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AHCA and DOH Recognize 20 Hospitals in Florida for Achieving the Healthy People 2020 C-section Rate Goal

Tallahassee, Fla. – Today, the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) and the Florida Department of Health (DOH) announced that 20 hospitals in Florida have achieved the federal Healthy People 2020 Maternal and Child Health goal of reducing Cesarean section (C-section) rates for first-time mothers with low-risk pregnancies. In response to the rise of unnecessary C-sections across the United States, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services adopted the Healthy People 2020 goal of reducing nationwide C-sections rates for low-risk births. AHCA and DOH announced the recognition awards to hospitals at the Florida Hospital Association’s annual meeting during the Celebration of Achievement in Quality and Service Awards Ceremony. [View complete list of recognized hospitals.](#)

Secretary Justin Senior said, “As part of managed care our Agency has worked with health plans and hospitals to improve birth outcomes and lower risks to both mother and baby. We have seen many hospitals take on this challenge, and are excited to recognize the hospitals that have met the Healthy People 2020 goal. We want to encourage all delivery hospitals to continue the hard work they have implemented and we look forward to recognizing even more hospitals next year.”

“The department and its partners are committed to improving quality of care and health outcomes for mothers and infants across Florida,” said State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. Celeste Philip. “Research supports that mom and baby have better health outcomes when non-medically indicated cesareans are avoided for low-risk pregnancies, and I am pleased to congratulate these hospitals and their staff for their concerted efforts to achieve this Healthy People 2020 target.”

In partnership with key stakeholders, AHCA and DOH share a common goal to improve maternal and child health outcomes, and understand the importance of reducing unnecessary C-sections. C-section rates for first-time low-risk pregnancies in Florida delivery hospitals range from 17 percent to 61 percent. State and local health officials believe that variation indicates a public health concern that needs to be addressed statewide. AHCA, DOH, and other community organizations have started and will continue working with health systems to focus on reducing unnecessary C-sections as an opportunity for quality improvement.

Each year, about 4 million babies are born in the United States, with Florida accounting for 5.7 percent of all U.S. births (223,000 babies per year). Delivery by C-section has increased in Florida from a low of 21.9 percent in 1996 to a high of 38.1 percent in 2012. Florida’s C-section rate for 2017 is 37.2 percent, while the Healthy People 2020 goal is 23.9 percent.

Many hospitals in Florida have put programs and systems in place in an effort to sustain a lower C-section rate for low-risk, first births. The 20 hospitals that made the Florida Recommended C-section Rate Award list accounted for 17 percent of the 116 delivery hospitals in Florida.

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