

FALL
2017

Fragile Times



OUR MEDICAL TEAM



Photo by Karla Davison

Nurse Sophie Rapp at the nursery window during the Walk for the Babies.

"Faith is like the wind, you can't see it but you know it is there."

P E D I A T R I C I N T E R I M C A R E C E N T E R

For 27 years PICC's nurses have kept the babies safe. Although our doctor oversees the babies' care and is always on-call, it is the nurses who are responsible for the medical safety of each baby through every hour of the day and night. Withdrawing newborns from prenatal drug exposures is a difficult and challenging task. It takes years of experience to really master the ability to read the infants' signs and symptoms accurately. But that is what PICC's nurses do every day, and they do it extremely well. We can't thank them enough.



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FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK



Barbara Drennen, Executive Director

This has been an eventful year at PICC, receiving babies both locally and from just about every corner of Washington State. Drug addiction hits every family, every community, and every economic level in our state and every other state. Each drug-exposed baby comes to us with its own story. The stories are very similar--some better, some worse. I think I've heard it all, and then another baby arrives with a story that makes me wonder how these precious little ones survive. They do survive, though, and with the right care they get better. After the first few weeks of stabilization the babies are on their road to recovery, and we look forward to being able to snuggle and cuddle with them. The happiness is bittersweet, though, because at that point they are telling us that they're ready to go home.

Again this year we've had visitors from across the state and country coming to see PICC and meet with me in hopes of opening a center like ours. They've heard about the impact of illicit drugs on their own communities, and they want to help the little ones. Just recently I've talked with people wanting to start centers in Ohio, Washington, West Virginia, and Arizona. We also have medical professionals who come to PICC to learn from our long experience of taking care of newborns with prenatal drug exposures so they can improve the care of these babies in their own hospitals and communities. Recent visiting medical professionals have included nurses from Washington and Ohio, and doctors from Virginia and Arizona. Even with all the training we have done both here and throughout the U.S., PICC continues to be the only stand-alone interim medical center for drug exposed infants. There is one other I have worked with in West Virginia, but they are affiliated with a hospital for their funding and staffing.

After 27 years, I'm not doing the direct management of the babies any longer. I wear only one hat today, and that is administration, but I still love being around the babies. I spend most of my time in my office downstairs so I can hear the sounds of the babies and peek at the new arrivals as they come through the door. It's still the best job in the world!



Last summer Pediatric Interim Care Center gratefully received a bequest from the estate of Elizabeth A. Edwards, a woman who loved children. We will honor Elizabeth's memory in the care we provide each day for the drug-exposed and medically fragile infants recovering in PICC's Newborn Nursery. Their lives will be her legacy.

A NOTE OF THANKS FROM BARB



When I was designing the center, I turned to Washington State Rep. June Leonard to help get my new program funded by the legislature. I worked for many months with Rep. Leonard, and also with her husband Tom, since he was fielding calls from her constituents. That is how PICC's relationship with the Leonard family started. Unfortunately, we lost June to cancer some years ago, but her family has continued to carry the torch. Tom is a Board Member Emeritus and his family members are among our staunchest supporters. During the past year, I have especially relied on their daughter Jean Leonard's

legislative expertise, and she was there with open arms. I cannot thank this family enough for all their help through the years making sure the babies have the best of care to start their new life. And thank you, Jean. You are wonderful.

WALK FOR THE BABIES



Patty Flanagan-Linderman (center) chairs the annual walk-a-thon.



The route of the walk passes PICC.

Thank you to the 350 walkers who joined us October 7 at Kent Station for Pediatric Interim Care Center's Walk for the Babies, and thank you to all the kind people who donated in support of them. Your efforts raised \$27,500 for the care of newborns recovering from prenatal drug exposures at PICC. That's a new Walk record!

Please join us in giving a special shout-out to our Walk sponsors: Kent Station, Roadrunner Sports, Duke's Chowder House, Mutual of Enumclaw Insurance, M & M Construction, Commencement Bank, Virginia Sweiberg, and Walmart (Renton, Puyallup and Bonney Lake stores).



Volunteer Sheri Roelofs and her family joined the walk.



Many of PICC's "graduates" and their families attend the walk.

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT



Elaine Purchase, Development Director at PICC, & Gage

Congratulations to Gage Bailey, who is well on his way to becoming an Eagle Scout with the completion of his community service project. Gage wanted use his service project to help PICC's babies, so he organized a blanket-making venture with his fellow scouts. For nine hours, Gage and members of his troop cut, pinned, sewed, and ironed flannel baby blankets. In October Gage delivered the results—two bins full of beautiful, soft and cuddly blankets. Well done, Scouts!

"Addiction does not discriminate.

It will take hold and destroy anyone in its path, including families and people who love them.

Addiction hides in the faces of everyday people all around us."

(From an obituary for a young victim of addiction)

MEET A SPECIAL VOLUNTEER



Dorothy Petersen is PICC's longest-serving volunteer and a model of dedication, rarely missing a shift from her first one in 1993 to present. We always know we can count on Dorothy.

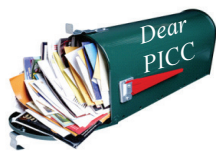
Dorothy was born in British Columbia but moved to Kent with her mother when she was 18. Back then the city's population was 3,500 and Dorothy recalls that their house cost \$3,500. Dorothy married, raised four children, and pursued a career in early childhood education. In 1997 she retired after 24 years as an instructor at Renton Technical College.



Today Dorothy is an avid Mariners fan and the proud matriarch of a family that includes 7 grandchildren and 9 great grandchildren.

