THE AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION AND THE SOCIETY OF CHEST PAIN CENTERS JOIN FORCES TO REDUCE DEATH FROM HEART DISEASE

Columbus, Ohio, May 5, 2011--The Society of Chest Pain Centers (SCPC), an international organization committed to the elimination of heart disease as the number one cause of death, and The American Heart Association a national organization dedicated to the prevention of cardiovascular diseases and stroke, today announced they will be joining efforts to save even more lives. The joint agreement seeks to improve cardiac care, specifically the care of patients suffering from a specific type of heart attack known as ST-Elevation Myocardial Infarction or “STEMI”. Both organizations will see this goal accomplished by establishing a collaborative framework for hospital accreditation that meets criteria as set forth in the American Heart Association initiative “Mission: Lifeline”.

“Each year, almost 250,000 people suffer from a deadly type of heart attack known in the medical community as a STEMI, which occurs when blood flow is completely blocked to the heart,” said Ralph Sacco, M.D., president of the American Heart Association. “Restoring blood flow to the heart is crucial in achieving optimal outcomes but 30% of these patients receive no reperfusion treatment at all.”

In an effort to improve the processes surrounding the care of the STEMI patient, the American Heart Association launched Mission: Lifeline in 2007. Mission: Lifeline seeks to improve these outcomes by breaking down and eliminating the obstacles that keep patients from accessing and receiving appropriate treatments. Mission: Lifeline systems start with the 9-1-1 call or at the point of entry in the emergency system, continues through the catheterization laboratory and through hospital discharge by promoting best practices that are identified using the very latest scientific evidence-based treatment for STEMI. Mission: Lifeline systems currently cover over 56% of the United States. Mortality rates from STEMI have decreased from 5.8% in 2008 to 4.8% in 2010.
“When the Society of Chest Pain Centers was approached by the American Heart Association to work together in a joint effort to improve STEMI care, the partnership seemed a natural fit,” said James McCord MD, FACC, Ex-officio with the Society Board of Trustees and current Cardiology Director of the chest pain decision unit at the Henry Ford Health System.

“SCPC, through their Chest Pain Center accreditation, had already improved cardiac processes in close to 14% of hospitals within the U.S. and had moved this accreditation to the international setting,” stated Michael Ross, MD, current Society Board president. In July of 2011, SCPC plans to launch Atrial Fibrillation certification, along with a different model of Chest Pain Center accreditation that addresses the specific challenges faced by freestanding emergency departments and critical access hospitals. Additionally, SCPC continues to grow their accreditation program for heart failure.

Collaboration between these two non-profit organizations, who share similar missions, will help bring consistency to healthcare delivery by providing a standard approach to the treatment of STEMI. The Society of Chest Pain Centers will assist the American Heart Association in implementing, developing and managing the Mission: Lifeline accreditation. SCPC and the American Heart Association mutually agree that providing cardiac accreditation programs is in the best interest of patients, meets the needs of the healthcare community, and will help to significantly reduce cardiac deaths.

Through this collaboration, SCPC will offer hospitals who meet the Mission: Lifeline criteria, the opportunity to become recognized as either an Accredited Mission: Lifeline STEMI Receiving Center or Referral Center. Hospitals who choose Chest Pain Center accreditation, a more comprehensive review that extends beyond STEMI to include all aspects of acute coronary syndrome will have the opportunity to add Mission: Lifeline accreditation by meeting relevant additional criteria.

For more information regarding Mission: Lifeline, please visit the website at www.heart.org/missionlifeline
For additional information on the Society of Chest Pain Centers, visit www.scpcp.org, or contact the Society’s offices at 614-442-5950.