



Salina Regional
Health Center

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Salina Regional Health Center Recognized for Higher Quality and Cost-Efficiency in Maternity Care

(January 25, 2024) – Salina Regional Health Center is proud to be recognized by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas (BCBSKS) with a Blue Distinction® Centers+ (BDC+) for Maternity Care designation, as part of the [Blue Distinction Specialty Care program](#). To earn this designation, each facility must deliver quality care, safely and cost-effectively.

“Salina Regional Health Center is committed to providing a high level of care and value to all of our patients,” said Robert Freelove, MD, senior vice president/chief medical officer at Salina Regional. “We are proud to receive this designation recognizing the work all staff and physicians put into ensuring an exceptional family-centered experience in our Mother-Baby unit. Achieving Blue Distinction Centers+ in Maternity Care confirms that new and expanding families will get safe, high-quality and affordable care at SRHC.”

The Blue Distinction Centers for Maternity Care program plays a key role in the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association’s (BCBSA) [National Health Equity Strategy](#) aimed at reducing racial health disparities across the care spectrum and improving patient outcomes for all Americans. To align with this strategy, the Blue Distinction Centers for Maternity Care program enhanced its quality and measurement standards to recognize higher-quality facilities that have taken action to respond effectively to obstetric emergencies, reduce racial disparities, and improve maternal health outcomes.

Based on data from the current designation cycle, facilities designated under the Blue Distinction Centers for Maternity Care program demonstrate higher-quality care compared to non-Blue Distinction Center facilities, with overall average rates of 26% lower episiotomies, 60% fewer elective deliveries and

17% lower cesarean births—all of which point to healthier outcomes for patients. BDC+ designated facilities also exhibited an average savings of 21% for maternity care.

"The provider and patient experience is powerful and we are proud that Salina Regional Health Center has put in the work to ensure their patients have this level of care," said Matt All, President/CEO, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas. "Each facility recognized as a Blue Distinction Center is meeting rigorous quality metrics in all phases of their maternity care programs and, in doing so, delivering better care for our members and all Kansans."

The Blue Distinction Centers for Maternity Care program's selection criteria was devised to close clinical care gaps and reduce inequities that persist throughout the maternal care spectrum. The selection criteria includes components of BCBSA's [Maternal Health Equity Actions](#), which dismantle the cultural, operational and structural barriers that have created inequities that persist in maternal care.

To be designated under this program, each applicant facility was evaluated on a combination of objective data on patient outcomes as well as the practices implemented to reduce racial disparities and improve maternal health outcomes, such as:

- Using evidence-based best practices to respond effectively to obstetric emergencies
- Offering unconscious bias training
- Participating in the regional Perinatal Quality Collaborative
- Having doula support available on the maternity care team
- Collecting race, ethnicity and language data
- Having a program dedicated to quality improvements in maternal care
- Running drills and simulations so that providers are prepared to deal with a range of obstetric emergencies
- Demonstrating health outcomes that exceed the selection criteria from our program's previous evaluation cycle

Since 2006, the [Blue Distinction Specialty Care program](#) has helped patients find quality specialty care at lower costs in the areas of bariatric surgery, cancer care, cardiac care, cellular immunotherapy, fertility care, gene therapy, knee and hip replacement, maternity care, spine surgery, substance use treatment and recovery, and transplants, while encouraging health care professionals to improve the care they deliver.

For more information about the program and for a complete listing of the designated providers, visit www.bcbs.com/bluedistinction.

About Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas

For more than 80 years, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas has built a reputation of trust with its members and contracting providers by providing outstanding customer service while quickly and accurately processing claims; fairly administering benefit plans and contracts; offering programs, services and tools to help members improve or maintain their health; and operating under the highest ethical standards while being good stewards of premium dollars. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association and is the state's largest insurer, serving all Kansas counties except Johnson and Wyandotte. For more information, visit bcbsks.com.

About the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association

The Blue Cross Blue Shield Association is a national federation of independent, community-based and locally operated Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies that collectively provide health care coverage for one in three Americans. BCBSA provides health care insights through [The Health of America Report](#) series and the national BCBS Health IndexSM. For more information on BCBSA and its member companies, please visit bcbs.com.

About Blue Distinction Centers

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 noncovered charges or other losses or damages resulting from Blue Distinction or other provider finder information or care received from Blue Distinction or other providers.

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