



GUAM MEMORIAL HOSPITAL AUTHORITY

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GMHA Responds to Concerns Over Number of OB/GYN Doctors

(Friday, December 8, 2023; Tamuning, Guam) Since the unfortunate passing of Dr. Jeffrey Gabel, GMHA has received numerous inquiries about the number of OB/GYN doctors available and the hospital's ability to deliver babies. Dr. Gabel's loss is deeply felt, but GMHA assures the community that its Labor and Delivery unit remains well-covered. "Dr. Gabel will be greatly missed, but GMHA is confident in our ability to continue helping mothers bring their babies into the world," said Hospital Administrator Lillian Perez-Posadas.

Currently, there are 11 OB/GYN doctors with privileges who deliver babies at GMHA. There are also a small number of midwives assisting. With approximately 250 babies born at GMHA per month, the hospital acknowledges the need for more OB/GYNs in Guam. GMHA vigorously recruits to bring more OB/GYNs on staff. However, like with many in-demand specialties, GMHA is competing on a national and international level for these doctors.

According to a recent report by the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), it projects a national shortage of up to 124,000 physicians over the next ten years, including OB/GYNs. The decline in the number of OB/GYNs and other specialties is attributed to aging physicians and a rapidly growing population. Fewer doctors mean the competition to secure them becomes much fiercer. GMHA has a difficult time competing with the higher wages and sign-on packages offered to these sought-after physicians by other hospitals. "These challenges are why GMHA is grateful to the Governor's Office and the Legislature for their support to become more competitive in our recruitment efforts," said Perez-Posadas.

In the interim, the hospital continues caring for its patients and bringing new ones into the world. "Regardless of the circumstances, GMHA focuses on what is most important, which is to ensure we continue to safely deliver babies. We are very thankful to the OB/GYNs who are currently ensuring the continuity of care for mothers and newborns," said Perez-Posadas.

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