

CHANGES IN OB SERVICES AT MEMORIAL HOSPITAL OF LAFAYETTE COUNTY

Darlington, Wisconsin (April, 2015)

Beginning September 30, 2015, Memorial Hospital of Lafayette County (MHLC) will no longer provide labor and delivery services. The decision was made after carefully considering the current obstetric volumes at MHLC, economic costs of continuing the services, ensuring the highest level of patient care and a comprehensive study of state and national trends for critical access hospitals with low birth rates.

“This is a very hard decision to make” says Julie Chikowski, MHLC CEO. “However, we have to face the reality that we, like many others who have chosen this path (19 CAH’s in the state of Wisconsin no longer deliver babies) live in a county with an aging population and too few births to ensure safe, quality outcomes for our patients. As a smaller hospital and clinic we need to focus our resources to meet the needs of our community.”

“Our patients’ safety is our number one priority and it is difficult for caregivers to maintain the necessary skills and experience into the future when there are so few births “says Kathy Ruef, DON/COO, MHLC.

Expecting mothers with due dates prior to September 30, 2015 – who already have an established Doctor / patient relationship with a Family Health Clinic physician and are appropriate to deliver at a smaller hospital will be able to deliver at MHLC. Others may continue prenatal care at Family Health until closer to delivery. A plan for delivery at a facility of the mother’s choice will be arranged between the patient and her physician.

Newly expecting moms in the MHLC community are invited to continue seeing the excellent providers at Family Health of Lafayette County for prenatal and, after delivery at a facility of choice, return for postpartum care and well-baby/child visits.

“We realize this decision will be sad news for many in the community. We have been delivering babies for over 60 years. The MHLC emergency department physicians and nurses are trained to perform deliveries in case of an emergency and this decision was made in the best interest of our patients and our community” said Mary Roelli, Director of Emergency Services, MHLC.