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ICAHN Highlights Rural Hospitals Providing Labor & Delivery Services While Emphasizing Emergency Obstetric Readiness Across Illinois

PRINCETON, Ill., July 8, 2026 — As [access to maternity care continues to decline in many rural communities](#), the [Illinois Critical Access Hospital Network](#) (ICAHN) is shining a spotlight on member hospitals that continue to provide labor and delivery services while emphasizing an important message: *every* ICAHN member hospital is prepared to care for pregnant patients experiencing an obstetric emergency.

Of the 20 rural hospitals in Illinois that offer labor and delivery services, eight are ICAHN members, providing expectant families with access to prenatal care, labor and delivery, and postpartum services close to home:

- Carle Richland Memorial Hospital (Olney)
- Crawford Memorial Hospital (Robinson)
- Gibson Area Hospital & Health Services (Gibson City)
- Graham Health System (Canton)
- Jackson Memorial Hospital (Jacksonville)
- McDonough District Hospital (Macomb)
- SSM Health Good Samaritan Hospital (Mt. Vernon)
- HSHS St. Francis Hospital (Litchfield)

While these hospitals maintain dedicated labor and delivery programs, ICAHN leaders stress that the absence of a labor and delivery department does not mean a rural hospital is unprepared.

All hospital emergency department physicians, nurses, and clinical teams are trained to respond when babies arrive unexpectedly or when pregnant patients require

immediate care before transfer or delivery, or come to the hospital seeking postpartum care.

"Across rural Illinois, every minute matters during a medical emergency," said Tracy Warner, executive director of ICAHN. "We're incredibly proud of the hospitals that continue to offer labor and delivery services despite the significant financial and workforce challenges facing rural healthcare. At the same time, we want families to know that every ICAHN member hospital is prepared to provide emergency obstetric care when needed. Our hospitals train for these situations because providing safe, high-quality care close to home is at the heart of their mission."

To further strengthen emergency obstetric preparedness across rural Illinois, ICAHN has partnered with [Laerdal Medical](#) and [McDonough District Hospital](#) in Macomb to host a comprehensive four-part, hands-on simulation training series designed specifically for rural healthcare teams.

The series began this year March 10-11 with *Precipitous Delivery & Neonatal Assessment and Stabilization*, followed by *Shoulder Dystocia & Neonatal Resuscitation* on May 8-9. The third training, scheduled for Sept. 9-10, will focus on [*Precipitous Breech Delivery in the Emergency Department & Neonatal Assessment and Stabilization Simulation*](#), while the fourth and final training, Nov. 17-18, will cover *Pregnant Trauma Patient Simulation: Maternal and Fetal Assessment and Care*.

Each simulation was intentionally selected to address a different high-risk clinical scenario that rural emergency departments and healthcare teams may encounter. By exposing participants to a variety of realistic obstetric emergencies, the series enhances preparedness, improves patient safety, and supports the delivery of high-quality care during these low-volume, high-acuity events.

"Fortunately, emergency deliveries are relatively uncommon in many rural emergency departments, but that also means opportunities to be involved in high-acuity situations can be limited," Warner said. "Simulation-based education allows healthcare teams to build confidence, strengthen teamwork, and maintain critical skills so they're ready whenever these situations occur."

All four trainings feature immersive experiences with Laerdal, allowing emergency department teams to practice managing critical obstetric emergencies in a realistic, hands-on environment.

The training program is supported by the Federal Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC) State Partnership Grant and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

as part of an award totaling \$55,000, with 0% financed with non-governmental sources.

As hospitals nationwide continue to face obstetric workforce shortages and financial pressures, ICAHN remains committed to supporting rural and critical access hospitals through education, collaboration, and specialized training that helps ensure mothers and babies receive safe, timely and quality care.

About ICAHN

The Illinois Critical Access Hospital Network (ICAHN) advances the strength, sustainability, and transformation of Illinois' rural hospitals through collaboration, advocacy, and shared solutions that improve performance and community health. Representing all Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs) designated by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), ICAHN is a nationally recognized rural health leader supporting sustainable hospitals, strong communities, and a healthier rural Illinois—Better Together. Visit icahn.org or call 815.875.2999 for more information.