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Midwife service launches with new birthing suites at Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola

Pensacola, Fla. (June 12, 2020) – Pregnant women desiring a natural childbirth have greater access to care thanks to the launch of a midwife service, as well as the opening of new birthing suites at Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola.

Certified nurse midwives [Esther Davis, CNM](#), and [Amber Price, CNM](#), provide personalized, compassionate prenatal and follow-up care to women desiring a natural, low-intervention birth experience. They graduated with their bachelor's degrees in nursing from the University of South Alabama in Mobile and received master's degrees in nursing from Frontier Nursing University in Hyden, Kentucky. They are board-certified by the American Midwifery Certification Board. Price has more than 13 years of labor-and-delivery experience, with four of those as active duty Navy. Davis has more than 40 years of women's healthcare experience, including 20 years as a certified nurse midwife and 20 years in labor-and-delivery, postpartum and newborn nursery care.

Davis and Price will see patients in their new office at Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola's Medical Office Building, located at 5153 N. Ninth Ave. For information or appointments, please call 850-416-6384.

New private birthing suites also open this month, designed for women expecting low-risk births. With this addition, the Maternity and Women's Center will offer three rooms with tubs to be used in labor, as well as a selection of birthing balls, bars and other comfort aids. Specially trained obstetric nurses will focus on methods of pain control including massage, breathing techniques, position maneuvers and aromatherapy. This addition of four new rooms brings labor and delivery to 20 beds on the Pensacola campus.

"The opening of our new birthing suites means that women in our community who choose to have a natural, low-intervention birth can also have the peace of mind that comes with having specialized doctors and nurses prepared for emergency care just down the hallway," said Lisa Gardner, vice president of patient care services for the Studer Family Children's Hospital at Ascension Sacred Heart. "Now, the addition of our midwife service brings a new option for pregnancy and childbirth care, combined with the level of safety that can come from the area's only OB Emergency Care Center, the region's only Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and the only local hospital with an onsite obstetrician 24/7."

Women wishing to utilize the birthing suites are asked to talk to their healthcare provider and schedule an appointment with Ascension Sacred Heart's birth designer, who meets with patients to learn about their labor and delivery preferences, including wishes for pain management and medications, room setup, visitors and support people, movement during labor, positions and amenities. The birthing suites

are available for patients of Ascension Medical Group midwives and OB/GYNs, as well as any community OB/GYN with delivering privileges. To learn more or schedule a birth design appointment, call 850-416-6378.

The new birthing suites are located on the second floor of the Maternity and Women's Center, in space freed up by the opening of the former Studer Family Children's Hospital in 2019.

About Ascension Sacred Heart

In Florida, Ascension operates Ascension Sacred Heart based in Pensacola and Ascension St. Vincent's based in Jacksonville. Together, Ascension Florida operates seven hospitals and more than 100 other sites of care and employs more than 11,000 associates. Across the region, Ascension Sacred Heart and Ascension St. Vincent's have served North Florida communities for more than 145 years. In fiscal year 2019, they provided nearly \$180 million in community benefit and care of persons living in poverty. Ascension is a faith-based healthcare organization committed to delivering compassionate, personalized care to all, with special attention to persons living in poverty and those most vulnerable. Ascension is one of the leading non-profit and Catholic health systems in the U.S., operating 2,600 sites of care – including 150 hospitals and more than 50 senior living facilities – in 20 states and the District of Columbia.

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