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SAINT FRANCIS RECOGNIZED FOR *IBCLC CARE AWARD*
One of Five Hospitals in State to be Recognized

(Hartford, CT, August 22, 2013) — The International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners® (IBLCE®) and International Lactation Consultant Association® (ILCA®) have recognized Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center for excellence in lactation care.

Saint Francis has received the *IBCLC Care Award* in recognition for staffing professionals who hold the prestigious International Board Certified Lactation Consultant® certification (IBCLC®) and providing a lactation program that is available a minimum of five days a week for breastfeeding families. In addition, the Hospital demonstrated that it has provided recent breastfeeding training for medical staff that cares for new families, and has recently completed activities that help protect, promote, and support breastfeeding.

The Hospital, one of only five in Connecticut to receive this designation, has 10 R.N., International Board Certified Lactation Consultants on staff who are available seven days a week.

“Saint Francis is pleased to be recognized for its efforts to provide breastfeeding mothers support prenatally, during their hospital stay and beyond discharge,” said Laura Bailey, Executive Director, Women and Infants. “Our nurses, doctors, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, and midwives have had extensive breastfeeding instruction to provide the most up-to-date, evidenced-based education to families.”

Breastfeeding support and education begins prenatally in doctors’ offices, prenatal clinics, and by attending a free breastfeeding class. Following delivery the Women and Infants division promotes, initiates and protects breastfeeding. Labor and Delivery staff begins with the baby and mother skin-to-skin for warmth, bonding and the first step in their breastfeeding experience. Following discharge, community support continues. The Lactation Consultants facilitate an outpatient Breastfeeding Support Group; provide phone consultations via a “warm-line”; and collaborate with Peer Counselors, Nurturing Families, and WIC.

According to Liz Brooks, President of ILCA, “This recognition highlights the efforts being made by maternity facilities all across the world to help mothers get off to a good start with breastfeeding, and to support them in reaching their goals. IBCLC is the only internationally recognized lactation certification in the world, and IBCLC certificants are highly skilled in helping mothers with the questions and concerns that can arise. They are also an

important part of the overall maternal and child health team by assuring that evidence-based policies and practices are in place that help mothers succeed with breastfeeding.”

Rebecca Mannel, Chair of IBLCE, echoes those sentiments. “Facilities that receive the IBCLC Care Award are to be commended for improving maternal and child health by making breastfeeding a priority and for taking steps to improve breastfeeding support. An important part of providing excellent breastfeeding care is having expert assistance available when the breastfeeding couplet needs it. IBCLC professionals are the health care professionals best suited to provide this help and often make the difference between success and failure for women achieving their breastfeeding goals.”

IBLCE certificants focus on preventive care, so they are available during pregnancy to assess the mother and provide information on how to successfully initiate breastfeeding. They continue that assistance after the baby is born by helping mothers overcome breastfeeding challenges, providing accurate information, and continuing to support them as their baby grows. They assist mothers returning to work or school, help mothers in more unusual situations such as breastfeeding more than one baby or nursing a sick or premature infant, and help train nursing staff to manage basic breastfeeding care.

As allied health care professionals with the *only* internationally recognized certification for professional lactation services, IBCLC professionals work in hospitals, clinics, public health agencies, private practice, community settings, government agencies, and in research. There are currently more than 26,000 such professionals in 94 countries worldwide that are certified by the International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners® (www.iblce.org), a program accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). NCCA accreditation represents a mark of quality for certification programs.

Brooks says that “Breastfeeding rates are on the rise today and with that dramatic increase the need for trained professionals who can help also increases. Breastfeeding is natural and often works quite well without intervention. But there can be complications or risk factors and mothers need extra support. An IBCLC is the trained expert who knows how to work with the entire health care team so that a mother’s breastfeeding goals can be met.”

In addition to finding IBCLC professionals at Saint Francis, mothers can also find an IBCLC near them by visiting the ILCA website at www.ilca.org. Follow the “Find a Lactation Consultant” link and search for an IBCLC by postal code, city and state, or country.

About Saint Francis *Care*

Saint Francis *Care* is an integrated healthcare delivery system established by Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center, an anchor institution in north central Connecticut since 1897. Licensed for 617 beds and 65 bassinets, it is a major teaching hospital and the largest Catholic hospital in New England. Other major entities of Saint Francis *Care* include The Mount Sinai Rehabilitation Hospital, the Connecticut Joint Replacement Institute, the Hoffman Heart and Vascular Institute of Connecticut, the Saint Francis/Mount Sinai Regional Cancer Center, the Joyce D. and Andrew J. Mandell Center for Comprehensive Multiple Sclerosis Care and Neuroscience Research, and Saint Francis Health*Care* Partners. Johnson Memorial Medical Center, parent organization of Johnson Memorial Hospital, Evergreen Health Care Center, and Home and Community Health Services is also a Saint Francis *Care* Partner. Saint Francis *Care*’s

services are supported by a network of five major Access Centers and eight additional medical office centers sited throughout the region. For more information, visit www.stfranciscare.com.