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## **ANTELOPE VALLEY HOSPITAL RECEIVES BABY-FRIENDLY DESIGNATION**

(LANCASTER, CA – April 23, 2015) – Baby-Friendly USA, Inc., the accrediting body of the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) in the United States, has designated Antelope Valley Hospital (AVH) as a Baby-Friendly birth facility. This prestigious designation means that AVH has met the gold standard in maternity care operations. Currently there are 256 active Baby-Friendly hospitals and birth centers in the United States.

The BFHI is a global program that was launched by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in 1991 to encourage and recognize hospitals and birthing centers that offer an optimal level of care for infant feeding and mother/baby bonding. It recognizes and awards birthing facilities who successfully implement the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding and the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes. The BFHI assists hospitals in giving all mothers the information, confidence and skills necessary to successfully initiate and continue breastfeeding their babies or feeding formula safely, and gives special recognition to hospitals that have done so. The "Baby-Friendly" designation is based on a rigorous on-site survey and must be maintained by following specific quality processes.

"I am so proud of the progress made over the last two and a half years and the hard work of our staff at the Women and Infants Pavilion, OB clinics and pediatrics unit in implementing the 10-Steps to Successful Breastfeeding," said AVH CEO Dennis Knox. "We are proud to have attained the Baby-Friendly designation, which is aimed at improving the health and well-being of mothers and babies in our community."

To prepare the hospital for the designation process, AVH participated in the Best Fed Beginnings initiative, which is a program of the National Institute for Children's Health Quality and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Best Fed Beginnings was a first-of-its-

kind, nationwide quality improvement initiative to help a select group of 89 hospitals across the country improve maternity care and increase the number of Baby-Friendly designated hospitals in the United States.

“Aligning our policies and practices with the World Health Organization’s Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative was an essential element for moving toward a maternity care system that women and families deserve,” said Andrea Randenberg, director of AVH’s Women, Infant, and Pediatric Services. “Promoting and supporting exclusive breastfeeding is central to our vision for a high-quality, high-value maternity care system at AVH.”

### **About Antelope Valley Hospital**

Celebrating 60 years of caring for the community, Antelope Valley Hospital is located in the city of Lancaster in northern Los Angeles County. The 420-bed district hospital is a Level II trauma center and provides a full array of medical/surgical services, pediatric treatment, NICU, mental health, cancer care and more. More information is available at [www.avhospital.org](http://www.avhospital.org) or by calling 661-949-5000.

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