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### Media Contacts

Joron Moore-Planter

Phone: 804-726-7934

Email: [Joron.moore@dss.virginia.gov](mailto:Joron.moore@dss.virginia.gov)

### *Raising the Bar:*

#### **Top Ten Virginia Hospitals Recognized for Outstanding Paternity Establishment**

**RICHMOND, Va. (March 29, 2013)** Ten Virginia hospitals are being recognized for exceptional performance rates with the Virginia Paternity Establishment Program (PEP) by the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS), in conjunction with the Center for the Support of Families (CSF).

Located throughout the Commonwealth, these hospitals continue to raise the bar by achieving paternity establishment rates greater than 77 percent.

VDSS' Division of Child Support Enforcement sponsors PEP, which is operated by CSF. The program offers unmarried parents the opportunity to establish paternity for their newborns by voluntarily acknowledging paternity prior to leaving the hospital. The Commonwealth has a total of 58 medical facilities that offer paternity establishment services to parents statewide.

“The benefits of establishing paternity are significant,” said VDSS Acting Commissioner Margaret Ross Schultze. “Children who have strong bonds with their parents have greater access to emotional and financial support as well as social and economic opportunities.”

Twin County Regional Hospital - Duke Lifepoint in Galax, Virginia, has ranked as the “Top Hospital” in the Commonwealth with a paternity establishment rate of 81.76 percent. “At Twin County Regional Hospital, we strive to promote, preserve and restore the health of our community by providing education on paternity to all single parents and supporting them in their decisions,” said Shirley Lephew, Director of the Mother/Baby Program at Twin County Community.

In 2012, close to 36 percent of all births in Virginia were to unmarried parents, a trend that is continuing unabated. The Commonwealth’s 2012 average paternity establishment rate is 69.3 percent, which is an upward trend for Virginia.

“It is important to note that the number of unmarried births is higher or lower depending on how many people a hospital serves. Therefore, establishment rates and rankings are based on the population density in each hospital’s particular location,” said Craig Burshem, VDSS’ Child Support Enforcement Director.

**The top ten ranked hospitals for 2012 paternity establishment rates overall are shown below:**

<b>2012 Virginia Births By Facility Chart</b> <b>Voluntary Paternity Establishment Rates</b>		<b>Establishment Rate Desired - 80% to 90%</b>				
<b>Ranking</b>	<b>Facility</b>	<b>% Unmarried Patients Compared to Married</b>	<b>Not Married/No AOP</b>	<b>Not Married/Yes AOP</b>	<b>Grand Total All Births</b>	<b>2012 Paternity Establishment Rate</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Twin County Regional Hospital</b>	<b>48.92%</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>81.76%</b>
<b>2</b>	Wellmont Lonesome Pine Hospital	49.41%	24	101	<b>253</b>	<b>80.80%</b>
<b>3</b>	Winchester Medical Center- Valley Health	38.58%	174	726	<b>2333</b>	<b>80.67%</b>
<b>4</b>	Sentara Martha Jefferson Hospital	22.59%	81	315	<b>1753</b>	<b>79.55%</b>
<b>5</b>	Montgomery Regional Hospital	31.39%	31	120	<b>481</b>	<b>79.47%</b>
<b>6</b>	Fauquier Hospital, Inc.	36.14%	61	231	<b>808</b>	<b>79.11%</b>
<b>7</b>	Reston Hospital Center	12.05%	85	321	<b>3368</b>	<b>79.06%</b>
<b>8</b>	INOVA Fair Oaks Hospital	19.20%	155	563	<b>3739</b>	<b>78.41%</b>
<b>9</b>	Sentara Rockingham Memorial Hospital	34.57%	134	462	<b>1724</b>	<b>77.52%</b>
<b>10</b>	Warren Memorial Hospital-Valley Health	57.29%	50	170	<b>384</b>	<b>77.27%</b>

For a complete listing of Virginia's 58 medical facilities and their respective ranking or to find out more information about the Virginia Paternity Establishment Program, please visit [www.vapaternity.org](http://www.vapaternity.org).