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 July 21, 2011

To Whom It May Concern,

On July 12, 2011 at 4:30 am, my wife’s water broke. This was a very frightening development for us as we were 35 weeks into the pregnancy and two days too early to have our child delivered with the midwives at BirthCare in Alexandria. My wife and I had spent the preceding months reading numerous books on pregnancy, childbirth, and were three quarters the way through our Bradley Method Childbirth classes. Although the midwives at BirthCare spoke very highly of the staff at Inova Alexandria Hospital, we were understandably apprehensive about having to attend an unfamiliar facility.

It turns out our fears were completely unfounded as your staff performed wonderfully and were highly sensitive to our desire to have a natural child birth. Our first impression was with nurse Bernie in the screening area. She respectfully waited to ask questions between contractions and provided a helpful visualization activity for my wife to aid her in relaxation.

Dr. Kenneth Adhoot observed that my wife was progressing through labor well and was admirably willing to step back and allow nature to take its course under the guidance of your nursing staff and midwife. Midwife Donna Greenfield was very professional and attended the actual delivery of our son, taking measures to avoid an episiotomy. Although precautions had to be taken because of his early arrival, as soon as initial examinations of our son were done, he was returned to his mother promptly for bonding.

Due to the preterm nature of our birth, we spent two nights at your facility, where we were very impressed with your very knowledgeable nursing staff. In the nursery, we were allowed to remain with our baby and comfort him as various tests were performed. During the days and nights, your nurses and lactation consultants were very helpful in educating us as first time parents in breastfeeding, breast pumps, changing diapers, and swaddling our infant. Roni and Libby were particular standouts.

Most of all, we want to thank nurse Heidi Johnson, who was with us throughout active labor. She seemed to intuitively know when to provide my wife encouragement, when to make adjustments for her comfort, and when to just let us work on progressing on our own. She varied between continual and intermittent fetal monitoring, perfectly balancing the wellbeing of our son and the comfort of the laboring mother.

We may have not ended up with in the locale we had planned for, but thanks to all the understanding and capabilities of your staff we can report that we had a wonderful and very positive birth experience. We expect to be speaking highly of your facility for years to come.

 Sincerely,

 Ryan and Vicky Somma