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HEALTHY LIVING

UPMC | HAMOT

Bringing World-Class Pediatric Care Close to Home



A Regional Hub to Keep Kids Close

UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh is making things easier for area families, bringing a wider range of care options for kids who need primary, specialty, or urgent care here in Erie.

UPMC Hamot is now a regional hub for nonintensive pediatric inpatient and outpatient world-class care, offering pediatric imaging, diagnostic testing, and other treatments at the UPMC Children's Specialty Care Center Erie.

Multidisciplinary Pediatric Specialists

Located on the first floor of UPMC Magee-Womens at UPMC Hamot, the UPMC Children's Specialty Care Center Erie provides more local access to pediatric specialty physicians than ever before.



Dale King, MD, board-certified pediatric gastroenterologist and medical director of UPMC's pediatric services for northwest Pennsylvania and western New York, has been traveling to Erie for many years to see patients. He now lives in Erie.

According to Dr. King, "With all the services together at one specialty care center, it's very convenient for children to receive many common tests and procedures, including endoscopies, echocardiograms, pulmonary function testing, x-rays, and advanced imaging options."

Local Inpatient Pediatric Care

The UPMC Children's Inpatient Unit at UPMC Hamot provides 24-hour access to pediatric experts, including board-certified pediatric hospitalists, specialized advanced practice providers, and trained pediatric nurses.



According to **Kathleen Stark, DO**, pediatric hospitalist service director and pediatric hospitalist with UPMC Hamot, "We hold ourselves to the same standard of care children receive at UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh.

We have access to the expertise of the full UPMC Children's team and we follow the same protocols as one of the top 10 children's hospitals in the nation."

Many pediatric conditions can be treated in the inpatient unit at UPMC Hamot, including respiratory illnesses, dehydration, malnutrition, minor trauma,

meningitis, pancreatitis, some diabetic conditions, nephrotic syndrome, metabolic disorders, and infections. Children are also admitted for monitoring during IV infusions.

"We treat every patient like they were our own child," says Dr. Stark.

Our Growing Team

In addition to the current team of pediatric providers, UPMC Hamot is currently recruiting additional specialists in endocrinology, gastroenterology, allergy/immunology, neonatal intensive care, neurology, and pulmonology.

"For cases that require additional consultation, pediatric specialists in Pittsburgh can access charts and test results while using telemedicine technology to perform exams and have face-to-face conversations with patients and their families," says Dr. King. "Together, we're improving the pediatric care options in Erie, so that children and families don't have to travel to Pittsburgh to receive world-class care."

For more information about pediatric services available in Erie, visit UPMCHamot.com/Childrens.

Annie's Story

UPMC Children's and UPMC Hamot partnership helps Erie family connect to specialized pediatric care.

In November 2022, Megan Sapone noticed her 4-month-old daughter, Annie, acting strangely. As a stay-at-home mom to Annie and her son Chase, then two years old, Megan was accustomed to their day-to-day behavior. So, when Annie went quiet and then made a movement her mother hadn't seen before, Megan knew something was wrong.

"Annie was in her lounge chair, which she loved," Megan says. "Her eyes started to water, and she made a movement where her arms reached up. She almost looked like she was trying to sit up. When she made this motion, her eyes rolled slightly to the side."

Concerned, Megan grabbed her phone and started recording Annie. The movements went on for a few minutes, then they stopped.

"I called the pediatrician right away, and explained what I saw," says Megan. "They told me it sounded like seizure activity and to go to the hospital right away."

Megan and her husband, Bryant, took Annie to the Emergency Department at UPMC Hamot. Through a partnership with UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh, UPMC Hamot provides emergency care to kids and helps connect their families to pediatric specialists, if needed.



When they arrived at the hospital, they met with **Cory Gotowka, DO**. As a pediatric hospitalist, Dr. Gotowka cares exclusively for children in the hospital. While he was examining Annie, she had another episode.

"I remember Dr. Cory telling us that he thought he knew what was going on and not to panic," Megan says.

Dr. Gotowka admitted Annie to UPMC Hamot and ordered an electroencephalogram (EEG), a test that measures electrical activity in the



brain. After a virtual consultation with pediatric neurologists at UPMC Children's, Annie was transferred by ambulance to the Pittsburgh hospital.

