



BlueDistinction®  
Specialty Care



March 20, 2018

For Immediate Release

**Contact:** JoAnn Cavanaugh, Director Public Relations

**Office:** (716) 706-2061 | **Cell:** (716) 228-4886 | **Email:** [icav@CHSBuffalo.org](mailto:icav@CHSBuffalo.org)

## Catholic Health Hospitals Recognized for High Quality Maternity Care

*Mercy Hospital and Sisters Hospital Receive National Designation as Blue Distinction Centers®*

**Buffalo, NY** – Catholic Health’s Sisters of Charity Hospital and Mercy Hospital of Buffalo have been named Blue Distinction® Centers for Maternity Care as part of BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York’s Blue Distinction Specialty Care program.

This designation recognizes birthing centers that deliver quality specialty care safely and effectively, based on objective, transparent measures of patient safety and health outcomes that were developed with input from the medical community. In addition to labor and delivery services and perinatal testing, the birth center at Sisters Hospital includes a Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), while the center at Mercy Hospital includes a Level II NICU.

Nearly four million babies are born in the U.S. annually, making childbirth the most common cause of hospitalization, and cesarean sections the most common operating room procedures, according to National Centers for Health Statistics and the Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality (AHRQ). In 2017, more than 6,000 babies were delivered in Catholic Health, with Sisters Hospital delivering more babies than any other hospital west of Syracuse.

“There is a reason more families deliver their babies at Catholic Health than any other local provider,” said Aimee Gomlak, Vice President of Women’s Services for the Buffalo-based health system. “It’s about the quality and safety of the care provided by our skilled and caring doctors, nurses, midwives, and support staff; and the specialized services we offer – all of which go into being named a Blue Distinction® Center for Maternity Care.”

The Blue Distinction Centers for Maternity Care program evaluates hospitals on quality measures for vaginal and cesarean delivery. “We are pleased that Catholic Health’s Mercy Hospital and Sisters Hospital have been recognized for their maternity care,” said Dr. Thomas Schenk, Senior Vice President and Chief Medical Officer, BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York. “Having these nationally recognized centers in our BlueCross BlueShield network ensures the members we serve have access to high quality care.”

Blue Cross and Blue Shield (BCBS) companies across the nation have recognized more than 1,000 hospitals as Blue Distinction Centers for Maternity Care. Hospitals recognized with this designation are assessed using a combination of quality information supplied by hospitals and cost measures derived from BCBS companies’ medical claims.

- more -

Since 2006, the Blue Distinction Specialty Care program has helped patients find quality specialty care in the areas of bariatric surgery, cancer care, cardiac care, maternity care, knee and hip replacements, spine surgery and transplants, while encouraging health care professionals to improve the care they deliver. Research shows that, compared to other hospitals, those designated as Blue Distinction Centers demonstrate better quality and improved outcomes for patients.

For more information about the program and for a complete listing of the designated facilities, please visit [www.bcbs.com/bluedistinction](http://www.bcbs.com/bluedistinction).

# # #

### ***About Catholic Health***

From delivering more babies than any other provider in the region; to offering the area's widest network of comprehensive cardiac, stroke, and orthopedic services; to providing a broad range of services for aging seniors; Catholic Health cares for hundreds of thousands of Western New Yorkers at dozens of locations throughout Erie and Niagara counties. Its healthcare network includes Kenmore Mercy Hospital, Mercy Hospital of Buffalo, Mount St. Mary's Hospital, and Sisters of Charity Hospital and its St. Joseph Campus; along with a complete continuum of Home & Community Based Care services, including skilled nursing and subacute rehab facilities, home care agencies, and diagnostic and treatment centers. For more information, visit [www.chsbuffalo.org](http://www.chsbuffalo.org).

### ***About BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York***

BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York is a division of HealthNow New York Inc., an independent licensee of the BlueCross BlueShield Association. Since 1936, BlueCross BlueShield has helped millions of people lead healthier lives. BlueCross BlueShield offers a full range of insured, self-insured, and government programs and services covering businesses, families, and individuals, as well as dental and vision plans and stop loss coverage. As a community-based, not-for-profit health plan, BlueCross BlueShield contributes significantly to organizations that strengthen and enrich the health of our community. For up-to-date news, facts, and information about the company, leadership, and industry, please visit the BlueCross BlueShield News Center at [bcbswny.com/news](http://bcbswny.com/news) or follow us on Twitter.

### ***About the BlueCross BlueShield Association***

The BlueCross BlueShield Association (BCBSA) is a national federation of 36 independent, community-based, and locally operated BlueCross and BlueShield 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 Index. For more information on the BCBSA and its member companies, please visit [bcbs.com](http://bcbs.com). We also encourage you to connect with us on [Facebook](#), check out our videos on [YouTube](#), follow us on [Twitter](#), and visit our [blog](#).

### ***About Blue Distinction Centers***

Blue Distinction Centers (BDC) met overall quality measures for patient safety and outcomes, 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 health care. 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 [bcbs.com](http://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 the BlueCross BlueShield Association nor any Blue Plans are responsible for non-covered charges or other losses or damages resulting from Blue Distinction or other provider finder information or care received from Blue Distinction or other providers.