

Susan Valley, a proponent of breastfeeding, appreciated the breastfeeding support she received from the Melrose-Wakefield Hospital staff. She is seen here holding her newborn son Dominic in her Saugus home.



# Melrose-Wakefield Hospital named Baby-Friendly<sup>®</sup> hospital

Hallmark Health System's Melrose-Wakefield Hospital (MWH) has been named a Baby-Friendly<sup>®</sup> birth facility by Baby-Friendly<sup>®</sup> USA. The local community hospital is one of only four hospitals in Massachusetts to receive this prestigious international recognition and the only in our region.

Baby-Friendly USA, Inc. is the country's authority for the implementation of the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative, a global program sponsored by the World Health Organization and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). The initiative encourages and recognizes hospitals and birthing centers that offer an optimal level of care for breastfeeding mothers and their babies. Based on the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding, this prestigious international award recognizes birth facilities that offer breastfeeding mothers the information, confidence and skills needed to successfully initiate and continue breastfeeding their babies.

"Receiving this award is such an honor for MWH and is a true testament to the exceptional care we provide mothers and their babies," said Mary Foley, lactation program coordinator at MWH. "The Baby Friendly initiative has helped us to create an environment that is supportive of optimal infant feeding, and we will continue to support and educate our new moms through prenatal education, in-hospital consultations and post discharge support."

There are more than 20,000 designated Baby-Friendly hospitals and birth centers worldwide. Currently there are only 138 active

Baby-Friendly hospitals and birth centers in the United States. The "Baby-Friendly" designation is given after a rigorous on-site survey is completed. The award is maintained by continuing to practice the Ten Steps as demonstrated by quality processes.

For more than 100 years, MWH has offered the region the very best in maternal and newborn services including a Level II Special Care Nursery, which provides a higher level of intensive care for babies having medical problems at birth. During a patient's stay in the mother-baby unit, our expert team of physicians, nurses, lactation consultants, social workers and others work closely with the new mom and her family to ensure that she is off to the best possible start in her journey as a new parent. From labor and delivery to the day of discharge and beyond, the staff at maternal and newborn services provides for mothers physical and emotional needs and helps them develop the skills necessary to care for their newborn.

**For a tour of the unit, call (781) 979-7561 or for more information about Maternal & Newborn Services, visit [www.hallmarkhealth.org](http://www.hallmarkhealth.org) and select "Programs."**