Dane’s Dream Comes True
By Jane Hantscher, Proud Mother of Dane

We are one of the statistics. We are one of the stories that you hope will never happen to you. Our world changed forever when Dane, our beautiful seven-year-old son, was diagnosed with leukemia. This ordeal was both overwhelming and terrifying for us. His treatment, including the toll that the various drugs took on his tiny body, was heart-wrenching.

_Dane had a three-year cancer journey. It’s a journey that still affects too many children, but one that is changing—and dramatically improving—thanks to the clinical trials you have generously supported._

This spring, we celebrated Dane and his return to a life without chemotherapy, spinal taps, steroids, daily medications and fatigue. When we realize Dane is a healthy kid again—just like his friends—we can barely contain our emotions.

Prior to Dane’s diagnosis, he was a solid 7/8 house league hockey player. The season came to an abrupt end when he received his diagnosis. Watching him forced to give up the sport he loved was devastating. But through it all, his passion for the game remained intact, and he was highly motivated to rejoin his

**HOPE. ENERGY. OPTIMISM.**

Those are the words that come to mind when we think of our province’s young people. In this newsletter, you will meet remarkable young people who embody those words. Their passion, leadership and tireless work to raise funds for CancerCare Manitoba inspires us, and we think it will inspire you as well.

Seeing a child diagnosed with cancer makes one falter a little, and question why life unfolds the way it does.

However, there is space for gratitude, and for hope, knowing that more children survive cancer than ever before, largely due to excellence in research, clinical trials, and the improved treatments made possible by the support of our donors.

The Foundation provides 48 percent of the funding for all pediatric cancer clinical trials conducted at CancerCare Manitoba, and we couldn’t do this without your generous support.

Cancer doesn’t always win. We’re working hard to ensure that there are far more happy endings than not... and that there will always be a place for extreme optimism.

Thank you for your generosity, your caring, and the important role you play in helping us change the lives of all Manitobans – young and old.

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Offering Tomorrow’s Treatment

Dr. Israels & Mia McLean

If someone you love was diagnosed with cancer, wouldn’t you want access to the best treatment available? Of course you would, and you’re not alone.

This is where clinical trials come in. To put it simply, clinical trials are research involving people. Trials show us what does and doesn’t work in medicine.

“Patients receive treatments that are believed to be beneficial, but still need to be proven. There’s the hope that the treatment being tested will be better than what’s already out there,” explains Kathryn Dyck, Manager of CancerCare Manitoba’s Clinical Investigations Office. “The knowledge gained from each study will help patients both now and in the future.”

Clinical trials are crucially important in advancing the fight against cancer. Trials have led to the discovery of drugs that are less toxic, and to the development of less-invasive surgeries.

“There are not enough children with a specific type of cancer in Manitoba to study the effects of a treatment. We have to conduct trials as part of a global team,” Dyck says. “The best treatments available today were once part of a clinical trial, and until we find a cure we can always do better.”

Approximately 50 adult trials are happening at any one time at CancerCare Manitoba, along with nearly 70 pediatric (child) trials. Half of the funding that supports pediatric trials comes from donors like you.

“We can’t function without funding from CancerCare Manitoba Foundation. The Foundation’s support allows us to provide Manitobans with access to state-of-the-art care,” says Dyck.

“Pediatric trials do not receive funding from pharmaceutical companies, so donor support is both needed and appreciated.”

Clinical trials are credited with saving the lives of many of CancerCare’s pediatric patients.

“Although we believe that even one case of pediatric cancer is too much, children’s cancer is still uncommon and accounts for only 1% of all cancers,” says Dr. Sara Israels, Head of CancerCare Manitoba’s Department of Pediatric Hematology and Oncology. “Without clinical trials, there would not be enough children with a specific type of cancer in Manitoba to study the effects of a treatment. We have to conduct trials as part of a global team.”

CancerCare is part of the Children’s Oncology Group, the largest pediatric clinical trials group in the world, with over 200 hospitals participating. Pediatric teams across North America, Europe, Australia, and Japan work to improve future treatments by testing new agents, combinations, and programs. This approach ensures that Manitoba’s children receive the best treatment in the world without leaving the province.

Without donor support, CancerCare Manitoba would not be able to participate in global clinical trials.

“Since the 1970s, we have been perfecting this approach and it’s working. Now more than 75 percent of children diagnosed with cancer today will survive,” Dr. Israels says. “This is thanks to high participation in clinical trials, which have led to improvements in treatments and patient care.”