

# EARLY Edition

NEWS & INFORMATION ON THE PEDIATRIC SPECIALTY CARE AT CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL, RICHMOND, VA

## PETERSBURG THERAPY CENTER ONE-YEAR UPDATE:

# Services Continue to Expand to Meet Area Needs

"Providing quality care, accessible to all children" is one of the goals Leslie Wyatt, President and CEO, outlined at the March 2009 grand opening celebration of Children's Hospital's Petersburg Therapy Center. This location began serving patients in November 2008 and is Children's Hospital's fourth community-based therapy center location.

"Offering care in the Petersburg area has reduced travel time for some patients by more than half," Leslie commented in her remarks. "For some, a two-hour commute has been reduced to 45 minutes or less." In general, many children are able to receive services at local therapy centers they likely would not be able to receive otherwise because of parent work schedules, school commitments, travel time or transportation issues.

According to Sherry Black, Business Development Manager, research conducted prior to opening the Petersburg location indicated that "the number one need for pediatric therapy services in the Tri-Cities region, as expressed by pediatricians and health department and school system professionals, was speech/language pathology." Since the center opened, however, growth has been evident in all therapy disciplines in terms of numbers of patients served, as well as in the geographic areas families are traveling from for therapy.

To meet the demand for services, appointment availability and staff were increased at the Petersburg Therapy Center within months after it opened. Plans are currently underway to accommodate continued growth at this location and also at Children's Hospital's therapy center in the Midlothian/Bon Air area of South Richmond. (For more on this, see page 2.) These growth projects are representative of a number of therapy-related enhancements and additions in the past two years that increase overall appointment availability at all Children's Hospital Richmond-area therapy locations. In addition to the Petersburg and Midlothian/Bon Air therapy centers, these locations include the main hospital in Richmond and a therapy center in Glen Allen, which

***In its first nine months, the Petersburg location provided 2,319 visits for physical, occupational and speech/language therapy. With the number of requests for services for the coming year, the center is equipped to more than double that number to accommodate 4,700 patient therapy visits.***



**Pictured at the ribbon cutting to celebrate the grand opening of the Petersburg Therapy Center and the children it serves: Leslie Wyatt, President/CEO, Malik Blow, 6, Children's Hospital patient, and keynote speaker Dr. Kay Rankin, Crater Health District Director, Virginia Department of Health (front row, left to right). Kneeling behind the ribbon are Cynthia Devereaux, President & CEO of the Petersburg Chamber of Commerce, and Allison Wolf, OT/L, Petersburg Therapy Center Team Manager.**

underwent expansion in 2008 after experiencing an 83 percent increase in demand for services from 2003 to 2008. Children's Hospital also has a therapy center in Fredericksburg.

Initially opened with the goal of providing access to care for children in the primary service market of the Tri-Cities area, "we have found that the Petersburg Therapy Center draws from 40 to 60 miles from the south, east and west," Sherry comments. "Patients are coming from Emporia/Greensville and the counties of Southampton, Surry, Sussex, Charles City, Prince George, Brunswick, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway and Dinwiddie."

"Several families receiving services at our main (Richmond) and South (Midlothian) locations were tremendously excited when we opened in Petersburg, closer to their homes," Sallie Tidman, OT/L, Director of Therapy Services, adds. "Many families were able to increase the frequency of appointments. For instance, there are children for whom physical therapy was recommended once per week, but because of the traveling distance they could only attempt one session every other week, or even just one time a month. Many increased

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## PETERSBURG THERAPY CENTER, *continued from page 1*

appointments to what was clinically recommended because this was now feasible with the Petersburg location.”

Children from birth to young adulthood with cerebral palsy, developmental delays, autism, pain issues, articulation issues and orthopaedic issues are among those receiving therapy services, and Sallie notes that the Petersburg Therapy Center, along with other locations, “has successfully served several ‘priority’ patients – those with an acute or new injury who need to be scheduled for services quickly.”


In its first nine months, the Petersburg location provided 2,319 visits for physical, occupational and speech/language therapy. With the number of requests for services for the coming year, the center is equipped to more than double that number to accommodate 4,700 patient therapy visits. When it first opened, patient visits were scheduled three days a week. Within two months, a fourth day was added, and this August, the center opened a fifth day.

“We are anticipating to further increase therapy and support staff dedicated to Petersburg to match the increased patient volumes,” Sallie remarks. “We also want to increase our schedule in terms of variety of services offered so that all of our services are offered each day.”



**Children's Hospital's Petersburg Therapy Center is located off the Wagner Road Exit of Interstate 95 near the Appomattox Area Health and Wellness Center.**

(Currently Occupational Therapy and Speech/Language Pathology are offered Monday through Thursday, while Physical Therapy is offered Monday, Tuesday and Friday. The hospital's main location and other three therapy centers provide these services five days a week.) An additional 1,337 square-foot space is available to build out as demand warrants at the Petersburg location, which currently operates in a 3,108 square-foot facility with four treatment rooms, two therapy gyms and a sensory motor area.

