

**TO MEDIA:**

**CONTACT PERSON:** Robin Jennings,  
Marketing and Communications  
Excelsa Health

724-689-0206 TEL  
724-516-4483 CELL

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

---

**EXCELA HEALTH RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS DESIGNATION  
FOR NURSING EXCELLENCE**

*Health System Joins Elite Roster Of Organizations Distinguished By  
American Nurses Credentialing Center Magnet Recognition Program®*

**GREENSBURG, Pa., January 15, 2020 ...** Excelsa Health announced today that it has achieved Magnet recognition as a reflection of its nursing professionalism, strong collaboration and teamwork, and superiority in patient care. The honor was bestowed by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) Magnet Recognition Program® and distinguishes organizations that meet rigorous standards for nursing excellence.

The news was received by nurses, doctors, administrators, and other allied professional and support personnel who gathered across the health system to receive the decision from Jeanette R. Ives Erickson, DNP, RN, NEA-BC, FAAN, chair of the Commission On Magnet Recognition.

With this credential, Excelsa Health joins the global community of Magnet-recognized organizations. Just eight percent of U.S. healthcare organizations out of more than 6,300 U.S. hospitals have achieved Magnet recognition. In Pennsylvania, only 35 healthcare organizations hold this designation. Further, Excelsa Health is now part of an elite group of healthcare providers to receive System Magnet® Designation and the last to be granted system recognition upon initial application. Future first-time applicants will not be offered this opportunity.

Magnet recognition lasts for four years, contingent on maintaining eligibility

criteria, and Excelsa Health and its member hospitals – Westmoreland, Latrobe and Frick – will continue the journey that led to this initial designation.

In describing Excelsa Health's Magnet appraisal, Erickson noted three areas that were identified as exemplary.

In the area of **community advocacy**, she highlighted the weekend backpack program that provides food to area school children; fund-raising in support of pancreatic cancer that celebrated the life of a colleague while advancing research, as well as fund-raising to provide services through Excelsa's Family Additions Maternity Center to assist newborns struggling with neonatal abstinence syndrome as a result of a mother's drug usage.

As **partners with patients**, Excelsa Health Nursing was lauded for the individualized care plans developed with those being discharged from the intensive care unit; the remote pacemaker checks that assure good health and compliance and reduce the need for in-person clinic visits, and the innovative approach to addressing patient concerns about their pets so as to avoid their leaving the hospital against medical advice.

Finally, Erickson cited development of the nursing peer review program, which aligns with the existing physician peer review, as an **innovation** that has led to the advancement of professional practice and quality.

Considered the gold standard, Magnet recognition is the highest recognition for nursing excellence and is a key factor when those seeking care evaluate healthcare organizations. When U.S. News & World Report publishes its annual showcase of "America's Best Hospitals," being a Magnet facility contributes to the total score for quality of inpatient care, according to the site.

Research shows that Magnet-recognized organizations consistently demonstrate:

- Higher patient satisfaction with nurse communication, availability of help and receipt of discharge information.
- Lower risk of 30-day mortality and lower failure-to-rescue rates.
- Lower rates of falls.

"This honor reflects our tireless commitment to providing the highest quality care to all of our patients and their families day in and day out," said Helen K. Burns, PhD,

RN, NEA-BC, FAAN, Excelsa Health Chief Nursing Officer. “We have been on a journey to excellence for many years to achieve Magnet standards and I am inspired by the unflagging dedication to our patients, the respect shown to their peers through interdisciplinary collaboration, the demonstrated commitment to the highest evidence based standards of professional practice and the genuine enthusiasm for the work that has been required to attain this distinction. This recognition affirms their skill, compassion and commitment to nursing excellence and I could not be more proud.”

Burns added, “We could not have achieved this prestigious honor without the teamwork of all the departments and services across the system. This designation validates the commitment our entire team has in creating a collaborative environment where everyone works together to improve the quality of care and the patient experience.”

John Sphon, Excelsa Health Chief Executive Officer, noted, "Magnet recognition is indeed a tremendous honor and reflects our pledge to deliver the highest quality of care to our community. To earn Magnet recognition is a great accomplishment and an incredible source of pride for our nurses. It further underscores the commitment to excellence and our values that drives our entire team to live our mission by improving the health and well-being of every life they touch.”

Speaking on behalf of the Excelsa Health Board of Trustees, board chair Teresa Petrick added, “As stewards of our community, the board embraced the journey to Magnet as a tangible measure of quality and organizational excellence. Validation of the care we offer and the environment in which that care is provided on a national level will serve us well today and in the future as we continue to recruit nurses and clinicians of all disciplines and aid in our retention efforts, further ensuring that the highest quality of healthcare services is available locally.”

To achieve Magnet recognition, organizations must pass a rigorous and lengthy process that demands widespread participation from leadership and staff. The process begins with the submission of an electronic application, followed by written documentation demonstrating qualitative and quantitative evidence regarding patient

care and outcomes. If scores from the written documentation fall within a range of excellence, an on-site visit occurs to thoroughly assess the applicant. After this rigorous on-site review process, the Commission On Magnet Recognition reviews the completed appraisal report and votes to determine whether Magnet recognition will be granted.

### **About ANCC's Magnet Recognition Program**

The Magnet Recognition Program — administered by the American Nurses Credentialing Center, the largest and most prominent nurses credentialing organization in the world — identifies health care organizations that provide the very best in nursing care and professionalism in nursing practice. The Magnet Recognition Program is the highest national honor for nursing excellence and provides consumers with the ultimate benchmark for measuring quality of care. For more information about the Magnet Recognition Program and current statistics, visit <https://www.nursingworld.org/magnet>