

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: [INSERT NAME, PHONE, FACILITY NAME]

DATE

[Insert Facility] Announces Designation as Texas Ten Step Hospital

Joining [X] Birthing Facilities Across Texas, [Insert Facility] Pledges Commitment to Improve Maternity Care and Breastfeeding Support

[INSERT CITY] – [FACILITY NAME] is honored to announce our recent designation by Texas Health and Human Services as a Texas Ten Step (TTS) facility – an important milestone in Texas’ statewide commitment to improving maternity care and optimal breastfeeding support for new moms and their babies.

[INSERT FACILITY] is currently implementing steps that improve breastfeeding support, most notably: [INSERT EXAMPLES SUCH AS: facilitating early skin-to-skin, babies rooming-in with their mother, training staff on breastfeeding management, etc.]. Our new Texas Ten Step designation and the evidence-based practices we follow illustrate our continued commitment to our patients.

As part of the TTS program, [INSERT FACILITY’S name] aligns with the World Health Organization and UNICEF’s Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding, an initiative that supports moms and their babies with breastfeeding initiation, breastfeeding exclusivity for a minimum of six months, and the continuation of breastfeeding for a year or beyond. Studies have found that when mothers experience Ten Step practices in the birthing facility, they are more likely to reach their goals of exclusive breastfeeding.

In Texas, 86 percent of new moms choose to breastfeed in the hospital, but only 24 percent continue to exclusively breastfeed until their baby is six months of age. The TTS program works with birthing facilities to develop environments where policies and practices support mothers’ informed infant feeding decisions. Improving maternity practices is also particularly important for families who are most vulnerable to poor health outcomes.

While health disparities have an impact on racial and ethnic groups and those living in low-income and rural communities, breastfeeding can serve as an equalizer to ensure every baby gets a healthy start. Research indicates that when the Ten Steps are followed, racial disparities in breastfeeding initiation are reduced.

Breastfeeding provides health benefits for baby, such as reduced risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC), ear infections, stomach-related infections, asthma and childhood obesity. In addition to health impacts, breastfeeding a baby for one year could save a family between \$900 and \$2,000 in annual health care and formula expenses.

“Expectant mothers look to our health care system to help them grow their families and care for their new babies,” says [INSERT NAME, TITLE]. “It is up to our industry to provide maternity care that supports, protects, and promotes breastfeeding to our newest Texans — and puts them at the forefront of our care.”

For information on the Texas Ten Step designation, call [local contact or program application contact].

For more information on the Texas Ten Step program, visit texastenstep.org.