



# Indian Health Service Press Release

July 18, 2013

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## IHS hospitals designated as Baby-Friendly facilities

*Phoenix Indian Medical Center is the latest IHS facility and the first hospital in Arizona to be certified*

Two Indian Health Service (IHS) hospitals — the Claremore Indian Hospital (CIH) in Oklahoma and the Phoenix Indian Medical Center (PIMC) in Arizona — have been certified as Baby-Friendly facilities by Baby-Friendly USA, Inc. This makes a total of five IHS facilities to have received this designation.

These designations were sought as part of the IHS Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative. This initiative is part of First Lady Michelle Obama’s “Let’s Move! in Indian Country” campaign dedicated to solving childhood obesity within a generation. The IHS campaign aims to certify all IHS obstetric facilities as Baby-Friendly by the end of 2014. This initiative promotes breastfeeding to reduce the risk that children will develop obesity and diabetes in the future. Baby-Friendly hospitals offer new mothers the information, confidence, and skills they need to initiate and continue breastfeeding their babies.

The CIH and PIMC are the first hospitals in their respective states to receive this prestigious designation. Three other IHS facilities — the Quentin N. Burdick Memorial Health Care Facility, Pine Ridge Hospital, and Rosebud Indian Hospital — received their certification in December 2012 and are the only hospitals in North and South Dakota to be designated as Baby-Friendly.

“The IHS is committed to making all our obstetric hospitals Baby-Friendly,” said Dr. Yvette Roubideaux, acting director of the IHS. “We are pleased and proud that IHS hospitals are setting the standard for maternity care in so many states. Our work shows how this initiative can succeed in populations that will most benefit from the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative.”

As a result of this initiative, breastfeeding initiation rates at these five facilities are now consistently in the 90th percentile for breastfeeding, and exclusive breastfeeding rates have continued to climb.

Co-administered by the World Health Organization and the United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund, the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative is an evidence-based practice care model designed to protect and promote breastfeeding as the safest, healthiest way to nourish babies. The Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative recognizes and awards birthing facilities that successfully implement the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding.

