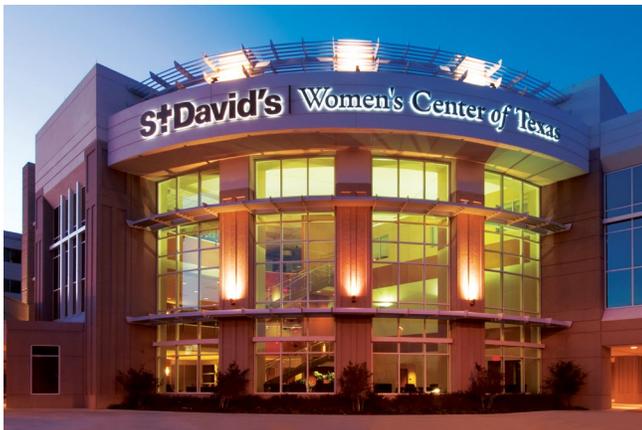




**CASE STUDY**  
**ST. DAVID'S NORTH AUSTIN**  
**MEDICAL CENTER**

## An Award-Winning Hospital Elevates the Quality and Safety of Its Women's Healthcare Line

Written and contributed by Brian Monks, MD



### Background:

#### St. David's North Austin Medical Center

St. David's North Austin Medical Center (NAMC), has been named one of the **Top 100 Hospitals** in the nation seven times, most recently in 2016, by *Truven Health Analytics*. The 363-bed, multi-specialty, acute care facility is dedicated to the highest level of women's health services. Resources include maternity and newborn care with Level I, II, and III nurseries at the adjacent \$83 million St. David's Women's Center of Texas. NAMC also offers a 24-hour Emergency Department, heart and vascular center, neurology and neurosurgery, a kidney transplant program, inpatient and outpatient surgery, and acute inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation.

### Challenge:

#### Sustainably Improving Safety and Quality of Women's Healthcare

St. David's North Austin Medical Center was faced with the task of elevating the quality and safety of women's healthcare in a financially viable and sustainable way while addressing common obstacles in women's healthcare, such as increased costs, a shortage of OB/GYNs, and a rise in uninsured and unassigned patients.

### Solution:

#### Implementing an On-Site Hospitalist Program

NAMC addressed the challenge by partnering with Ob Hospitalist Group (OBHG), the largest dedicated provider of OB/GYN hospitalists and the original architect of the Obstetric Emergency Department (OBED), to implement an on-site hospitalist program. OBHG's highly skilled, Board Certified OB/GYNs now staff a dedicated OBED 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The hospitalists help both patients and private OB/GYNs by providing an unprecedented level of care that not only improves safety and outcomes but greatly reduces the hospital's risk for negative claims or legal action.

The OBHG program provides St. David's North Austin Medical Center with the professional coverage needed to improve emergency outcomes, limit nurse liability, and reduce overall hospital malpractice exposure. OBHG hospitalists also provide services to unassigned patients admitted to NAMC who do not have an established relationship with a local provider. Some OBHG partner hospitals utilizing a similar approach have been able to reduce their insurance reserves or premium requirements.

## Results:

### Receiving a Prestigious Quality Award

The OBHG program at St. David's North Austin Medical Center has elevated the quality and safety of women's healthcare in the following areas:

- Improved Postpartum Hemorrhage Protocols
- Enhanced Supervision of ebb™ Intrauterine Balloon Implementation
- OB Rapid Response Team Participation
- Fewer Unattended Deliveries
- Increased Capacity in Maternal Fetal Medicine

The program supports local obstetric providers by providing call coverage options for optimal work/life balance, triage support for improved productivity, surgical assistance to improve outcomes, and care for unassigned patients. Trust in OBHG hospitalists has blossomed among local providers as concerns about competition diminished. In fact, St. David's North Austin Medical Center has had greater success in recruiting physicians to their facility since the introduction of the OBHG program.

In 2014, NAMC was one of only four organizations to receive the esteemed Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, the nation's highest presidential honor presented to organizations for performance excellence.

Support from OBHG also enhanced recruitment and development of St. David's North Austin Medical Center's Maternal Fetal Medicine (MFM) group. Initiated in 2010, the MFM program succeeded in recruiting its fourth MFM physician within two years. The OBHG program permitted the hospital to offer MFMs the work/life option of a consultancy practice, with the hospitalist team assuming primary care responsibilities for these often high-risk pregnancies.

The partnership with OBHG and the national accolades that followed led to a significant increase in demand for women's and infant services at NAMC. For example, the hospital's NICU saw utilization increase by 49% in four years. In addition, NAMC established an antepartum unit in 2010. Then, in 2014, NAMC expanded the unit to one of the first Antepartum Intensive Care Units in the state.

In response to the arrival of OBHG's program at NAMC, the Austin Area OB/GYN (AAOBGYN) practice moved its deliveries from Seton Medical Center to NAMC. Eliminating the requirement for local OB/GYN physicians to provide coverage to the main Emergency Room, as well as the enhanced MFM program, were among the deciding factors that prompted AAOBGYN to leave Seton Medical Center after a 30-year affiliation.

“The program at our hospital has been a huge success and has contributed to the highly successful opening of St. David's Women's Center of Texas and the development of a rapidly growing Maternal Fetal Medicine program dedicated to our hospital.”

— Chief Medical Officer  
St. David's North Austin Medical Center

The presence of a physician 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to handle emergent OB patients allows NAMC to bill for Obstetric Emergency Department (OBED) services rather than less-profitable Labor and Delivery triage services. By charging and collecting OBED facility charges, NAMC has been able to offset the cost of its obstetric hospitalist program and realize substantial added revenue.

Financial and efficiency gains attributed to the presence of OBHG:

- Increased revenue from OBED facility charges
- Fewer medical malpractice claims
- Recruitment of new physicians
- Maternal Fetal Medicine with maternal transfers (150/month)
- Addition of AAOBGYN and its 1,800 deliveries per year
- Earned media through marketing of the OBED
- Increase in nursing skill set and training through patient safety drills led by OBHG
- A two-fold increase in deliveries
- An 89% increase in NICU beds
- An increase from 0 to 180 transfers per year



For more information call 800.967.2289  
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