



GUAM MEMORIAL HOSPITAL AUTHORITY

ATURIDÁT ESPETÁT MIMURIÁT GUĀHĀN

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For Immediate Release

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Response to Misrepresentations About Number of Privileged OB-GYN Doctors at GMHA

(Monday, December 11, 2023; Tamuning, Guam) To maintain transparency and accuracy, the Guam Memorial Hospital Authority (GMHA) is addressing misrepresentations made in the media regarding its Labor & Delivery unit and the number of OB/GYNs (a doctor of obstetrics and gynecology) and midwives with privileges at the hospital. There are currently 15 providers with privileges who deliver babies. This includes 11 full- and part-time OB/GYNs, three midwives, and one family practice doctor with credentials and experience delivering babies.

The definition of privileges means a physician and/or midwife has been vetted and meets the criteria to admit patients and practice medicine at GMHA. Initially, the healthcare provider is given privileges for one year. If the doctor continues to meet the necessary criteria to practice, their privileges are renewed for two years and renewed every two years for the same length of time as long as the physician continues to possess a Guam Medical License and meet the qualifications. Privileges are extended to doctors working full- or part-time, doctors who are not physically in Guam on a full-time basis but travel from the mainland and practice while here, and doctors from the private practice sector who deliver their patients' babies at GMHA but do not work there.

There are currently three full-time OB/GYNs at GMHA since the unfortunate passing of Dr. Gabel last week. Several of Dr. Gabel's colleagues have stepped in to ensure his patients are being cared for as scheduled. There are five part-time OB/GYNs and one who is based in the mainland but will take shifts when in Guam. There are two private practice OB/GYNs who deliver their own patients' babies. Combined with three midwives and a trained family medicine doctor, Guam has 15 providers with privileges at GMHA to deliver babies.

GMHA continues to actively recruit for more full-time OB/GYNs. However, as has been noted in several press releases from GMHA over the last year, there is a worldwide shortage of OB/GYNs and many other specialty doctors. This has been widely reported and attributed to aging doctors. Meanwhile, the population keeps growing. And in the interim, GMHA is safely delivering babies and will continue to do so.

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