Children's Hospital has one of the largest teams of physical, occupational and speech/language therapists in Central Virginia. The overall number of outpatient therapy visits the hospital provides annually grew from 53,970 in fiscal year 2008 to over 59,800 in 2009, and overall numbers are expected to increase further in 2010. Services are available for short-term needs, long-term issues, and for children discharged from acute rehabilitation programs or recovering from acute injury. 

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**OPENED**  
**NOV. 2008**

## Midlothian Therapy Center to Move to Bon Air Location *New Facility Offers More Treatment Space; Occupational and Physical Therapy Services to Increase*

The beginning of January 2010 brings a new home for Children's Hospital's therapy center in Midlothian. To accommodate increasing demand for services, operations will move from the center's current 3,100 square-foot location on Polo Parkway, where it has been located since January 2002, to a 5,300 square-foot facility in Bon Air. Additional occupational and physical therapy services and

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staff will be added with the transition to this new facility.


“We will also have the capacity at this location to add even more additional staff as the caseload and requests

warrant,” Sallie Tidman, OT/L, Director of Therapy Services, remarks.

In fiscal year 2009, 9,086 visits for physical, occupational and speech/language therapy services were completed at the Midlothian Therapy Center, nearly double the amount of 4,494 visits completed in fiscal year 2003, the center's first full year of operations at this location. Psychology was added as an additional service at this location in December 2005, and approximately 750 psychology visits are completed at this therapy center each year.

Even with the addition of 800 square feet of space in 2006, continued steady growth presents the need for a larger facility, as well as the increase in services. “We are really looking forward to a

larger space,” Sallie comments. “We have spent a great deal of time developing the space plan to enhance patient flow for those receiving one service or who may transition between two or more services during a visit. We'll have double the therapy gym space, dedicated psychology space, and many treatment room options of different sizes to meet the needs of each child and family.” Other enhancements include a larger and more family friendly waiting space with a corner devoted to children's activities; colorful, child-friendly treatment areas; and additional bathrooms.

The Bon Air Therapy Center will be completed during the final months of 2009 with support through donations by the Denny Hamlin Foundation and the Junior Board of Children's Hospital. The center will be in the Sheltering Arms Bon Air facility near Buford Road and Midlothian Turnpike in South Richmond. It is approximately five miles from the Polo Parkway location, still easily accessible for the primary market area this location serves, which includes children and families from Chesterfield, Powhatan, Amelia, Cumberland, Nottoway, Dinwiddie, Prince Edward and the City of Richmond. 

**An OPEN HOUSE will be held at the Bon Air Therapy Center on February 5, 2010. For information, contact Sherry Black, Business Development Manager, at (804) 228-5971 or [sblack@chva.org](mailto:sblack@chva.org).**

## Precious Hawkins, 2

Sharon Layten will never forget the day her daughter Precious tried a wheelchair for the first time. It was about a month after Precious turned two. “She loved it. It came naturally to her – she didn’t know how to guide it yet, but was trying to push it down the hall of the therapy center and then pointing to say ‘Let’s go.’ You could see the joy in her face. It was a great, great day.”



Born with anomalies to three limbs (her left arm ends above the elbow, her left leg above the knee and her right leg at the hip), Precious started physical and occupational therapy at Children’s Hospital’s Petersburg Therapy Center the week it opened in November 2008. Prior to that, Sharon and Precious traveled two hours from their home in Brunswick, Va., for evaluations and ongoing treatment at Children’s Hospital’s main location in Richmond. “The Petersburg location saved us many miles and many dollars, and has made a big difference in our lives,” Sharon remarks.

Every Monday Precious comes to the Petersburg Therapy Center, a 40-minute drive from home, for co-treating sessions with Physical Therapist Cristin Beazley, DPT, and Occupational Therapist Allison Wolf, OT/L, Petersburg Therapy Center Team Manager. “Mobility and development would have been challenging without therapy intervention,” Cristin says. “The complexity of her condition allows us to work collaboratively to best meet her needs and progress her development.”

Precious was initially reluctant during weekly sessions. “When she does not like something, she does *not* like it, but her therapists have been really good as far as rotating different things for her to play with and get used to,” Sharon says. Able to attend consistently, Precious has participated more in recent months, making it easier for her team to advance her skills.

Rolling, sitting, crawling and balancing, both with and without her prosthetic limbs, are recent accomplishments Precious has made through therapy progress. Developing core strength, lower extremity strength, acknowledgement of her left arm, and fine motor and basic age-appropriate concepts are areas of overall concentration. Bilateral coordination for tasks requiring symmetrical and/or asymmetrical movements (opening a container, pulling up to stand, lifting a cup to her mouth, etc.) is also a focus, both with and without her prosthetic limbs.

