

# With Gratitude

## Delivering Safe Transport for Our Smallest Patients: How You and Children's Miracle Network Support TMC for Children

TMC for Children's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) is one of the only Level III-B NICUs serving families from Tucson and communities throughout the region.

When critically ill newborns must move, every detail matters. They need a controlled, protective environment - whether by ground or air - that keeps them safe. The best care comes from the right equipment and a skilled, compassionate team. Our NICU transport team is among the busiest in the country, on call around the clock to deliver care where it's needed most.

The neonatal transport isolette is a specially designed incubator that stabilizes and protects fragile newborns during transfer. For years, our NICU team has relied on this essential equipment to safely transport 70-80 babies a year, and in 2025, it was time to replace our aging isolette with a new model to ensure safer, smoother transport.

Thanks to Children's Miracle Network (CMN), TMC for Children - one of only two CMN Hospitals in the state - had the resources to act quickly and acquire a new isolette.

If you've ever purchased a paper miracle balloon at Costco or rounded up at the register at Dairy Queen, Ace Hardware, or Panda Express - or one of CMN's 206 Tucson



Scan this QR Code to learn more about our life-saving Isolette.

business partners - you've provided support to TMC for Children. Since 1983, CMN has connected hospitals with donors, partners, and local communities to raise funds that enable the best possible care for all kids. From life-changing treatments to routine exams and support for advanced research and technology, CMN funds raised in our community stay here to support children's health.

**We are grateful to CMN and to donors like you for equipping our NICU with state-of-the-art equipment, including our new isolette.**

(pictured below)  
NICU Transport Team



# Patient Assistance Fund and How Little Things Matter: A Conversation with Kerri Reeves, Oncology Support Services Manager and Social Worker

## What is your role at TMC Health? Why do you do what you do?

I am a social worker, but I'm also the manager of the support service team. I oversee the other social workers and nurse navigators who provide support services at the TMC Health Cancer Center.

I've been in this field since I was 18, and I can't see myself ever going anywhere else. Our patients are just fiercely incredible human beings, so much resilience, even when they think they don't have it, they do.

## Who do you see at the Cancer Center?

All kinds of people of all ages and stages.

## What is the Patient Assistance Fund, and how has your team used it to support patients at the Cancer Center?

TMC Health Foundation gives small grants to support emergency situations, from urgent transportation needs to food assistance.

Just this morning, I had a really frustrated patient whose ride didn't arrive, and she couldn't get to the center for surgery. I told her I could order and pay for her transportation. She was so relieved and was able to stay on track with her treatment.

There was another young patient who came in who had nothing, no food, their phone was going to get shut off the next day, and no gas to get home. They were lacking everything. We were able to get that person set up with

some groceries and hygiene supplies so they could at least have something to eat and take a nice shower.

We had another situation where a patient's refrigerator was broken and she couldn't afford a new one. She couldn't get her medication for her cancer treatment because it needed refrigeration. We were able to access the money from the Patient Assistance Fund and purchase her a mini fridge. That's lifesaving, that's huge.



## What have you heard or seen from your patients who receive this kind of support?

People are relieved, surprised, thankful, and even tearful.

## What do you want to say to the donors who help provide unrestricted funding that fuels the Patient Assistance Fund?

After COVID, there have been so many cuts to support programs nationwide, especially in the oncology community. It's hard to find patients the help they need in times like these. So I would say "thank you"! Thank you for donating. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to help our patients in ways we haven't been able to in many years. You guys are literally saving lives! Like the patient who got to her surgery today, the patient who can take her chemotherapy because she now has a mini fridge to store it in, and the patient to whom we gave groceries, who was really on the edge. These little acts of kindness make a huge difference in patients' lives, so thank you.



*Thank you, Kerri, for sharing and caring.*

*You, too, are the heart of TMC Health!*



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Tickets \$25 | Season Pass \$80



## *A Love that Carries On:* **The Harpst Family Legacy Gift Funds Life-Saving Equipment**

Steve Harpst, the son of one of our legacy donors, visited Tucson Medical Center to see firsthand the impact of his mother's estate gift to our Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). During his visit, Steve walked through the NICU Operating Room and heard from the medical team about the equipment they were looking forward to securing with the funding they will receive - a new surgical tower with 12 trays of life-saving instruments that assist in the delicate procedures newborn patients require. For babies facing immediate and complex medical challenges, these new tools will shape every moment of their care.

"The Harpst family's generosity will improve health outcomes and offer hope to hundreds of families in Southern Arizona each year," said Christina Suarez, Director of Perioperative Services. "With this upgraded equipment and technology, we can act faster and with greater precision when a baby needs us most. It brings comfort knowing our team can deliver the very best care possible."

Learn more about how you can take care of your loved ones while also planning a meaningful legacy in our community. Connect with **Heidi Hultquist**, Director, Major Gifts & Planned Giving, at **520-324-3717** or at **Heidi.Hultquist@tmcaz.com** for a confidential discussion.

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# Hope, Science, and Patient Care: Dr. Adriana Olivares, Cardiovascular Clinical Research Fellow

At the heart of TMC Health beats a steadfast commitment to advancing patient care through innovative clinical research. By expanding access to cutting-edge therapies, clinical research offers hope where it's needed most, especially for patients for whom standard-of-care treatments are no longer viable. Every day in the Clinical Research department, the team works to unlock new possibilities for healing, ensuring that TMC Health always has options to care for our patients when conventional therapies fall short. Among the team is Dr. Adriana Olivares, Cardiovascular Clinical Research Fellow, whose work is fueled by the generosity of both donors and industry partners.

The true measure of clinical research lies in its effect on patients' lives. A little over a year ago, Vivian\* was referred to Clinical Research after being told there were no remaining standard treatments for her illness. She was delighted when she qualified for a study, but a series of serious health setbacks delayed the investigational procedure for eight months as her symptoms worsened. Once she was finally cleared, Vivian underwent the intervention, and it was a true success. Six months later, Vivian, once reliant on a walker and supplemental oxygen, now swims every day and feels stronger than she has in years. Like so many who turn to clinical research when no other options remain, Vivian is deeply grateful for the gift of health and second chances.

The ongoing work of Dr. Olivares and the Clinical Research team fuels discoveries that restore vitality and inspire hope in patients of all ages facing a variety of health challenges. "Behind every protocol is a person placing their trust in us, and our persistence through every delay and challenge can help individuals reclaim their health and their lives," Dr. Olivares reminds us.

**As TMC Health looks to the future, the synergy between research, philanthropy, and patient care remains vital. Every contribution from you helps write new chapters of healing and transformation - one patient at a time.**



*"At TMC Health, we've broadened our therapeutic offerings to the point that patients travel from across the U.S. and even Canada to receive a unique therapy available at only a few centers worldwide. This positions us to truly understand our patients' needs and ensure they have access to the care they deserve."*

- NATALIA ELIAS CALLES, MPH,  
DIRECTOR OF CLINICAL RESEARCH

\*Names changed to protect the patient's privacy

## YOU ARE PART OF A CARING COMMUNITY THAT MAKES STORIES LIKE THESE POSSIBLE. THANK YOU!

If you have any questions or want to learn about other ways to support TMC Health Foundation, contact us at [520-324-3116](tel:520-324-3116) or email [foundation@tmcaz.com](mailto:foundation@tmcaz.com).

### Ways to Give:



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