MERCY RECOGNIZED BY WELLMARK FOR HIGHER QUALITY IN MATERNITY CARE

In an effort to help prospective parents find hospitals that deliver quality, affordable maternity care, Wellmark Blue Cross® and Blue Shield® announced 18 Iowa hospitals have received the Blue Distinction® Center+ for Maternity Care designation under the Blue Distinction Specialty Care program. Mercy Medical Center – Des Moines has once again received this recognition.

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. Reducing early elective delivery is an area of focus for the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the American Academy of Pediatrics. 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.

“Mercy is proud to be recognized as a Blue Distinction® Center+ for Maternity Care,” said Mercy’s interim chief nursing officer Kathy Goetz. “We created the Women & Infants’ Center to meet the complete needs of mother and baby in one location. Here they have access to birthing and midwifery services, obstetric emergency care in Iowa’s only dedicated 24-hour OB Emergency Department, management of high-risk pregnancies by perinatal specialists and specialty care for babies who are born early in the Variety Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.”

Blue Cross 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.

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, 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.

MARCH IS NATIONAL SOCIAL WORKER MONTH

This year, the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) will celebrate National Social Workers Month in March with a special “Social Workers: Leaders. Advocates. Champions.” campaign. This campaign will highlight the value of the profession while informing the public about the past and present role of social workers in helping the most vulnerable people in our society.

At Mercy, more than 44 medical social workers serve our patients at a variety of locations, including central campus, West Lakes, behavioral health, home care, hospice, palliative care and our Accountable Care Organization (ACO). Medical social workers support patients and families coping with chronic, acute or terminal illnesses by providing education, counseling and referrals for other services within the community.

Take a moment to thank our medical social workers for the important role they play in providing a Remarkable Mercy Experience each day.
NEW AD CAMPAIGN LAUNCHING FOR OB SERVICES

An advertising campaign promoting Mercy’s comprehensive obstetric services will begin this month and run through May. The ads feature many of our caring staff from the OB Emergency Department, Labor and Delivery, Mother/Baby, Childbirth Education and Volunteer Doula Services.

You can see or hear the ads in the following locations: “The Des Moines Register” main section every Tuesday; STAR 102.5 and MORE 104.1; KCCI SchoolNet online and mobile app; “Des Moines Business Record”; Des Moines Civic Center programs; Jordan Creek Town Center; digital billboards throughout the metro; TV, including WHO-TV 13, KCCI TV-8, WOI-ABC 5 and cable stations; YouTube; Facebook; internet display ads; Time and Temp phone line; signage at entrances on central campus; and elevator signs at central campus. To view the TV spot, visit https://youtu.be/x-Fw4pN3o68.

Thank you to all of the Mercy colleagues who participated in the campaign or helped during our production days!

A BLESSING IN TIME

While going about her work as a transporter at Mercy’s central campus, Athyang Koj heard a commotion when passing the service elevators near the main lobby. A patient had become uncooperative and disruptive after attempting to leave the hospital before her discharge orders were complete and transportation available. A team of medical and public safety staff were doing their best to convince the patient to return to her room, with little success. That’s when the distraught woman noticed Koj and asked for her help.

After receiving the patient’s permission to enter the elevator, Koj began speaking to the patient in a calm and soothing voice, creating an instant connection. Mercy Clinical Resource Nurse Mala De Vore was also on the elevator that day. “The compassionate care Athyang provided to this patient, whom she did not even know, was extraordinary,” De Vore said.

Noticing the patient’s clothing was disheveled, Koj helped cover the woman from exposure while continuing to speak to her in a calming voice. Holding the patient’s hand, Koj helped escort her back to her room. Later that day, Koj returned to check on the patient, as she had promised.

Koj, who has been with Mercy just over two years, says her passion to serve others is driven by her strong faith. “It makes me happy when I can make someone feel better or less afraid,” Koj said. “Every time I am able to help someone, I feel like I am getting blessed.”