



GE Healthcare

OSF St. Joseph Medical Center

Baby-Friendly designation: Our journey



OSF HealthCare is an integrated health system owned and operated by The Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis, headquartered in Peoria, Illinois. OSF HealthCare employs nearly 21,000 Mission Partners in 124 locations, including 13 hospitals, 18 urgent care locations, 11 centers for health, and two colleges of nursing throughout Illinois and Michigan.

OSF St. Joseph Medical Center—located in Bloomington, Illinois—is a 149-bed, Level II trauma center hospital with 700 deliveries per year.

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Evidence-based practices in labor and delivery

The labor, delivery, recovery, and postpartum (LDRP) unit at St. Joe's is like most obstetrics practices—everything is good until it's not. Renell Composto, birth center manager at St. Joe's, has been working hard to ensure that best practices are implemented in her unit.

In 2011, St. Joe's new unit opened with an LDRP model—where mom labors, delivers, and recovers all in the same room. This was the first step in a multifaceted approach to transform the way perinatal care was delivered to patients.

After the LDRP was established, Composto and her team began to work towards the unit's Baby-Friendly designation. A Baby-Friendly designation would certify the unit's use of evidence-based maternity care practices to support optimal infant feeding, which includes rooming-in. This third-party certification entails a rigorous, structured process that required a great deal of internal-process change management from Composto and her staff.

"Our goal is to provide education to patients from an evidence-based platform, with facts, versus our own personal beliefs about breastfeeding," says Composto. "This allows patients to make an educated decision about how they want to feed their baby."

Composto's next step was to address concerns about co-bedding and infant drops that came with the rooming-in model. A model for safe-sleep practice and avoiding infant falls needed to be established. Traditional-style bassinets were no longer meeting their needs. With support from administration, Composto replaced these bassinets with the HALO® Bassinest® swivel sleeper Hospital Series.

OSF St. Joseph Medical Center chose the HALO Bassinest because it:

- Enhances fall-prevention intervention
- Helps Improve C-section workflow
- Is ideal for rooming-in care model
- Has a height-adjustable design for beds and couches alike

After having used traditional bassinets for so long, the change to the HALO Bassinest was something the unit had to work through. The HALO Bassinest is not as narrow and since it was designed for rooming-in, it can seem bulkier. The value to moms far exceeds these minor workflow changes and made it the right choice for St. Joe's.

Since St. Joe's received their Baby-Friendly designation in early 2017, its exclusive breastfeeding rates are now around 70 percent.

What our patients are saying about the HALO Bassinest

"When we round on patients, we ask them how they like it. And we're getting rave reviews. That's because it lets our patients get closer to their babies, enabling the bond between mom and baby. In addition, it gives moms the added flexibility they need to care for their newborns without compromising comfort—especially after a C-section."

The importance of safer sleep

At St. Joseph's, moms sign a safe-sleep contract after they learn about safe sleep. Renell has also created a scoring system, based on literature, that is designed to help with staff interventions to reduce the infant-fall rate. "Safe Do's and Don'ts" signs are displayed in rooms and on the side of the HALO Bassinests. "We explain the risk of co-bedding and why they shouldn't. Now we're able to give them a tool that still allows them to be close to their baby. I must remove barriers—this product does that and parallels the initiatives that we have. It supports the practice."

St. Joe's has continued to implement other key practices, including a postpartum peer counselor and a community available via a Facebook page with close to 1000 members—all this has evolved from the Baby-Friendly initiatives. "We're proud of the fact that we have a navigation program—a single nurse through your pregnancy—we're part of your experience even after discharge. We want to take care of women all the way through. We really try to connect with women in the community for that post-partum support."

The St. Joe's LDRP unit is now working on their Safe Sleep certification, another step towards helping families by providing them tools and education.

"We have to provide the tools and resources to help our patients make informed choices. We are here to share the evidence."

Baby-Friendly certification advice:

- You can't underestimate barriers to change. Have a change-management strategy in place by getting your stakeholders on board and mitigating any barriers.
- Realize that your staff may not be ready. You have to help them understand what Baby-Friendly certification is by educating them.
- Talk to others who have gone through the certification process and can share their experience.
- Don't expect it to be easy; it won't be. Have a vision and work toward it.

"I had a vision and confidence in the direction I wanted to see us get to in terms of quality and patient experience."

Renell Composto

Birth Center Manager
OSF St. Joseph Medical Center



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Imagination at work



GE Healthcare is proud to be the exclusive distributor of the HALO Bassinest swivel sleeper Hospital Series for use in hospitals in the United States.

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