DOULAS AND THE MEDICAL STAFF
WORKING TOGETHER

Doulas are considered professionals trained in childbirth. They provide emotional, physical, and informational support to the mother during pregnancy, labor and birth, or has recently given birth.
There are over 150 different organizations that train doulas.

What is the difference between a doula and the medical staff?

- The medical staff is busy and usually has many patients to attend too. Doulas do not changes shifts and provides continual support throughout the duration of the labor. Additionally, doulas can lend a hand with tasks like hydrating the patient or helping with bathroom breaks.

- Unlike medical providers and nurses, doulas do not perform clinical or medical tasks such as taking blood pressure or temperatures, monitoring fetal heart rate, doing vaginal examinations or providing postpartum clinical care.

- Doulas do not give medical advice, but can provide information in lay terms to the patient to help make informed decisions about their care. The doula can help facilitate good communication between the patient and staff.

- Doulas and nurses really work together to make sure the patient is taken care of physically, emotionally, and medically.

Are all doulas certified?

Most doulas start with attending an approved doula training program, observe a childbirth education series, attend a breastfeeding class and support a minimum number of births as part of their certification requirement. Those working toward certification, value the learning and hands-on experience received when attending a birth. Certification can take close to a year to achieve so while there are certified doulas supporting families, it is important to remember every doula has to begin somewhere in order to obtain certification.

When doulas and the medical staff work together the optimal care is given to the patient and a positive birth experience can be achieved.