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Highland District Hospital Recognized by Ohio First Steps for Healthy Babies

Hillsboro, Ohio- February 26, 2020- Highland District Hospital, along with other maternity centers in Ohio, is taking steps to promote its support of successful breastfeeding. The *Ohio First Steps for Healthy Babies* is a voluntary breastfeeding designation program through the Ohio Hospital Association and Ohio Department of Health that recognizes maternity centers in Ohio for taking steps to promote, protect, and support breastfeeding in their organization. A star is awarded for every two steps achieved in the *Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding*, as defined by the World Health Organization and Baby-Friendly USA. The initiative encourages maternity centers across the state to promote and support breastfeeding one step at a time. Highland District Hospital has been given the distinct honor of recognition as a Four Star Hospital in this initiative.

To participate with the program, Highland District Hospital is providing information and hospital practices supportive of breastfeeding and the *Ohio First Steps for Healthy Babies* program to its community. These resources are available at <https://www.ohiohospitals.org/ohiofirststeps>.

“It is our hope that *Ohio First Steps for Healthy Babies* will prompt our leaders and employees to have thoughtful conversations in the hospitals about the benefits of breastfeeding in order to educate patients and the community,” said Courtney Gallimore, Registered Nurse and Highland District Hospital Obstetrics Manager. “The support a new mother receives from hospital employees and leaders can impact her decision to breastfeed. Increasing the number of breastfed newborns can lead to a decrease in the likelihood for future health conditions for the child such as asthma, diabetes and obesity.”

For more information about *Ohio First Steps for Healthy Babies*, please visit, <http://ohiohospitals.org/ohiofirststeps>

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