

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 18, 2017

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**KDHE honors area hospitals
*Mercy Hospital in Ft. Scott and Susan B. Allen Memorial Hospital in El Dorado
honored for decreasing early elective delivery rate***

TOPEKA, Kan. – The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) recognizes Mercy Hospital in Ft. Scott and Susan B. Allen Memorial Hospital in El Dorado for achieving a less than five percent early elective delivery birth rate. In 2013, the Kansas early elective delivery birth rate was eight percent. KDHE, in collaboration with the March of Dimes, the Kansas Hospital Association and the Kansas Healthcare Collaborative, began work toward eliminating early elective delivery (EED).

Babies that undergo an EED are delivered before 39 weeks gestation without a medical reason. This puts them at risk of immediate life-threatening health problems, long-term complications and developmental delay. Preterm birth is the lead cause of infant death and childhood disability.

Together the collaboration encouraged Kansas birthing hospitals to adopt practices allowing babies to reach 39 weeks. KDHE is proud to report that in 2015 the statewide EED rate was two percent. The March of Dimes created a national banner recognition program to recognize hospitals that have achieved an EED rate of less than five percent. KDHE supports this recognition program and congratulates Mercy Hospital and Susan B. Allen Memorial Hospital as the first of 32 approved hospitals in the state to receive this banner of recognition.

"I applaud the health leaders across Kansas who worked together to lower the early elective delivery rate in our state", said KDHE Secretary Susan Mosier, MD, MBA, FACS. "This initiative demonstrates the great results we can achieve through collaborative partnerships. I look forward to further collaborations in the future to drive improved health for Kansans."

"Our OB girls were elated." Brenda Stokes of Mercy Hospital in Fort Scott shared. "When I walked down the hall with the banner still rolled up, they jumped out from behind the desk asking if that was their banner. They are proud of their accomplishment." When asked how Ft. Scott lowered their EED rate, Stokes said bringing it to the forefront and tracking it was key. Her advice to other hospitals working towards a lower rate is to partner with providers and help them document exclusions.

The banner was hung near the cafeteria following a small internal celebration a couple weeks ago. Stokes said having the banner where patients will see it will help them ask the right questions during their appointments.

If hospitals would like to apply for the banner recognition program [click here](#) for more information.

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KDHE's mission is to protect and improve the health and environment of all Kansans.