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Mattie Miracle Cancer Foundation Announces Completion Of Psychosocial Standards Of Care For Children With Cancer

Mattie Miracle Cancer Foundation Teamed up with Experts to Develop Psychosocial Standards of Care

WASHINGTON, July 31, 2015 /PRNewswire/ -- Today, at the World Congress of Psycho-Oncology, leading researchers and clinicians dedicated to the psychosocial needs of children with cancer announced the completion of the Psychosocial Standards of Care to be published in a 2015 special issue of *Pediatric Blood and Cancer*. The Mattie Miracle Cancer Foundation spearheaded the effort to create and implement Standards of Care to ensure patients and families have access to a minimum level of psychosocial care from the time of diagnosis, through survivorship, or end of life and bereavement care.

"Having our child diagnosed with cancer, undergo treatment, and die from this disease, we learned that childhood cancer is not just about the medicine. The psychological impact of childhood cancer is just as real as the physical consequences for patients and their families," said Vicki and Peter Brown, Co-Founders of The Mattie Miracle Cancer Foundation and parents of Mattie Brown. Developing Standards of Care and publishing them in a top tier medical journal allows The Mattie Miracle Cancer Foundation to begin partnering with government, associations and cancer centers to practically apply the Standards and help children with cancer and their families.

The development of the Psychosocial Standards of Care is a major step forward in addressing the needs of children with cancer and their families. The integration of psychosocial care along with disease-directed treatment improves the quality of life across the cancer trajectory. Depression and other psychosocial concerns can affect adherence to treatment regimens and decrease coping abilities. Therefore, making psychosocial care part of standard treatment maximizes positive treatment outcomes.

"The Psychosocial Standards of Care will allow us to more effectively care for children and their families impacted by childhood cancer by giving them access to a minimum level of psychosocial care to manage their cancer journey with dignity. I commend Vicki and Peter Brown for their leadership on this issue in honor of their son Mattie," said Congressman Michael McCaul (R-TX), Co-Chair of the Congressional Childhood Cancer Caucus.

"Surviving childhood cancer is just the beginning of psychological recovery for a child and their family members," said Congresswomen Jackie Speier (D-CA), Member of the Congressional Childhood Cancer Caucus. "The development of these Standards of Care will better equip doctors to treat all of the impacts of this disease, ensuring a complete healing process that doesn't end at the hospital door."

"Childhood cancer remains the number one killer of children by disease, but more children survive cancer each year," said Congressman Chris Van Hollen (D-VA), Co-Chair of the Congressional Childhood Cancer Caucus. "We need to ensure that survivors and their families have the resources they need to deal with the social and psychological distress of their illness. The Psychosocial Standards of Care will enable families to cope with these issues that come with a cancer diagnosis, and it has been an honor to partner with the Mattie Miracle Cancer Foundation in this effort."

Once the Psychosocial Standards of Care for Children with Cancer and Their Families have been published later this year, The Mattie Miracle Cancer Foundation and the team of pediatric psycho-oncology experts will work to encourage the rapid adoption of the Standards in clinical sites throughout the country. Learn more at www.mattiemiracle.com (<http://www.mattiemiracle.com/>).

We invite you to learn more about Mattie Miracle Cancer Foundation at www.mattiemiracle.com (<http://www.mattiemiracle.com/>), follow us on Twitter at @MattieMiracleCF (<https://twitter.com/MattieMiracleCF>), and like us on Facebook at [facebook.com/mattiemiracle.cancerfoundation](https://www.facebook.com/mattiemiracle.cancerfoundation) (https://www.facebook.com/mattiemiracle.cancerfoundation?_rdr=p).

About Mattie Miracle Cancer Foundation

In July 2008, only 3 months after his 6th birthday, Mattie felt some pain in his right arm. A routine trip to the pediatrician and x-rays prompted the sound of every parent's worst nightmare: "Your child has cancer." For the following 14 months, he underwent a series of invasive treatments, including chemotherapy, two limb-salvaging surgeries that impacted three of his four appendages, and a sternotomy to remove tumors from his lungs.

Within months of his second surgery, Mattie was diagnosed with clinical depression, anxiety, and medical posttraumatic stress disorder. Mattie's parents learned firsthand the need for psychosocial support and services during their son's cancer journey and the role these services must play for families in bereavement care. Mattie's parents, determined to use their experience to help other children and their families through similar struggles, founded the Mattie Miracle Cancer Foundation, a 501(c) (3) Public Charity in memory of their son to bring awareness to enable patients and their families to cope with cancer so that all may lead happy and productive lives.

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