

CMC in Falls City to stop delivering babies

(KLZA)--Community Medical Center in Falls City has announced that effective November 1, babies will no longer be delivered at the facility.

The hospital made the announcement in a news release Thursday afternoon.

Hospital CEO Ryan Larsen said the hospital will continue to provide prenatal and postnatal care after November 1 but plan to partner with OB physicians and facilities in Hiawatha, Lincoln, St. Joseph and Omaha to handle deliveries. " Our goal for healthy mothers and babies remains the same, even if they no longer deliver here."

Larsen said local physician practices will be coordinating with expecting mothers in the next several weeks. Those with delivery dates prior to November 1 will not be impacted. For those with due dates after November 1, physician practices will discuss options. In most cases, patients can see their local physicians through at least 32 weeks of pregnancy, with the office coordinating care with the patient's preferred delivery location.

Larsen noted that the hospital's decision was not easy, taking many months of deliberation. "We have a hundred-year history of delivering babies, and our doctors and nurses have spent hundreds and thousands of hours in training to develop and maintain their obstetric skills. It was not an easy decision to reach, and I do not expect it to be an easy decision for community members to hear. That said, we are very pleased by the phenomenal support shown by area hospitals and obstetric physicians and their willingness to coordinate care and to keep patients' relationships with local practitioners intact."

Asked what led to this decision, Larsen stated, "Deciding factors included declining volumes as our county population shrinks and ages, the challenges of keeping enough hands-on experience among nurses, and concerns about maintaining ongoing surgical Caesarean coverage with a small medical staff." Larsen noted that CMC delivered 43 babies last year and was on pace to deliver around 44 in 2019.

Larsen said hospital personnel, as well as staffs at both local physician clinics, will be available to help families affected by this change.