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When it comes to maternity care, NYHQ really delivers

by Shane Miller

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For the sixth year in a row, New York Hospital Queens (NYHQ) has been awarded the Maternity Care Excellence Award by HealthGrades.

According to HealthGrades, an independent organization that provides ratings on a variety of services for 5,000 hospitals across the U.S., NYHQ ranks among the top 10 percent in the nation when it comes to caring for mothers and newborns.

That puts NYHQ in rare company with just 149 other hospitals in the nation. And only 20 of those can boast that they have won the Maternity Care Excellence Award for six years or more running.

This doesn't just happen," said Stephen Mills, president and CEO of NYHQ, at a small ceremony in the lobby of the Flushing hospital Monday afternoon. "It's about the people involved in what can be a very dangerous, but very happy, business."

According to Brody Westcot of HealthGrades, hospitals that rank in the top 10 percent have approximately 62 percent fewer complication than hospitals that rank in the bottom 15 percent.

NYHQ deliver over 4,000 babies each year. The ranking are based on maternal complications, volume of low birth weight deliveries, and infant mortality rates, among other factors.

Dr. Gary Eglington is chairman of the Obstetrics and Gynecology Department at NYHQ. He came to the hospital in 1999, and said at the time NYHQ was a "good community hospital," but that he thought it could be so much more.

"In addition to being a hospital that serves the community, I thought we had some opportunities to really be on par with some of the major academic hospitals in Manhattan," he said.

But in the end, Eglington said the success in his department isn't about cutting-edge technology and being up on the latest medical practices, but about the people, from the doctors delivering the babies to the housekeepers cleaning the rooms.

"There is a huge team involved from the bottom up," he said. "And it's important that it's a team effort throughout the process."

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