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Press Advisory:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EL PASO REGION GETS FIRST MOBILE STROKE UNIT

Most Advanced System Of Its Kind In The World Now At UMC

EL PASO, Texas – University Medical Center of El Paso announced today the unveiling and introduction of the most advanced Mobile Stroke Unit (MSU) in the world, a specialized vehicle designed to provide rapid response to stroke victims throughout El Paso, during ceremonies at the El Paso County Coliseum.

UMC's unit is the first of its kind in the world - because it has the 16-slice OmniTom scanner. All other MSUs have an 8-slice CereTom or a Siemens scanner. The advanced system on the UMC unit allows physicians to see more images of the brain while producing them faster than previous systems.

“Today marks a new level of access to care at UMC,” said Jacob Cintron, President & CEO. “This unit is the direct result of leadership between our El Paso delegation, the City and County of El Paso, UMC and Texas Tech Physicians of El Paso. I especially want to thank Representative Art Fierro and former State Sen. Jose Rodriguez, both of whom championed efforts to secure support for this project in our Legislature.”

UMC is El Paso’s only Joint Commission-certified Level 1 Comprehensive Stroke Center.

The Mobile Stroke Unit strengthens UMC's capacity for care in a fast-growing region. This unit complements an already high level of care at UMC, in step with its high level of certification and designation. The expertise available at to stroke patients served by the Mobile Stroke Unit comes from Neuroscience nurses and technicians from UMC, onboard EMTs from the El Paso Fire Department, and doctors from Texas Tech Physicians of El Paso who will be supporting the patients via a specialized telehealth system inside the unit.

UMC's Stroke and Neuroscience team is led by one of the foremost neuroscience physicians in the region, Salvador Cruz-Flores, Professor and Founding Chair of the Department of Neurology at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center at El Paso, and Clinical Chief at UMC's Neuroscience Department. His expertise is in neurology, stroke neurology and neurocritical care. "This new Mobile Stroke Unit helps us raise the bar for stroke care for our community," he said. "Our ability to diagnose and care for patients faster is the greatest benefit of this unit. With each passing minute that we gain, we improve the possibility of greater long-term recovery for our stroke patients. Nowhere is there a better home for this unit than at UMC with the partnership and expertise of our Texas Tech Physicians of El Paso. We intend to put the unit to good use so that families have access to world class patient care right here in El Paso."

The Mobile Stroke Unit will be housed primarily at UMC when not on calls or travelling throughout El Paso. Of note, strokes are one of the leading cause of death and disability in the U.S., especially within minority communities.

Below are stroke statistics of note:

- Studies indicate that up to 1.9 million brain cells are lost per minute during a stroke.
- In 2016, Texas Department of State Health Services estimated that chronic disease, to include strokes, account for 75% of Texas health care expenditures.
- CDC in a 2017 report found that stroke is the fourth leading cause of death among Hispanics and the third leading cause of death in Hispanic women.

Further research points to Hispanics experiencing strokes at a much younger age, that they are more prone to risk factors and less likely to receive necessary treatment. The CDC reports that the average age for a stroke among non-Hispanic whites in the U.S. is 80, but among Hispanics, it is 67.

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