

Lincoln's Story As Shared by his Mother

SHRINERS Hospitals for Children is changing the world by caring for kids. We hear from many parents, thanking us for the expert medical care they've received. Below is a letter from Anne, the mother of Lincoln, who is receiving care at our Twin Cities hospital:

Lincoln was born exactly on his due date. His delivery was beautiful and uneventful. He was a good sleeper and first social smile was right on target at six weeks. And that was the last milestone he hit "on target." He always progressed, but each successive milestone was just a bit further and further from the target. He didn't crawl until two weeks after his first birthday.

By 18 months we were tired of waiting for the much-promised and much-hyped "spurt." He was clearly too far behind physically to easily catch up on his own. Our next step was a call to a local program designed to help parents access early intervention care through the Minneapolis school district. Our first screening was with a public health nurse, and she gave us some ideas about possible "next steps," the most important of which seemed to be a complete neurological/neuromuscular assessment.

We have a high deductible health plan, and due to my own medical event, our health savings account was essentially drained. We were looking at a long list of uncovered medical assessments for Lincoln. While we both had "good jobs," I had chosen to go part-time when we got pregnant. Things were looking very tight as we looked ahead to neurological, developmental, audiology, ophthalmology, and endocrine testing. While Lincoln's needs made me especially happy to be working part-time, it made finances much more stressful.

After leaving our assessment, the nurse called me later in the day. She had just received a flyer from Shriners Hospitals for Children-Twin Cities. She explained that if Lincoln could benefit from the services provided by Shriners Hospitals for Children, they would provide orthopedic and neurological care, at no cost. We were shocked and knew this meant we could put our dollars toward the other services he'd need. We had heard of Shriners Hospitals but knew almost nothing about your services, nor did we know how close the beautiful campus is to our home!

We went to Shriners Hospitals for Children for an assessment. It was scheduled quickly, and unlike any other process we've met, it was fast and family-friendly. It wasn't long into our appointment before someone confirmed that Lincoln could benefit from services offered by the hospital.

We would have done whatever we needed to do, whatever the cost, to help Lincoln. But having access to all the medical and therapeutic assessments without having to worry about cost? It was an indescribable feeling to know we'd not have to worry about the financial obligations of these services.

I remember "Googling" the hospital's neurologist and learning that **Dr. Rothman** is also the head of pediatric neurology at the University of Minnesota. I joked with my friends and family, "I guess that's good enough for Lincoln."

Shriners Hospitals for Children has provided us with neurological assessments, genetic and metabolic testing, MRI, X-rays, orthopaedic care, ankle-foot orthotics (AFO), and ongoing physical therapy. Plus the care coordination staff has really helped us get organized to maintain our own records, something that seems small but helps to ensure continuity of care across all our providers.

What we've appreciated most is how family-friendly everyone has been. It hasn't always been an easy road for us as mom and dad, but to have the hospital staff as our partners has made it a lot easier!

With the help of his AFO and weekly physical therapy, Lincoln has gotten so much stronger. He started to walk a few weeks after his second birthday and he cruises very fast (and gets a lot of attention) with the walker we've been loaned. He's so proud of what he can do! And he keeps getting stronger and more confident with each week of therapy.

We still don't have a diagnosis for Lincoln. That's the reality for a lot of families. There is "no reason" for the way things are, but there is support and therapy that can help him make the most of life and, ultimately,



mately, that's all any parent wants.

What's telling about Shriners Hospitals for Children is that Lincoln loves to go to there. We pull into the parking lot and he gets excited. You have all become very dear to our family. We really can't thank you enough!



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CHIEF STEWARD NEEDED

It is with great sadness that after his many years of dedication to Aleppo, Chief Steward Emeritus Al Gebow is stepping down from his position in the Aleppo Shriners Auditorium kitchen. His faithful support of so many Potentates will be appreciated forever.

**WITH THIS NEWS WE ARE IN THE PROCESS OF
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To apply for this position, please contact **Peter K. Stone**, Recorder who will bring it before the board.

Aleppo Shriners
99 Fordham Road

Tel: 978-657-4202 x13
Fax: 978-657-8950

Wilmington, MA 01887-2148

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