

January 13, 2016

THREE LAKE COUNTY HOSPITALS ON THEIR WAY TO BECOMING “BABY FRIENDLY”



Contact:

Noelda Lopez, Public Information Specialist

Noelda.Lopez@flhealth.gov

Office: 352-589-6424, After Hours: 352-728-7662

Lake County – The Florida Department of Health in Lake County is very excited to announce that we are working with three (3) local birthing hospitals to integrate the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding into their maternity care practices which can lead to “Baby Friendly” hospital designation or the “Florida Quest for Quality in Maternity Care Award”. The goal of this project is to enhance hospital maternity care practices that support and promote breastfeeding

The Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative is a global program launched by the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children’s Fund to encourage and recognize hospitals and birthing facilities that offer the finest care for infant feeding and mother/baby bonding. Twenty-seven hospitals in Florida received \$10,000 mini-grants to obtain assistance needed to successfully implement the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding. Three of those hospitals were here in Lake County. The three participating hospitals are Florida Hospital Waterman, Leesburg Regional Medical Center, and South Lake Hospital.

The Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding that the hospitals must follow are:

1. Have a written breastfeeding policy that is routinely communicated to all health care staff.
2. Train all health care staff in skills necessary to implement this policy.
3. Inform all pregnant women about the benefits and management of breastfeeding.
4. Help mothers initiate breastfeeding within one hour of birth.
5. Show mothers how to breastfeed and how to maintain lactation even if they should be separated from their infants.
6. Give newborn infants no food or drink other than breast milk, unless *medically* indicated.
7. Practice rooming in allowing mother and infants to remain together 24 hours a day.
8. Encourage breastfeeding on demand.
9. Give no artificial nipples or pacifiers to breastfeeding infants.
10. Foster the establishment of breastfeeding support groups and refer mothers to them on discharge from the hospital or clinic.

“It has been a very rewarding experience working with these hospitals. I have been impressed by the level of commitment and dedication that the nursing staff has shown towards helping breastfeeding babies and mothers” said Mary Stickney, Florida Department of Health in Lake County WIC Director.

To learn more about the department's effort to support the Baby-Friendly Initiative visit www.healthiestweithflorida.com/activities/baby-steps.html. For more information on the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative, visit www.babyfriendlyusa.org/about-us.

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