



## **HHC Lincoln Medical Center First Bronx Hospital to be Named “Baby-Friendly” by the World Health Organization**

*Recognized by WHO for promoting breastfeeding and improving maternal and infant health*

(Bronx, New York – March 12, 2015) [The New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation](#) (HHC) announced today that [HHC Lincoln Medical Center](#) has become the first hospital in the Bronx to be designated “Baby-Friendly” as part of the global hospital initiative sponsored by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) to promote maternal and infant health.

The [Baby-Friendly](#) initiative encourages hospitals and birthing centers to offer an optimal level of care for breastfeeding mothers and their babies. It distinguishes birth facilities worldwide that offer mothers the information, confidence and skills needed to successfully initiate and continue breastfeeding their babies. The prestigious “Baby-Friendly” designation is given only after a rigorous on-site survey is completed, and is then reviewed every five years.

“Promoting the benefits of breastfeeding and supporting mothers in breastfeeding is a key focus at Lincoln,” said Milton Nunez, Executive Director of HHC Lincoln Medical Center. “The Baby-Friendly designation demonstrates our strong commitment to the best possible breastfeeding support for mothers, infants, and their families. We are extremely proud of the collective work of our staff in achieving this prestigious recognition, and for the benefits it represents for the Bronx.”

“Lincoln has set the Bronx standard in supporting and maintaining excellence in maternity and neonatal care,” said Shefali Khanna, MD, Chair of Lincoln’s Department of Pediatrics. “Studies have shown that breastfeeding provides health benefits to both mother and baby. Breastfed newborns are at lower risk of ear and respiratory infections, diabetes and obesity. Breastfeeding mothers have lower risks for breast and ovarian cancers, diabetes and

postpartum depression. The Bronx has very high levels of obesity, asthma and diabetes, which are all illnesses that are less likely to occur in breastfeeding families.”

Lincoln had 2,267 births in 2014. Of those, 93 percent of the mothers initiated breastfeeding, demonstrating the strong desire to provide optimal feeding for their newborns. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s “[2014 Breastfeeding Report Card](#),” only about 80 percent of infants born in 2011 in New York State were ever breastfed, with only 55.8 percent still being breastfed at the age of six months.

HHC Lincoln has recently made several improvements to enhance services and care for pregnant women and babies. In 2009, a new and expanded Labor and Delivery Suite was opened, which included the modernization of the adjacent postpartum, neonatal and nursery units. The Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) built a breast milk pumping room for mothers with newborns, and a Breastfeeding Team was developed that now totals seven Lincoln nurses.

In 2013, Lincoln updated its procedures to ensure that mothers and their newborns would not be separated after birth unless there was a medical necessity. The Lincoln Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program also built a lactation room where mothers can express breast milk and meet with a Breastfeeding Peer Counselor. Lincoln and the Lincoln WIC Program cosponsor a monthly Breastfeeding Club for group support.

And in 2014, Lincoln received the [International Board Certified Lactation Consultant \(IBCLC\) Care Award](#) for its dedication to breastfeeding and for excellence in lactation care.

“We have created a sustainable environment which promotes, protects and supports breastfeeding and encourages maternal-infant bonding by following the 10 steps to successful breastfeeding,” stated Carl Kirton, DNP, RN, MBA and Chief Nurse Executive at Lincoln. “The effect of maternity care practices on breastfeeding has shown that the more steps a mother experiences in the hospital, the greater the likelihood she will continue to breastfeed. Lincoln Medical Center has worked to remove barriers to successful breastfeeding so that all newborns, including formula fed babies, have optimal feeding outcomes and bonding with their mothers.”

Lincoln patient Fatoumata Ouedraogo, who recently delivered her son Achraf at the hospital, breastfeeds thanks to support from Lincoln staff. “It is important for my baby and for me. It protects us both and attaches the mother and baby to each other. It makes the baby intelligent. He can breastfeed for as long as he wants,” she said.

When it was time for Dianna Owens to have Langston, the youngest of her six children, she returned to Lincoln. “I would not breastfeed were it not for Lincoln Hospital because I did not come from a family that breastfed. But I had such a good experience that I came back. Staff

encourages mothers to nurse their babies. Doctors here incorporate breastfeeding in their plan. Breastfeeding is easy, it is natural and it is not expensive. Breast milk is made for the baby. I hope to breastfeed Langston at least a year.”

### **Baby-Friendly USA’s “Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding”**

1. Have a written breastfeeding policy that is routinely communicated to all health care staff.
2. Train all health care staff in the skills necessary to implement this policy.
3. Inform all pregnant women about the benefits and management of breastfeeding.
4. Help mothers initiate breastfeeding within one hour of birth.
5. Show mothers how to breastfeed and how to maintain lactation, even if they are separated from their infants.
6. Give infants no food or drink other than breast-milk, unless medically indicated.
7. Practice rooming in – allow mothers and infants to remain together 24 hours a day.
8. Encourage breastfeeding on demand.
9. Give no pacifiers or artificial nipples to breastfeeding infants.
10. Foster the establishment of breastfeeding support groups and refer mothers to them on discharge from the hospital or birth center.

Lincoln becomes the third HHC facility – along with Harlem Hospital Center in Manhattan and Queens Hospital Center in Queens – and just the fourth in New York City to achieve Baby-Friendly designation. There are 240 hospitals and birthing centers that have been designated as Baby-Friendly throughout the United States.

###

### **About Lincoln Medical Center**

Lincoln Medical Center, located at 234 East 149th Street in the Bronx, is a 362-bed, Acute Care Level 1 Trauma Center with the busiest single site emergency department in the region. Winner of the 2012 American Hospital Association-McKesson Quest for Quality Finalist Award, and 2013 recognition as a “Top Performer on Key Quality Measures” by The Joint Commission, the hospital emphasizes primary care and specialty medicine and uses the latest advances in medical science. Lincoln Medical Center is a member of the Generations+/Northern Manhattan Health Network, a healthcare conglomerate which is part of the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation (HHC).

## **About HHC**

The New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation (HHC) is a \$6.7 billion integrated healthcare delivery system and the largest municipal healthcare organization in the country. Its own health plan, Metroplus, is a plan of choice for nearly half a million New Yorkers. HHC serves 1.4 million New York City residents every year, of which more than 475,000 are uninsured. HHC provides medical, mental health and substance abuse services through its 11 acute care hospitals, five skilled nursing facilities, six large diagnostic and treatment centers and more than 70 community based clinics. HHC Health and Home Care also provides in-home services for New Yorkers. HHC is the recipient of the National Quality Forum and The Joint Commission's John M. Eisenberg Award for Innovation in Patient Safety and Quality. For more information, visit [www.nyc.gov/hhc](http://www.nyc.gov/hhc) or find us on [facebook.com/nycHHC](https://facebook.com/nycHHC) or [twitter.com/HHCnyc](https://twitter.com/HHCnyc).