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### **Licking Memorial Hospital Earns Baby-Friendly Designation**

Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) has received prestigious international recognition as a Baby-Friendly Designated birth facility. Baby-Friendly USA, Inc. is the U.S. authority for the implementation of the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI), a global program sponsored by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF). The initiative encourages and recognizes hospitals and birthing centers that offer an optimal level of care for breastfeeding mothers and their babies. The criteria are challenging, designed to set the standards for the best possible breastfeeding support for mother and infant in the maternity setting. Based on the *Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding*, this award recognizes birth facilities that offer breastfeeding mothers the information, confidence and skills needed to successfully initiate and continue breastfeeding their babies.

“We are proud to become the first Baby-Friendly community hospital in Central Ohio and one of only 10 hospitals in the state,” commented Rob Montagnese, CEO & President of Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS). “The Baby-Friendly Hospital designation is a respected recognition of a hospital’s success in achieving a high standard of maternity care and meeting best practices for infant nutrition,” he continued. “The entire staff has shown a collaborative effort in earning this designation and we are appreciative of their cooperation for the benefit of our patients.”

Currently there are 379 active Baby-Friendly hospitals and birth centers in the United States and more than 20,000 designated Baby-Friendly hospitals and birth centers worldwide. The Baby-Friendly designation is awarded after completion of a rigorous on-site survey. The award is maintained by a continued demonstration of quality processes.

*Licking Memorial Hospital has served the medical needs of Licking County residents since it was founded in 1898. The 227-bed facility employs approximately 1,900 staff members to meet the healthcare needs of the community. Licking Memorial Hospital is proud to have been named to Truven Health Analytics’ national list of 100 Top Hospitals a total of 12 times. For more information, visit [www.LMHealth.org](http://www.LMHealth.org).*

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