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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Tri-City Medical Center Recognized for Reducing Unnecessary Caesarean Births**

*Smart Care California's C-section 2017 Honor Roll names Tri-City Medical Center*

OCEANSIDE, Calif. – Tri-City Medical Center was named to Smart Care California's C-section 2017 Honor Roll for exceeding a federal government target aimed at reducing Cesarean births, commonly known as C-sections, for first-time mothers with low-risk pregnancies.

The California Health and Human Services Agency identified 111 California hospitals, including just four in San Diego County, that met or exceeded the federal target which was set by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The federal goal is 23.9 percent with Tri-City Medical Center achieving a rate of 22.7 percent in 2016, down from 24.7 percent in 2015.

The reduction in C-sections at Tri-City Medical Center is the result of several key factors. First among them is the collaboration between nurses and physicians to achieve the reduction. The labor and delivery program has also been targeting a reduction in the number of babies born before 39 weeks of gestation as well as a reduction in induced labors.

“When you decrease C-sections, delay delivery until after 39 weeks and let labor happen naturally, you improve health outcomes for the mother and the baby,” said Dr. Sandra Lopez, MD, an obstetrics doctor at Tri-City Medical Center. “Inducing labor can lead to a C-section and a C-section can lead to complications for the mother. Babies born under 39 weeks are also more likely to need admission to the NICU. In the majority of first-time, low risk pregnancies, it's preferable to allow labor to occur naturally.”

In a [news release](#), the state HHS agency reported: “While life-saving in some circumstances, unnecessary C-sections can pose serious risks to mothers—higher rates of hemorrhage, transfusions, infection and blood clots—and babies—higher rates of infection, respiratory complications and neonatal intensive care unit stays.

“Evidence suggests that a woman's chance of having a C-section largely depends on where she delivers and the practice pattern of her physician and clinical team. Even for low-risk, first-birth pregnancies, huge variation

exists in hospital C-section rates. Rates in California hospitals range from less than 15 percent to more than 60 percent. Experts find that variation of this magnitude is a signal of a problem that needs to be addressed.”

Smart Care California is a public-private partnership working to promote safe, affordable health care in California. The group currently focuses on three issues: C-sections, opioids and low back pain. Collectively, Smart Care California participants purchase or manage care for more than 16 million Californians—or 40 percent of the state. Smart Care California is co-chaired by the state’s leading health care purchasers: DHCS, which administers MediCal; Covered California, the state’s health insurance marketplace; and CalPERS, which manages pension and health benefits for California’s public employees, retirees, and their families. IHA convenes and coordinates the partnership with funding from the California Health Care Foundation. Learn more about Smart Care California at <http://www.iha.org/our-work/insights/smart-care-california>.

### **About Tri-City Medical Center**

Tri-City Medical Center has served its community for over 50 years and is a 388-bed full service, acute-care hospital in Oceanside, Calif., with a primary care clinic and over 700 physicians practicing in 60 specialties. Its Gold Seal of Approval® from the Joint Commission recognizes its commitment to safe and effective patient care for the residents of the community it serves. It operates the only Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) in North County as well as an Orthopedic & Spine Institute, a Cardiovascular Health Institute and a Neuroscience Institute along with the Tri-City Wellness Center in Carlsbad, Calif., recognized as one of the best wellness centers in San Diego County. It also specializes in women’s health, robotic surgery, cancer and emergency care. For more information about Tri-City Medical Center and Tri-City Healthcare District, please visit [www.tricitymed.org](http://www.tricitymed.org).

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