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**CONTACT:**

AHCACommunications@ahca.myflorida.com;  
NewsMedia@flhealth.gov



## **AHCA and DOH Recognize 19 Hospitals in Florida for Achieving the Healthy People 2020 Low-risk, Primary C-section Goal**

**Tallahassee, Fla. –** Today, the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) and the Florida Department of Health (DOH) announced that 19 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 Mary Mayhew said,** “By recognizing these 19 hospitals and promoting their efforts, we are increasing the transparency around birth outcomes and encouraging families to shop for quality health care services. More than half of all of the births in the state of Florida are paid for by Medicaid, and it is our duty to ensure that our managed care plans are working with hospitals to provide the best birth outcomes for mothers and babies. We know that this means receiving prenatal and postpartum care, and adhering to maternity best practices. By working in concert with hospitals, medical professionals, stakeholders and families to reduce the occurrence of unnecessary C-sections we will create better health outcomes for mothers, reduce unnecessary and costly procedures, and save taxpayer resources.”

“One of the main goals set forth by the Department of Health is improving quality of care and health outcomes for mothers and infants across our state,” **said Florida Surgeon General Dr. Scott A. Rivkees.** “Reducing the ratio of cesarean sections is an important step in reducing rates of prematurity and maternal mortality. I am pleased to congratulate these hospitals and their dedicated staff for their hard work to reduce cesarean section rates for low-risk pregnancies. Their important efforts will result in better health outcomes for both Florida’s new mothers and their babies, and help us in our mission to protect, promote & improve the health of the people of our state.

In partnership with key stakeholders, AHCA and DOH share a common goal to improve maternal and child health outcomes, and understand the importance of eliminating unnecessary C-sections. C-section rates for first-time low-risk pregnancies in Florida delivery hospitals range from 13 percent to 60 percent. State and local health officials believe the existing variation indicates differences in C-section delivery patterns that need to be addressed statewide. AHCA, DOH, and other community organizations will continue to engage health systems and obtain stakeholder feedback on evidence-based strategies to reduce unnecessary C-sections as an opportunity for quality improvement.

About 4 million babies are born each year in the United States, with Florida accounting for about 5.5 percent of all U.S. births (222,000 babies per year). Florida’s C-section rate for 2018 is 36.8 percent, down from 37.2 percent in 2017, but higher than the Healthy People 2020 target goal of 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 19 hospitals that made the Florida recommended C-section rate award list accounted for 17 percent of the 114 delivery hospitals in Florida.

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