



OSF[®] HEALTHCARE

Four OSF HealthCare Hospitals Recognized for Higher Quality in Maternity Care *Racial Equity Added to New Criteria*

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(February 12, 2021/ (PEORIA, ILLINOIS)- Peoria, Illinois-based OSF HealthCare is proud to have four hospitals recognized as Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL) Blue Distinction[®] Centers (BDC) for Maternity Care designation. OSF HealthCare St. Mary Medical Center in Galesburg, St. Joseph Medical Center in Bloomington, Saint Francis Medical Center in Peoria and Saint Elizabeth Medical Center in Ottawa received the designation for expertise in delivering improved patient safety and better health outcomes.

This latest evaluation looked at *new* factors to better address clinical quality and equity issues in maternity care. Those include assessments of internal quality improvement, data collection and dissemination regarding racial and ethnic disparities, and internal protocol, including those to address implicit provider bias.

Compared to similarly developed countries such as Canada, Germany, and Australia, the United State has the highest maternal mortality rate (MMR), at approximately 17.4 deaths per 100,000 live births, with the MMR steadily increasing since 2000ⁱ. According to the CDC, non-Hispanic Black women are two to three times more likely to die from preventable or treatable pregnancy-related complications compared to white womenⁱⁱ.

To help address these gaps in care and to help ensure the better health of mothers, The Blue Cross Blue Shield Association enhanced its quality evaluation for the Maternity Care program to address key factors driving the United States' maternal health crisis such as preventable or treatable pregnancy-related conditions, high utilization of Caesarean sections, and racial and ethnic disparities in maternal healthcare. In 2018, facilities that received designations under the Blue Distinction Centers for Maternity Care program cared for more than 40% of Blue Cross and Blue Shield commercially insured women giving birth across the country.

OSF HealthCare is proud to be recognized by BCBSIL, the largest insurer in the state, for meeting the new and more rigorous quality selection criteria for maternity care set by the Blue Distinction Specialty Care program.

“The COVID-19 pandemic provided its many challenges. We not only met the challenge to provide excellent care for women and babies, but we managed to maintain the highest and most equitable quality and safety standards,” said Lori Wiegand, chief nursing officer for OSF HealthCare. “That only happens with a laser-like focus on internal protocols, ongoing data review and regular collaboration among care teams and experts within the OSF HealthCare system.”

“Our Mission of serving with the greatest care and love drives our multidisciplinary approach to providing consistent, high-quality care for our women and babies across our Ministry,” according to Jennifer Rice, director of Women’s Health, OSF HealthCare. “Our ability to collaborate across the OSF Ministry provides the mechanism to share best practices for treatment and support that ensures every mother and new baby receives the gold standard level of care during every part of the birthing experience.”

In 2020, the Blue Distinction Centers for Maternity Care Program was expanded beyond traditional outcome measures to include assessments of internal quality improvement, data collection and dissemination, and internal protocols that better address clinical quality and equity issues in maternity care. New in the evaluation cycle, facilities must collect race ethnicity data, have a maternal quality improvement program, commence drills and simulations for adverse events, and have dedicated protocols and procedures for the management of hypertension and hemorrhage. In addition, they must meet clinical outcome metrics at a higher standard than required previously. Specifically, the rate for low risk first time cesarean sections (NTSV C-section rate, PC-02) has been aligned with the revised Healthy People 2020 goals. Facilities eligible for the Blue Distinction Centers for Maternity care show statistically significant differences in key clinical outcomes compared to their peers.

“Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois is committed to working with providers to help improve the care of mothers and their infant children and is proud to offer this important recognition,” said Derek Robinson, MD, MBA, FACEP, CHCQM, chief medical officer, BCBSIL. “It’s one of the ways we’re partnering with members, employers, providers and communities to help improve health equity.”

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/maternal-mortality/pregnancy-mortality-surveillance-system.htm>

² https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/68/wr/mm6835a3.htm?s_cid=mm6835a3_w

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OSF HealthCare is an integrated health system owned and operated by The Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis, Peoria, Illinois. OSF HealthCare employs more than 23,600 Mission Partners in 147 locations, including 14 hospitals – 10 acute care, four critical access – with 2,097 licensed beds, and 2 colleges of nursing throughout Illinois and Michigan. The OSF HealthCare physician network employs more than 1,500 primary care, specialists and advanced practice providers, who are part of the OSF Medical Group. OSF HealthCare, through OSF Home Care Services, operates an extensive network of home health and hospice services. It also owns Pointcare Inc., comprised of health care-related businesses; OSF HealthCare Foundation, the philanthropic arm for the organization; and OSF Ventures, which provides investment capital for promising health care innovation startups.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL) is committed to expanding access to quality, cost-effective health care to as many people as possible in Illinois. BCBSIL is dedicated to innovation and exploring, nurturing and activating future possibilities to make the health care system work better for our members and our communities. BCBSIL is a division of Health Care Service Corporation, a Mutual Legal Reserve Company and an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. Learn more at bcbsil.com and follow us on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/bcbsil) and on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/bcbsil).

Blue Distinction Centers (BDC) met overall quality measures, 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 healthcare. 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 www.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.