



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Salina Regional Health Center designated Blue Distinction® Center+ for Maternity Care by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas

(February 19, 2018) – Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas has designated Salina Regional Health Center as a Blue Distinction Center+ for Maternity Care. The designation is part of the national Blue Distinction® Specialty Care program that recognizes hospitals for providing quality and affordable care.

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. The Blue Distinction Centers for Maternity Care program evaluates hospitals on quality measures for vaginal and cesarean delivery.

About 1,200 newborn deliveries are performed each year at Salina Regional Health Center. Efforts to improve patient outcomes by Salina medical providers and Birth Center staff through implementing nationally regarded best practices have shown positive results. Over the last four years Salina Regional has reduced the number of elective deliveries prior to 39 weeks gestation from 5 percent to 0, not including cases where there was medical necessity. This effort, and other initiatives, has reduced the number of complications in newborns and the

number of admissions to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.

“We are committed to a high level of care for our patients,” said Luanne Smith, vice president, chief nursing officer at Salina Regional Health Center. “This distinction looks at cesarean delivery rates, elective deliveries, newborn complications and patient satisfaction scores. We are proud to receive this designation by meeting the criteria for high quality, family centered, affordable care.”

"Today there is much talk about 'quality' in health care and the role quality plays in overall outcomes, patient experience and costs," said Andrew C. Corbin, BCBSKS president/CEO. "Salina Regional Health Center is doing more than talking about quality. They are putting quality into action by meeting rigorous quality metrics in all phases of their maternity care program and, in doing so, deliver better care for our members. The 'plus' in the designation means that Salina Regional is not only providing quality maternity care, but also doing so in a cost-efficient manner. That is why we are proud to recognize Salina Regional as a Blue Distinction Center+ for Maternity Care."

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.

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. On average, Blue Distinction Centers+ also are 20 percent more cost-efficient than non-Blue Distinction Center+ designated hospitals.

For more information about the program, please visit bcbs.com/bluedistinction.

About Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas

For more than 75 years, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas has built a reputation of trust with its members and contracting providers by providing outstanding customer service while quickly and accurately processing claims; fairly administering benefit plans and contracts; offering programs, services and tools to help members improve or maintain their health; and operating under the highest ethical standards while being good stewards of premium dollars. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association and is the state's largest insurer, serving all Kansas counties except Johnson and Wyandotte. For more information, visit bcbsks.com.

About Blue Cross Blue Shield Association

The Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association is a national federation of 36 independent, community-based and locally operated Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies that collectively provide health care coverage for one in three Americans. BCBSA provides health care insights through The Health of America Report series and the national BCBS Health Index. For more information on BCBSA and its member companies, please visit bcbs.com.

About Blue Distinction Centers

Blue Distinction Centers (BDC) met overall quality measures for patient safety and outcomes, developed with input from the medical community. A Local Blue Plan may require additional criteria for providers located in its own service area; for details, contact your Local Blue Plan. Blue Distinction Centers+ (BDC+) also met cost measures that address consumers' need for affordable health care. Each provider's cost of care is evaluated using data from its Local Blue Plan. Providers in CA, ID, NY, PA, and WA may lie in two Local Blue Plans' areas, resulting in two evaluations for cost of care; and their own Local Blue Plans decide whether one or both cost of care evaluation(s) must meet BDC+ national criteria. National criteria for BDC and BDC+ are displayed on bcbs.com. Individual outcomes may vary. For details on a provider's in-network status or your own policy's coverage, contact your Local Blue Plan and ask your provider before making an appointment. Neither Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association nor any Blue Plans are responsible for non-covered charges or other losses or damages resulting from Blue Distinction or other provider finder information or care received from Blue Distinction or other providers.

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