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SWMC Named Quality Respiratory Care Institution

Southwest Medical Center has earned Quality Respiratory Care Recognition (QRCR) under a national program aimed at helping patients and families make informed decisions about the quality of the respiratory care service available in hospitals.

About 700 hospitals or approximately 15 percent of the hospitals in the United States have applied for and received this award.

“I am proud that SWMC Respiratory Care Department has received this award,” said SWMC Cardiopulmonary/Respiratory Therapy Director Mark Cowan. “The Respiratory Staff at SWMC work hard to take care of our patients and should be commended for this.”

The QRCR program was started by the American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC) in 2003 to help consumers identify those facilities using qualified respiratory therapists to provide respiratory care. Hospitals earning the QRCR designation ensure patient safety by agreeing to adhere to a strict set of criteria governing their respiratory care services.

To qualify for the recognition, Southwest Medical Center provided documentation showing it meets the following conditions:

All respiratory therapists employed by the hospital to deliver bedside respiratory care services are either legally recognized by the state as competent to provide respiratory care services or hold the CRT or RRT credential.

Respiratory therapists are available 24 hours.

Other personnel qualified to perform specific respiratory procedures and the amount of supervision required for personnel to carry out specific procedures must be designated in writing.

A doctor of medicine or osteopathy is designated as medical director of respiratory care services.

Hospital policy prohibits the routine delivery of medicated aerosol treatments utilizing small volume nebulizers, metered dose inhalers, or intermittent positive pressure treatments to multiple patients simultaneously. Circumstances under which this practice is permitted is defined by policy.

The AARC’s QRCR program grew out of growing concerns among health care leaders and the general public regarding the safety and quality of health care services provided to patients. Hospitals that meet the QRCR requirements provide a level of respiratory care consistent with national standards and guidelines, and should be commended for their commitment to quality care. A list of QRCR hospitals is maintained at the associations’s website for consumers, YourLungHealth.org.

Respiratory therapists are specially trained health care professionals who work under physician’s orders to provide a wide range of breathing treatments and other services to people with asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, cystic fibrosis, lung cancer, AIDS and other lung or lung-related conditions. They also care for premature infants and are key members of lifesaving response teams charged with handling medical emergencies.

The AARC is a membership organization representing more than 46,000 health professionals involved in respiratory care nationwide.

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