Skill development in these areas supports overall goals related to mobility and independence. “We are trying out a manual wheelchair for mobility and the ability to access her environment to increase her independence,” Allison comments. In therapy, Precious has been working on using both arms together to push; at home, she practices with a hospital-loaned wheelchair that she proudly refers to as her “car.” Having turned two in late July, Precious is physically too small for a one-arm drive manual wheelchair, which would allow her to propel and

steer with one arm, and her therapists are working with equipment vendors to customize a wheelchair for her with an adapted left wheel that would make it easier to propel forward without having to grip the wheel.

With improved balance and trunk control, Precious also recently reached a point where she can stand in her prosthetic legs with support of a standing frame. “She really enjoys this,” Cristin remarks. “It improves bone density and growth of her lower extremity residual limbs, helps with strengthening and range of motion, and allows her a different perspective and position for exploring and learning.”

As Precious grows, she can receive additional support from physician specialists in Children’s Hospital’s Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Program, a team-based program designed to help children with disabilities maximize skills and mobility for improved quality of life. Pediatric Physiatrist Eugenio A. Monasterio, MD, FAAPMR, Children’s Hospital Medical Director, prescribed her prosthetic limbs and sees her for follow-up through this program. Precious also has access to the Petersburg therapy team for support in other developmental areas, and she is currently scheduled for a speech/language evaluation at this location. Her full Children’s Hospital team is available to work with community providers to support her goals and provide assistance with equipment and adaptations at school, home and in other areas of daily life. A plan is already in place for Cristin and Allison to work with her prosthetist on what may best functionally serve her in the future.

As for her own future plans, motivated by her newfound mobility and skills – and the opportunities they bring for play and exploration, Precious is now more engaged and more willing to try new things each week. “She looks forward to Mondays now,” Sharon says. “She gets there and points to the therapy gym. She can’t wait to do what she needs to do now. It’s just a great place, a really, *really* great place – they’ve helped us out a lot.” 🧠



**During a therapy activity, Precious Hawkins, 2, practices sitting balance, while leaning forward to place items into a container, as Occupational Therapist Allison Wolf, OT/L, facilitates core/trunk musculature needed to hold an upright body position.**

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[www.childrenshosp-richmond.org](http://www.childrenshosp-richmond.org)

# Children's Hospital

PEDIATRIC SPECIALTY CARE OF RICHMOND, VA

Young at heart

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## PROGRAM UPDATE

# Recent Changes to Early Intervention Intake, Referral and Screening Processes


By Sharon Berg, MS, Infant Services Program Manager

Virginia's statewide early intervention system is called The Infant and Toddler Connection of Virginia. Established in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA), Part C—Early Intervention, this system serves children from birth to 36 months who are not developing as expected or have a medical condition that can delay development. Related supports are also available to their families.

Intake, referral and screening processes for Part C—Early Intervention services in the state of Virginia changed October 1, 2009. Lead agencies (the local agencies responsible for administering Part C in each county or city) now serve as the central point of intake and provide screening, eligibility determination and, in some instances,

assessment for service planning for early intervention. Certified early intervention specialists (physical, occupational, speech/language therapists and early childhood educators) may then provide therapeutic intervention as indicated. Therapy services are provided in the child's natural environment, meaning in the home, child care center or other locations where typically developing children play and interact.

Lead agencies in the Richmond area include Henrico Area Mental Health & Retardation Services Board; Chesterfield Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services; and Richmond Behavioral Health Authority. These agencies now complete intake, eligibility determination and sometimes assessments for children entering early intervention who reside in the city/county they serve. Children's Hospital has been closely involved with these agencies during this time of transition and will continue to be a community partner with Richmond and the counties of Henrico and Chesterfield. Through this partnership, Children's Hospital offers early intervention specialists who are Part C qualified to provide assessment (as needed), service coordination, and ongoing services for families requiring physical, occupational and speech/language therapy for their child.

Families and referral sources who would like to refer children directly to Children's Hospital are encouraged to do so, as they always have. What has changed is that Children's Hospital's intake staff members facilitate referrals to the local lead agencies, assist and educate families in the early intervention process, and follow up on the outcome of those referrals. Families who wish to be served by Children's Hospital will be referred back to the hospital for early intervention services once the process is completed with their local agency. 



As part of an Early Intervention therapy session in a child's home, Children's Hospital Speech/Language Pathologist Amanda Adkins, MA, CCC-SLP, incorporates a Floor Time approach to engage the child in play activities while providing instruction to his father about effectively encouraging interaction and play.

For additional information, contact Sharon Berg, MS, Infant Services Program Manager, at (804) 228-5881 or [sberg@chva.org](mailto:sberg@chva.org) or visit Virginia's Part C—Early Intervention website at [www.infantva.org](http://www.infantva.org).