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FirstCare Health Plans Continuing Support for March of Dimes

2016 Marks Another Successful Year of FirstCare Fundraising and Support

AUSTIN, Texas (May 23, 2016) – Today, officials at [FirstCare Health Plans](http://www.firstcare.com) announced another successful year supporting the March of Dimes and their [March for Babies](http://www.marchofdimes.org) campaign—the annual campaign to fund research towards finding the causes of premature birth, supporting families with a premature baby in newborn intensive care, and helping women have full-term pregnancies to deliver healthy babies.

“We take great pride in being a part of the communities we serve,” said FirstCare President/CEO Darnell Dent. “One of our core beliefs as a company is that all Texans and our communities should be healthy—and that includes the tiniest Texans too. So when we can extend our support to an organization like the March of Dimes, we are also standing behind our belief structure and corporate mission.”

This year, FirstCare employees raised over \$2,600 in donations for the March of Dimes, exceeding their own internal goal and eclipsing last year’s fundraising efforts. Since 2002, FirstCare has been a corporate sponsor for the March of Dimes in Lubbock, Texas—winning recognition as a Top 10 corporate sponsor in 2004, 2011 and again in 2015. In 2016, FirstCare employees, from all FirstCare offices, were invited to support the event, with employees participating in the March for Babies walks in Lubbock (Saturday, April 23) and Austin (Saturday, May 14).

I'm READY to have this baby! What's the big deal?
Babies need at least 39 weeks to grow before they're born.

Sometimes inductions are medically necessary. But many births are being scheduled early for non-medical reasons.

In 2014-15, 32.2% of all inductions, the number of inductions has **MORE THAN DOUBLED**.

If you and your baby are healthy, wait for labor to begin on its own. Here's why...

Your due date may NOT be exactly right!
It could be off by as much as 2 weeks.

Babies aren't fully developed until 39 completed weeks of pregnancy:

- ✓ Brain
- ✓ Lungs
- ✓ Liver

At 26 weeks, a baby's organs are just **two-thirds** developed. At 39 weeks.

Babies born even a **FEW WEEKS** early can have serious health problems. They may need help breathing, feeding and keeping warm, and can have serious problems that require care in a NICU.

Induction of labor may cause **PROBLEMS**:

- ✓ stronger, more painful contractions
- ✓ changes in baby's heart rate
- ✓ infection in mother or baby
- ✓ uterine rupture, in rare cases

Talk to your health care provider. Be INFORMED. Ask questions.

(more)

“I’m proud of the efforts our employees have put forth for this cause,” said Dent. “These events and this sense of community is what sets FirstCare apart from other health plans in Texas. We are here, we are a part of the community and we’re already looking forward to these events in 2017.”

About FirstCare Health Plans

Our mission is to provide access to high quality, affordable health care through strong partnerships in the communities we serve. Since 1985, we’ve been serving the health care needs of members across North, West, and Central Texas. Today, our service area includes 108 counties, with local offices in Abilene, Amarillo, Lubbock, and corporate offices in Austin, Texas. We offer a wide range of HMO, PPO, HSA, and ASO products through a variety of programs, including small and large employer plans; state, federal and teacher plans; government programs; and the Health Insurance Marketplace. With the support of our owners, Covenant Health in Lubbock and Hendrick Health System in Abilene, we serve over 188,000 members. For more information, please visit www.firstcare.com.