

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 25, 2014

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## **North County Health Services Recognized for Excellence in Lactation Care**

*NCHS earns national award for facilities, staff and community activities*

San Marcos, Calif. – June 5, 2014 –The International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners® (IBLCE®) and International Lactation Consultant Association® (ILCA®) have recognized North County Health Services for excellence in lactation care.

North County Health Services is the only community clinic in North County San Diego to have received the IBCLC Care Award in recognition for staffing professionals who hold the prestigious International Board Certified Lactation Consultant® certification (IBCLC®) and providing a lactation program that is available two to five days a week for breastfeeding families.

In addition, NCHS demonstrated that it has provided recent breastfeeding training for medical staff that care for new families, and have recently completed activities that help protect, promote, and support breastfeeding in the community.

“This recognition highlights the efforts being made by maternity facilities all across the world to help mothers get off to a good start with breastfeeding, and to support them in reaching their goals,” said Liz Brooks, president of ILCA. “IBCLC is the premiere internationally recognized lactation certification in the world, and IBCLC certificants are highly skilled in helping mothers with the questions and concerns that can arise. They are also an important part of the overall maternal and child health team by assuring that evidence-based policies and practices are in place that help mothers succeed with breastfeeding.”

IBLCE certificants focus on preventive care, so they are available during pregnancy to assess the mother and provide information on how to successfully initiate breastfeeding. They continue that assistance after the baby is born by helping mothers overcome breastfeeding challenges, providing accurate information, and continuing to support them as their baby grows. They assist mothers returning to work or school, help mothers in more unusual situations such as breastfeeding more than one baby or nursing a sick or premature infant, and help train nursing staff to manage basic breastfeeding care.

Brooks says that “Breastfeeding rates are on the rise today and with that dramatic increase, the need for trained professionals who can help also increases. Breastfeeding is natural and often works quite well without intervention. But there can be complications or risk factors and mothers need extra support. An IBCLC is the trained expert with clinical skill who works with the entire health care team so that a mother’s breastfeeding goals can be met.”

NCHS Vice President of Nutrition Services Mary Sammer said the award recognizes the years of hard work and effort by multiple departments and individuals to make breastfeeding a priority at NCHS.

"By educating providers, patients and WIC participants, as well as being committed to developing lactation experts to provide the high-quality breastfeeding services we are known for, NCHS and NCHS WIC have been

collaborating to make breastfeeding the norm for the infant's first year of life," Sammer said. "The health and emotional benefits breastfeeding provides is a gift that lasts a lifetime for both mom and baby."

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### **About North County Health Services**

North County Health Services is a private not-for-profit organization that serves over 60,000 patients annually at 10 community health centers in Carlsbad, Encinitas, Oceanside, San Marcos and Ramona, and through two mobile clinics. NCHS has been providing affordable, quality & comprehensive care to members of our north San Diego County communities who are uninsured or underinsured for over 40 years. Services at NCHS include pediatrics, obstetrics, gynecology, dental care, internal medicine, adolescent medicine, radiology, pharmacy and transportation services as well as community health outreach, prevention and disease management programs. We accept private insurances, Medi-Cal and Medicare. If you are uninsured, you may be eligible for low or no-cost programs based on your income, qualify for a discount or use our monthly payment plan.

For more information, visit [www.nchs-health.org](http://www.nchs-health.org) or call 760-736-6767.

### **About IBCLC**

As allied health care professionals with the premiere internationally recognized certification for professional lactation services, IBCLC professionals work in hospitals and birthing centers, clinics, public health agencies, private practice, community settings, government agencies, and in research. There are currently more than 26,000 such professionals in 94 countries worldwide that are certified by the International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners® ([www.iblce.org](http://www.iblce.org)), a program independently accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). NCCA accreditation represents a mark of quality for certification programs.