After a series of tests at Children's, which revealed that a small portion of the lower left quadrant of her brain was different than the right side, Annie was diagnosed with infantile spasms, a rare type of epilepsy. She was in the hospital for 12 days.

“As scary as that time was, we knew we were right where we needed to be, seeing the best doctors who specialize in cases like Annie’s.”

— Megan Sapone, Annie's mom

"The way that they took their time to run multiple tests to get to the bottom of exactly what was going on with Annie felt amazing," Megan says. "They didn't want to miss a thing and you could tell."

Annie's parents appreciated that an entire team of doctors visited with them to explain her diagnosis and condition. "Everyone at UPMC Children's was

beyond amazing," Megan says. "As scary as that time was, we knew we were right where we needed to be, seeing the best doctors who specialize in cases like Annie's."

A little more than a year after her first seizure, Annie is a happy and thriving toddler. She loves playing with her brother, her puppy, Willow, and her cat, Tiger. She is also walking, talking, and responding to questions about objects by pointing at them.

"At the time all of this was happening I was completely fearful for Annie's future," Megan says. "I feared the unknown, like is she going to be able to understand me? Is she going to be able to walk and talk?"

To manage her condition, Annie takes a liquid seizure medicine twice a day and is learning to walk with the help of her physical therapist, who she sees once a week. Every few months, she follows up with **Yoshimi Sogawa, MD**, pediatric neurologist at UPMC Children's. Annie's most recent EEG in November 2023 showed no seizure activity.



"I am so hopeful, and I pray for a bright future for Annie," Megan says. "I feel like with the team of neurologists at UPMC Children's, we will be able to overcome anything that may come our way. I would one million percent recommend UPMC Children's to anyone and everyone."

For more information about UPMC Children's services in Erie, visit UPMCHamot.com/Childrens.

UPMC Children's

HERE FOR YOU IN ERIE

If your child needs care — whether it's a routine checkup or an emergency — UPMC Children's is here for you in Erie.

Pediatric Emergency Care at UPMC Hamot

- Collaboration between UPMC Hamot emergency providers and UPMC Children's medical staff.
- Local emergency care keeps kids close to home.
- Child-friendly exam room available.



UPMC Children's Inpatient Unit at UPMC Hamot

- Warm, colorful, and inviting inpatient unit designed with children in mind.
- Playrooms for patients and siblings.
- Television and video games provided in each room.
- Staffed by pediatric hospitalists (pediatricians who care for kids in the hospital).



UPMC Children's Specialty Care Center Erie

Offers a wide range of pediatric specialty services for children from infants to teenagers, including:

- Allergy and immunology
- Cardiology
- Child Abuse Referral and Evaluation (CARE)
- Diabetes and endocrinology
- Down syndrome care
- Gastroenterology
- Genetics
- Hematology
- Nephrology
- Neurology
- Neurosurgery
- Pulmonology
- Respiratory therapy
- Rheumatology
- Sickle cell care
- Surgery



118 E. 2nd St., First Floor
Erie, PA 16507
Phone: 814-877-8701

UPMC Children's Community Pediatrics (CCP)

- General pediatric care and specialty services including nutrition and behavioral health.
- Part of the larger CCP network of more than 350 pediatric providers throughout Pennsylvania.



UPMC Children's Express Care—Erie

- After-hours clinic for minor injuries and illnesses.
- Staffed by board-certified pediatricians.
- Open Monday through Friday from 5 to 9 p.m. and weekends from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.



3330 Peach St., Suite 106
Erie, PA 16508
Phone: 814-877-8586



Scan to access our video visits.



Scan for more information on UPMC Children's Community Pediatrics in Erie.

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UPMC Hamot
201 State St.
Erie, PA 16550

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Head, shoulders, knees & hearts

Sometimes children need highly specialized care. That's why we deliver the world-class pediatric services of UPMC Children's Hospital in Pittsburgh, closer to home.

From routine care to highly specialized procedures, UPMC Children's in Erie can treat your little one — from head to toe.

To learn more, visit UPMCHamot.com/Childrens.

UPMC | CHILDREN'S

