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Lakeside Medical Center Recognized for Higher Quality in Maternity Care



Belle Glade, FL Lakeside Medical Center, the Health Care District of Palm Beach County's teaching hospital, has been recognized by Florida Blue with a Blue Distinction® Center for Maternity Care designation as part of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association's Blue Distinction Specialty Care program. Blue Distinction Centers are nationally designated hospitals that show expertise in delivering improved patient safety and better health outcomes, based on objective measures that were developed with input from the medical community.

Nearly four million babies are born in the U.S. annually, making childbirth the most common cause of hospitalization, and cesarean sections the most common operating room procedure, according to National Centers for Health Statistics and the Agency for Health Care Research & Quality (AHRQ). Reducing early elective delivery is an area of focus for the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). According to Health Affairs,

elective inductions result in more cesarean deliveries and a longer maternal hospitalization.

The Blue Distinction Centers for Maternity Care program evaluates hospitals on quality measures for vaginal and cesarean delivery. Quality is key: only those hospitals that first meet Blue Distinction's nationally-established, objective quality measures will be considered for designation as a Blue Distinction Center+.

"We are honored that Lakeside Medical Center was recognized by Florida Blue for meeting the rigorous Blue Distinction Center+ quality and cost selection criteria for maternity care set by the Blue Distinction Specialty Care program," said Darcy J. Davis, Chief Executive Officer of the Health Care District of Palm Beach County. "Our rural, safety net hospital is committed to providing safe, quality patient care and is proud to have served generations of families in the Glades region."

Blue Cross and Blue Shield (BCBS) companies across the nation have recognized more than 1,000 hospitals as Blue Distinction Centers+ for Maternity Care. Hospitals recognized with this designation are assessed using a combination of quality information supplied by hospitals and cost measures derived from BCBS companies' medical claims.

"Lakeside Medical Center is committed to delivering high-quality maternity care and our obstetric nurses have received certification as lactation counselors," said Karen A. Harris, Vice President of Field Operations. Added Stephanie Dardanella, Hospital Administrator, "This national recognition is a testament to the dedication of our physicians and staff to meet the health care needs of our community."

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Since 2006, the Blue Distinction Specialty Care program has helped

patients find quality specialty care in the areas of bariatric surgery, cancer care, cardiac care, maternity care, knee and hip replacements, spine surgery, and transplants, while encouraging health care professionals to improve the care they deliver. Research shows that, compared to other hospitals, those designated as Blue Distinction Centers demonstrate better quality and improved outcomes for patients.

For more information about the program and for a complete listing of the designated facilities, please visit www.bcbs.com/bluedistinction

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