and hope for everyone, everywhere. Connect with us on heart.org, [Facebook](#), [X](#) or by calling 1-800-AHA-USA1.

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Photo Captions: Meghan Current-Cary, Rehabilitation Services Director at Astera Health