



SOUTH ELGIN & COUNTRYSIDE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Headquarters Station 21 1090 W. Spring Street, South Elgin, IL 60177



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Joint Press Release

Northwestern Medicine expands Mobile Stroke Unit coverage to South Elgin

Specialized ambulance offers stroke treatment in the field

South Elgin, IL – (DATE) – Northwestern Medicine and the **South Elgin and Countryside Fire Protection District** are collaborating to offer life-saving stroke diagnosis and treatment to residents of the South Elgin area and the northwestern suburb. Northwestern Medicine's [Mobile Stroke Unit](#) (MSU) can now be dispatched to essentially create an emergency room in a parking lot, saving precious minutes.

The first of its kind in Illinois, Northwestern Medicine's MSU has a 16-slice CT scanner, telemedicine connections and stroke-specific medications. The team is comprised of a critical care nurse, a CT technician, an EMT technician driver, and a critical care paramedic.

For patients who meet stroke criteria, the South Elgin and Countryside Fire Protection District can request the MSU meet their ambulance at a location between South Elgin and Central DuPage Hospital in Winfield. The patient is transferred into the MSU for a CT scan, telemedicine assessment by a stroke neurologist, and treatment. The patient is then transported to Central DuPage Hospital often as a direct admit bypassing the emergency department.

On average, Northwestern Medicine's Mobile Stroke Unit provides life-saving treatment 30 minutes faster than traditional transport.

"We are getting a 30-minute head start by bringing the emergency room to the patient," said [Harish Shownkeen, MD](#), medical director of the Stroke and Neurointerventional Surgery Programs at [Northwestern Medicine Central DuPage Hospital](#). "The earlier you treat the patient the better their outcome. Patients who get treated right away often go home from the hospital instead of to a nursing home or rehabilitation."

Stroke is the fifth leading cause of death in Illinois and the leading cause of serious long-term disability according to the [Centers for Disease Control](#).



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The South Elgin and Countryside Fire Protection District is pleased to bring this innovative and lifesaving treatment to the residents of our Fire District. "This unit brings the treatment to the patient, providing a direct connection with a neurologist who can identify and confirm or deny if a patient is experiencing a stroke. Crews can administer the correct medicine when applicable which can drastically reduce the amount of damage occurring to the brain every second as a result of a stroke," said Fire Chief William Luchsinger.

The South Elgin and Countryside Fire Protection District and Northwestern Medicine want to remind patients that if you suspect someone is having a stroke, Remember BE F.A.S.T.

B: Balance- Is the person suddenly having trouble with balance or coordination?

E: Eyes. Is the person experiencing suddenly blurred or double vision or a sudden loss of vision in one or both eyes without pain?

F: Facial droop

A: Arm Weakness on one side

S: Speech Difficulty

T: Time to call 911

Northwestern Medicine Central DuPage Hospital has earned the [Advanced Comprehensive Stroke Center](#) designation by [The Joint Commission](#). The highest level of stroke certification, this designation recognizes the significant resources in staff, training and state-of-the-art infrastructure that comprehensive stroke centers must have to treat complex cases.

The South Elgin and Countryside Fire Protection District protects approximately 24 square miles and population of nearly 30,000 residents and we are pleased to partner with Northwestern Medicine to bring this medical advancement to the residents and visitors of our Fire District.

To learn more about Northwestern Medicine, visit nm.org.

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