



For Immediate Release
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**HACKENSACK MERIDIAN *HEALTH* –HACKENSACK UNIVERSITY
MEDICAL CENTER RECOGNIZED FOR SUPPORTING
BREASTFEEDING MOTHERS AT WORK**

Hackensack, NJ, May 18, 2017 – In an effort to commend, celebrate and increase the number of NJ worksites that support breastfeeding employees, the New Jersey Breastfeeding Coalition (NJBC) has selected Hackensack University Medical Center (HUMC), as a “NJ Breastfeeding Friendly Worksite”. The award was presented at the hospital.

HUMC was recognized for important breastfeeding supportive practices including providing the availability of *reasonable breaks to express milk* or to nurse their child and *access to a private space* for expressing milk or nursing their child. Studies show that simple worksite support practices increase the duration of breastfeeding among employed mothers. Research also shows that breastfed babies have fewer illnesses contributing to less employee absenteeism.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that all babies be exclusively breastfed for the first six months with breastfeeding to continue, with the introduction of solid foods, at least until the baby is 12 months old. Abundant research has revealed short term and

lifelong health benefits of breastfeeding for mother and child. However, many mothers cite return to work as a reason for early discontinuation of breastfeeding.

“I am extremely grateful to HUMC,” said Joan Jennings, a Patient Care Associate at HUMC. "My initial thought about breastfeeding when I was pregnant was to "just try it out." When my son was born "trying" turned into 3 months, which progressed to 6 months and so on. When I came back to work I was worried that my milk supply would stop. But, I was supported and able to pump every 3-4 hours while doing my 12 hours shifts. I feel that it created an amazing bond between the two of us”.

"Breastfeeding is a truly a selfless and unmeasurable gift”, said Elizabeth Bigos, Nurse Manager of Postpartum/Well Baby-Nursery. “I am delighted to be a part of an organization that is dedicated and committed to supporting women in their decision to breastfeed throughout all stages of their pregnancy and postpartum period. Providing a safe, clean space for our employees to pump and continue their breastfeeding journey is our boundless privilege."

The NJBC encourages all employers to learn about and become a breastfeeding-friendly worksite and then to complete the simple self-assessment at <http://breastfeedingnj.org/breastfeeding-friendly-worksite-recognition-program/> .

The New Jersey Breastfeeding Coalition is a collaboration of health professionals and community representatives whose mission is *to improve the health of New Jersey families by working collaboratively to promote, protect and support breastfeeding.* For more information about the New Jersey Breastfeeding Coalition, visit www.breastfeedingnj.org.

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