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FOR MEDIA INFORMATION

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Hamilton Medical Center expands capabilities with EKOS treatment for patients with pulmonary embolisms

DALTON, Ga. (August 13, 2019) – Hamilton Medical Center, part of Hamilton Health Care System, recently began using a procedure called EKOS to treat pulmonary embolisms (PE), allowing patients to receive the advanced care close to home. Hector Dourron, MD, and Michael Hartley, MD, have performed the procedure.

“We’re very proud to be using this advanced technology at Hamilton,” said Jeff Hughes, cardiovascular service line administrator. “It elevates our capabilities and allows the patient to stay close to home and close to family.”

EKOS, or EkoSonic® Endovascular System, is the only endovascular device cleared by the FDA for the treatment of pulmonary embolism, a blockage in an artery in the lungs.

Pulmonary embolism affects as many as 600,000 people annually and carries a high rate of mortality. It is a condition where one or more clots break off or travel from existing venous clots in the legs or arms and travel in the circulation, getting trapped in the lung, where they block the ability of blood to get oxygen in some areas of the lung.

EKOS is intended to treat sub-massive pulmonary emboli, which make up 45 percent of pulmonary embolism cases. In sub-massive pulmonary emboli, the right side of the heart has a difficult time pumping blood and can quickly become larger than the stronger left side of the heart, which, if not treated, can cause the right side of the heart to fail. EKOS, used in conjunction with a thrombolytic drug, dissolves clots and restores healthy heart function and blood flow. EKOS also allows the physician to use a much smaller dose of clot busting medication, making treatment much safer by greatly reducing bleeding risk. EKOS can also be used in the treatment of deep vein thrombosis (DVT).

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Photo: From left are Hector Dourron, MD, and Michael Hartley, MD.

Sidebar:Common PE symptoms include:

- Shortness of breath
- Progressively worsening chest pain
- Cough
- Clammy or discolored skin
- Excessive sweating
- Rapid or irregular heartbeat
- Lightheadedness or dizziness