

## **Press Release**

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**Contact: Tamara Sloper ([sloper@intersocietal.org](mailto:sloper@intersocietal.org))**

### **Contra Costa Regional Medical Center Receives Echocardiography Accreditation by the IAC**

Cardiovascular diseases are the No. 1 cause of death in the United States. On average, one American dies every 39 seconds of cardiovascular disease – disorders of the heart and blood vessels. The American Heart Association estimates that the direct and indirect cost for cardiovascular disease in the U.S. for 2010 was \$503.2 billion.

Early detection of life threatening heart disorders and other diseases is possible through the use of Echocardiography procedures performed within hospitals, outpatient centers and physicians' offices. While these tests are helpful, there are many facets that contribute to an accurate diagnosis based on Echocardiography testing. The skill of the Echocardiography sonographer performing the examination, the type of equipment used, the background and knowledge of the interpreting physician and quality assurance measures are each critical to quality patient testing.

**Contra Costa Regional Medical Center located in Martinez, CA has been granted a three-year term of accreditation in Echocardiography in the areas of Adult Transthoracic by the Intersocietal Accreditation Commission (IAC).**

Accreditation by the IAC means that Contra Costa Regional Medical Center has undergone a thorough review of its operational and technical components by a panel of experts. The IAC grants accreditation only to those facilities that are found to be providing quality patient care, in compliance with national standards through a comprehensive application process including detailed case study review.

IAC accreditation is a "seal of approval" that patients can rely on as an indication that the facility has been carefully critiqued on all aspects of its operations considered relevant by medical experts in the field of Echocardiography. When scheduled for an Echocardiography procedure, patients are encouraged to inquire as to the accreditation status of the facility where their examination will be performed and can learn more by visiting [www.intersocietal.org/echo/main/patients.htm](http://www.intersocietal.org/echo/main/patients.htm).

IAC accreditation is widely respected within the medical community, as illustrated by the support of the national medical societies related to Echocardiography, which include physicians and sonographers. Echocardiography accreditation is required in some states and regions by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and by some private insurers. Echocardiography accreditation is required in some states and regions by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and by a number of private insurers. However, patients should remain vigilant in making sure that their Echocardiography procedures are performed within accredited facilities, because for many facilities accreditation remains a voluntary process.