

# SUNNYSIDE COMMUNITY HOSPITAL RECEIVES LEVEL I CARDIAC DESIGNATION

News Release from **Sunnyside Community Hospital**

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Contact: Ryan Rodruck

Tel: 509-837-1543

Email: [ryan.rodruick@sunnysidehospital.org](mailto:ryan.rodruick@sunnysidehospital.org)

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sunnyside Community Hospital receives Level I Cardiac designation

SUNNYSIDE, WA -- Sunnyside Community Hospital announced today it has been designated by the Washington Department of Health as a Level I Cardiac facility. The state's Emergency Cardiac and Stroke System (ECS) was created to reduce the time between the reporting of a cardiac or stroke emergency and the treatment of the patient. A Level I Cardiac designation is the highest in the state's system.

The new designation allows emergency medical services (EMS) to transport patients in cardiac distress directly to Sunnyside Community Hospital for treatment. Prior to the designation, EMS transported patients to Yakima or the Tri-Cities for emergency cardiac care.

"This designation will dramatically improve the health outcomes for emergency cardiac patients within our service area," said John Gallagher, CEO of Sunnyside Community Hospital and Clinics. "Prior to this designation emergency cardiac patients could be faced with a transport time of over 30 minutes. By eliminating this lengthy transport time we increase results and ultimately save lives," Gallagher continued.

The hospital upgraded its suite of cardiac services in February 2016 adding 24-hour cardiac catheterization. This upgrade completed the state's requirements for designation as a Level I facility.

"In a cardiac emergency the potential for muscle loss increases with every moment that passes and access to a Level I facility becomes critical," said Todd Farina, RN, Director of the hospital Emergency Department. "Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the U.S. and the longer a patient waits for a higher level of care, the greater the chances of a lengthy recovery, long-term disability or even more dire consequences," Farina continued.

Other requirements in Level I certification include having a designated cardiac response team lead by a cardiologist, emergency nursing staff trained in Advanced Cardiac Life Support and interventional and diagnostic services available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

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**Contact Info:**

Ryan Rodruck

[ryan.rodrucl@sunmysidehospital.org](mailto:ryan.rodrucl@sunmysidehospital.org)