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## **Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Children's Nebraska Becomes One of 13 Nationwide to Receive Gold-Level Beacon Award of Excellence**

**OMAHA, Neb.** – The [Neonatal Intensive Care Unit](#) (NICU) at Children's Nebraska has received a Gold-Level Beacon Award for Excellence from the [American Association of Critical-Care Nurses](#) (AACN), distinguishing the unit's exceptional patient care and healthy work environments. It is one of just 13 NICUs nationwide to achieve the honor.

As the only Level IV NICU in Nebraska, Children's offers the most advanced level of neonatal care available, complete with a collaborative, multidisciplinary approach.

The Beacon Award for Excellence recognizes unit caregivers who successfully improve patient outcomes and align practices with AACN's six Healthy Work Environment Standards. Units that achieve this three-year, three-level award with gold, silver or bronze designations meet national criteria consistent with the ANCC Magnet Recognition Program®, the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award and the National Quality Healthcare Award.

"The Gold-Level Beacon Award serves as a powerful reminder of our team's unwavering commitment to exceptional patient- and family-centered care," says Anne Dey, director of intensive care at Children's Nebraska. "We are beyond proud of our team's expertise and dedication to improving the life of every child."

The gold-level Beacon Award for Excellence earned by the NICU team at Children's signifies an effective and systematic approach to policies, procedures and processes that include engagement of staff and key stakeholders; fact-based evaluation strategies for continuous process improvement; and performance measures that meet or exceed relevant benchmarks.

"We're honored to be a leader in neonatal medicine across the country and will only continue to improve and advance our work for the patients and families we serve," says Nicole Birge, MD, medical director of the NICU at Children's Nebraska. "This is a testament to our team's passion, dedication and unparalleled collaboration – and we won't stop here."

To learn more about Children's Nebraska, visit [ChildrensNebraska.org](http://ChildrensNebraska.org).

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**About Children's Nebraska**

*Children's Nebraska is the only full-service, pediatric health care center in Nebraska, providing expertise in primary care and more than 50 pediatric specialty services to children across a five-state region and beyond. Children's is home to Nebraska's only Level IV regional Newborn Intensive Care Unit and the state's only Level II Pediatric Trauma Center. Children's is recognized as a 2023-24 Best Children's Hospital by U.S. News & World Report, ranked among the best in the specialty of Pulmonology. Visit us online at [ChildrensNebraska.org](https://www.ChildrensNebraska.org).*

**About the Beacon Award for Excellence**

*Established in 2003, the Beacon Award for Excellence offers a road map to help guide exceptional care through improved outcomes and greater overall patient satisfaction. U.S. and Canadian units where patients receive their principal nursing care after hospital admission qualify for this excellence award. Units that receive the Beacon Award for Excellence meet criteria in six categories: leadership structures and systems; appropriate staffing and staff engagement; effective communication, knowledge management, and learning and development; evidence-based practice and processes; and outcome measurement. To learn more, visit [www.aacn.org/beacon](https://www.aacn.org/beacon) or call (800) 899-2226.*

**About the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses**

*Founded in 1969 and based in Aliso Viejo, California, the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN) is the largest specialty nursing organization in the world. AACN represents the interests of more than half a million acute and critical care nurses and includes more than 200 chapters in the United States. The organization's vision is to create a healthcare system driven by the needs of patients and their families in which acute and critical care nurses make their optimal contribution. To learn more about AACN, visit [www.aacn.org](https://www.aacn.org), connect with the organization on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/aacnface](https://www.facebook.com/aacnface) or follow AACN on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/aacnme](https://www.twitter.com/aacnme).*