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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **ST. ELIZABETH'S JOINS THE MIDAMERICA STROKE NETWORK TO OFFER ADVANCED ACCESS TO CRITICAL STROKE CARE**

*Belleville* – St. Elizabeth's Hospital has recently joined the MidAmerica Stroke Network, a collaborative system of hospitals that shares knowledge, educational opportunities and technologies to provide high-level stroke care to patients.

Launched by Saint Louis University Hospital in April 2008, the Network is committed to providing current and clinically-effective stroke care to patients in the member hospitals' respective communities. The Network is the first and only one of its kind in the region.

“With this collaboration, St. Elizabeth's once again proves our commitment to providing stroke patients in our community with the most current and clinically effective care,” stated Terry Brown RN, MSN, Director of Critical Care Services. The benefits for both the hospital and patients in the region include 24-hour access to the Network hotline, cutting edge technology and equipment, access to

research and clinical trials in stroke care, and ongoing medical and public educational opportunities.

As a member of the Mid-America Stroke Network, St. Elizabeth's Hospital's emergency room medical team will receive assistance from SLUCare neurologists, employing consultative and diagnostic services at no cost in potential stroke cases. The neuro-specialist can fully evaluate the patient's condition and vital signs in order to assist the physicians at the outlying hospital in determining the best treatment.

The Network will help the St. Elizabeth's Hospital's emergency medical team effectively treat stroke patients on-site in a timely manner, which may improve patient outcomes and possibly identify those patients who may benefit from a higher level of care. Ultimately, the hospital's participation in the Mid-America Stroke Network may help stroke patients recover quickly and completely, reducing the risk of permanent brain damage.

According to a five-year study by the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS), stroke patients who receive tPA within three hours of the onset of stroke symptoms are at least 30 percent more likely to recover with little or no disability after three months. Currently, only 1.5 percent of stroke patients in the United States receive tPA according to these guidelines. A goal of St. Elizabeth's and the MidAmerica Stroke Network is to increase the percentage of eligible stroke patients treated with tPA within the 180-minute window to 15 percent or greater.

In the future, St. Elizabeth's Hospital will be offering stroke programs at the hospital and to community organizations to educate patients, family members

and the public on stroke prevention and treatment. If your organization is interested in hosting a presentation, contact Mary Frierdich, Community Wellness Coordinator, at 618-234-2120, ext. 1156.

**Additional resources** [www.midamericastrokenetwork.com](http://www.midamericastrokenetwork.com)

[www.strokeassociation.org](http://www.strokeassociation.org)

[www.ninds.nih.gov](http://www.ninds.nih.gov)

**About St. Elizabeth's Hospital** St. Elizabeth's Hospital, in Belleville, IL, maintains a Gold Seal of approval from the Joint Commission. The hospital was founded by the Hospital Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis in 1875. Today, we continue their mission: to provide care for the sick and needy with a spirit of respect, care, competence and joy. For more information please contact Kelly Barbeau at 618.234.2120, extension 1270.

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