Her birthday coincides with our annual luncheon in May, and every year she makes a donation in direct proportion to the number of candles on her cake. This year, that check totaled \$89 dollars. Dorothy, we look forward to many, many more of your birthdays!

FROM THE MAIL BOX



One of the lovely parts of my job is opening the mail and reading about the warm connections PICC has with so many people in our community. Some of the letters bring tears to my eyes, like this one from a heartbroken father whose son died of heroin overdose when he was just 20 years old.

"I can't think of a better way to honor my son's memory than to make this donation to the babies of PICC. I lost Lance to the terrible grips of a heroin addiction over four years ago."

Another letter that touched my heart came from a social worker who made a generous donation. He explained that he had often turned to PICC for infants needing a safe placement at night or on the weekend.

"Now, at age 63, I find myself terminally ill. Although I plan to defy the doctors' opinion, I'm not expected to make it through next year. That was a shock since I have always been very healthy ... For many reasons I am more than happy to support the work of PICC for the most vulnerable victims."

Many of our most touching letters come from the families of young people who received care at PICC when they were newborns. This letter came from the grateful grandmother more than two decades after her grandson was at PICC:

"Thank you for saving my grandson when he was a baby. He's 22 today and a healthy, happy person. I am eternally grateful for your hard work and guidance to get us through that painful time and kindness from one and all."

On October 1st PICC reached its 27th anniversary. Over those years we have cared for more than 3,100 babies through a difficult time for them and their families. Knowing that we have made a difference and that we are remembered is such a wonderful reward!

KELLY'S CORNER



The majority of the babies who have come to PICC for care this year have been exposed to heroin and methamphetamines. Lately, we have had a number of little ones weighing just over 4 pounds. A few of their stories leave us wondering how they survived their birth. One newborn was found hours after birth with the mother unconscious on

the floor and the placenta still attached. Another newborn came to us after being born in the restroom of a hotel. Despite the dangerous circumstances of their birth, both of these babies are now doing fairly well and making progress through their withdrawal. I'm always amazed at how very resilient the babies are. It's an honor for us to be able to give them a safe, loving home for a few weeks and to watch as they start their journey into what we all hope will be a great future.

*Kelly DenHeyer, RN
Director of Nursing*

Photo by Karla Davidson

DRUGS TODAY

Drugs are very cyclic, changing constantly. Those treating drug-exposed infants have to be cognizant of these changes to help the babies and also educate the caregivers. As you have probably heard, heroin addiction is prevalent in our community and across the United States. What we see with the babies at PICC, though, is that heroin does not stand alone. Generally, the babies who come to PICC have one to three additional drugs in their systems when they are born. For the last couple of years, we've been seeing a lot of heroin and methamphetamine exposure, in addition to other opiates.

PICC ON TV

In October, Pediatric Interim Care Center was featured in a KING 5 news report about the effect of the opioid crisis on newborns prenatally exposed to heroin



and other opiate drugs. If you missed it, you can find the story on the KING5.com website.

(The weblink is <http://www.king5.com/news/local/caring-for-the-most-vulnerable-in-the-opioid-epidemic/482096649>)

CALEB & HANNAH

It is always our greatest joy when PICC's "graduates" come back to visit, and we're able to see how well they've grown. This year we were able to share that joy with the guests attending our annual Luncheon in May. The luncheon program featured the heartwarming story of Hannah and Caleb, twins who first came to PICC as tiny neonates in the spring of 2004.

This spring Hannah and Caleb, now 13, came back to visit PICC with their family. The twins were adopted by Jen and Brian Clintworth. After taking a class on caring for drug-affected infants at PICC, they got a call from their adoption agency about the twins. Brian and Jen say it was the training they got at PICC that gave them the courage to say "yes" to that call.

Hannah and Caleb were 16 months old when their adoption became final. That's still a red-letter day in the Clintworth household. Then four years later, they got another happy surprise. Jen found out she was expecting twins. "It was like, here we go again. At least we've done this before!" Jen said. Then three years later their youngest son was born. "He's still asking, 'Where's my twin?'"

Today the Clintworths are a big, busy family, active in their church and in sports with the kids. Hannah plays piano and is social and nurturing. Caleb loves basketball is the more serious one. The five children are all close. Jen sums it up this way: "If you think my hands are busy, you should see my heart. It is overflowing."



*Caleb & Hannah with KOMO-TV's Michelle Esteban,
host of PICC's Luncheon in May.*



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*Giving a safe
and healthy start
to drug-exposed
infants since 1990*

DETLEF SCHREMPF FOUNDATION

PICC was honored to be a featured children’s charity at The Detlef Schrempp Foundation’s Ripple of Giving Gala in June. After 24 years, Detlef and Mari are retiring their foundation so this evening was their “Last Splash.” We thank them from the bottom of our hearts for all they’ve done for our babies and for vulnerable children in our community.



Barbara Drennen’s grandchildren (Paige, Katie, & Tyler) thank Detlef for his continued support of PICC’s babies.

Pediatric Interim Care Center is a qualified 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization for tax purposes. Our federal tax identification number is 91-1485176.

MISSION

Pediatric Interim Care Center’s mission is to provide safe, short-term medical care between hospital and home for prenatally drug-exposed and medically fragile infants, to provide educational services to the community, and to always be a voice for the child.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Barbara J. Drennen

CONTACT INFORMATION

Phone: (253) 852-5253
Fax: (253) 852-5728
Email: picc@picc.net
Mail: 328 4th Ave S, Kent, WA 98032
Website: picc.net

FRAGILE TIMES

This newsletter is published as a community service by Pediatric Interim Care Center. PICC is the only facility providing 24-hour interim care for drug-exposed and medically fragile infants in Washington State.