



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Salina Regional Health Center Recognized by BCBSKS for Higher Quality Spine Surgery and Knee and Hip Replacements

(July 11, 2025) – Salina Regional Health Center is proud to be recognized by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas (BCBSKS) with Blue Distinction® Center+ (BDC+) designation for Spine Surgery and Blue Distinction Center (BDC) designation for Knee and Hip Replacement.

These programs identify hospitals and ambulatory surgery centers (ASCs) that demonstrate expertise in patient safety and deliver better health outcomes. Quality assessments are based on objective measures developed from the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association's (BCBSA) partnership with the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS).

"At Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas, we are incredibly proud of our provider partners for their unwavering commitment to delivering exceptional care," said Matt All, president/CEO of BCBSKS. "Each Blue Distinction Center is recognized for meeting rigorous quality standards in spine surgery and knee and hip replacements, ensuring our members and all Kansans receive superior health care."

These designations are a testament to the rigorous standards met by Salina Regional Health Center. Designated spine surgery and designated knee and hip replacement facilities deliver high quality care, with an average of:

- 28% fewer readmissions and 29% fewer complications within 90 days after spine surgery
- 21% fewer readmissions and 21% fewer complications within 90 days of knee and hip replacement surgery

Designated BDC+ facilities also achieve cost savings of 23% for spine surgery compared to all other facilities for this specialty care area.

Patients treated at designated facilities benefit from the expertise and advanced practices that lead to improved recovery times and reduced complications making a positive difference in their overall health journey.

“We’re proud to be recognized as a Blue Distinction Center for spine surgery and knee and hip replacements, along with the maternity care distinction we’ve held for many years,” said Joel Phelps, President/CEO at Salina Regional Health Center. “What this means for our community is simple: you can count on us to provide top-quality care right here at home. Whether you're having a baby or facing spine or joint surgery, you can trust that you’re in expert hands.”

These Blue Distinction Center programs help consumers find both quality and value for their specialty care needs, while also encouraging health care professionals to improve the overall delivery of care nationwide.

Only providers that meet nationally established quality measures will be considered for designation as both a Blue Distinction Center Spine Surgery and a Blue Distinction Center for Knee and Hip Replacement, which include:

Spine Surgery	Knee and Hip Replacement
Full accreditation by at least one of the national accrediting organizations as either a hospital or ASC	Full accreditation by at least one of national accrediting organizations as either a hospital or ASC
Low complication, mortality, and unplanned readmission rates within 90 days after primary spine surgery	Low complication, mortality, and unplanned readmission rates within 90 days after elective primary total knee and hip replacements
Have enhanced recovery after surgery processes and procedures in place for quality perioperative care	Have enhanced recovery after surgery processes and procedures in place for quality perioperative care
Participation in BCBSKS BlueCard Preferred Provider Organization (PPO) Network	Participation in BCBSKS BlueCard Preferred Provider Organization (PPO) Network

By meeting these stringent criteria, Salina Regional Health Center not only highlights its commitment to high quality health care but also commits to remaining at the forefront of advancements in spine surgery and knee and hip replacements.

To further improve patient outcomes and inform treatment strategies in these specialty care areas, BCBSA utilized two robust sources for evidence-based performance measures and patient reported outcome measures: the American Spine Registry—a joint effort between the American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS) and AAOS—and the American Joint Replacement Registry.

Since 2005, the Blue Distinction Specialty Care program has helped patients find quality specialty care—and, for those that meet the program’s cost criteria, at lower costs—in the areas of bariatric surgery, cancer care, cardiac care, cellular immunotherapy, fertility care, knee and hip replacement, maternity care, spine surgery, substance use treatment and recovery, and transplants, while encouraging health care professionals to improve the quality of care they deliver.

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About Salina Regional Health Center

Salina Regional Health Center is a full-service acute care hospital dedicated to delivering outstanding health care quality and patient outcomes across north central Kansas and beyond. Affiliated with three Critical Access Hospitals located in Abilene, Concordia, and Lindsborg, Salina Regional forms the cornerstone of an integrated health system that includes more than 20 primary care and specialty clinics that provide outreach services in communities across the area. With a team of more than 2,550 skilled professionals – equipped with the latest medical technology – the system stands at the forefront of health care in the region providing a continuum of medical care and advanced, lifesaving services.

About Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas

For more than 80 years, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas has built a reputation of trust with its members and contracting providers by providing outstanding customer service while quickly and accurately processing claims; fairly administering benefit plans and contracts; offering programs, services and tools to help members improve or maintain their health; and operating under the highest ethical standards while being good stewards of premium dollars. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association and is the state's largest insurer, serving all Kansas counties except Johnson and Wyandotte. For more information, visit bcbsks.com.

About the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association

The Blue Cross Blue Shield Association is a national federation of independent, community-based and locally operated Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies that collectively provide health care coverage for one in three Americans. BCBSA provides health care insights through [The Health of America Report](#) series and the national BCBS Health IndexSM. For more information on BCBSA and its member companies, please visit bcbs.com.

About Blue Distinction Centers

Blue Distinction Centers (BDC) met overall quality measures, developed with input from the medical community. A Local Blue Plan may require additional criteria for providers located in its own service area; for details, contact your Local Blue Plan. Blue Distinction Centers+ (BDC+) also met cost measures that address consumers' need for affordable healthcare. Each provider's cost of care is evaluated using data from its Local Blue Plan. Providers in CA, ID, NY, PA, and WA may lie in two Local Blue Plans' areas, resulting in two evaluations for cost of care; and their own Local Blue Plans decide whether one or both cost of care evaluation(s) must meet BDC+ national criteria. National criteria for BDC and BDC+ are displayed on www.bcbs.com. Individual outcomes may vary. For details on a provider's in-network status or your own policy's coverage, contact your Local Blue Plan and ask your provider before making an appointment. Neither Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association nor any Blue Plans are responsible for noncovered charges or other losses or damages resulting from Blue Distinction or other provider finder information or care received from Blue Distinction or other providers.