

## **Gifts from Izzy Foundation and Children's Miracle Network Hospitals to Support Transformation of Surgical Waiting Area for Families**

Imagine exhaustion has given way to intense anxiety as you wait for the surgeon to emerge from the operating room following your child's procedure. As you look around the nondescript surgical waiting room on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of Hasbro Children's Hospital, you see that same look of panic on the faces of fellow parents.

For Drs. Kyle and Tina Wohlrab, it's a scenario they don't need their imaginations for. It is what inspired their most recent commitment to our hospital, pledging \$200,000 from their foundation and securing another \$100,000 gift from Children's Miracle Network Hospitals (CMNH) to transform the surgical waiting room.

"We want to focus on the family experience as you're waiting for your child to come out of surgery," says Tina. "Our family spent a lot of time in the surgical waiting room; it's a space where it is important to feel supported—everyone copes differently when they're nervous."

The Wohlrab's daughter, Isabelle, known affectionately as Izzy, was diagnosed with a rare connective tissue cancer just after her first birthday, losing her fight with the disease two years later. The family established The Izzy Foundation to honor her memory and provide support to families with children battling debilitating disease. They partnered with CMNH in 2013 to renovate the 5<sup>th</sup> floor family room, which was renamed the Izzy Family Room. It is a welcoming home-away-from-home for families during their child's hospitalization.

Kyle and Tina have since set their sights on transforming the surgical waiting room into a similarly warm and comfortable respite. The current surgical waiting area is actually two rooms that are adjacent to each other, each featuring comfortable chairs and televisions. To create a more fluid and functional space, the rooms will be combined, and elements being discussed include the addition of a café-like eating area, play space for siblings, a computer and reading nook, sitting lounge, and a renovated restroom. The project will also create more private space for families to consult with their child's surgeon or physician. And, the Izzy Foundation has again enlisted the help of acclaimed New York City architect Tom Morbitzer, who donated his services to design the Izzy Family Room 3 years ago.

"As surgeons ourselves, and knowing everything we and Izzy went through, we're extremely sensitive to families needing space to speak with their child's doctor and process the information they receive," says Kyle.

"While the time a family spends in the surgical waiting room may be short, no parent waiting for their child during surgery ever forgets those anxious moments—no matter what type of procedure their child is undergoing," says Thomas F. Tracy, Jr., MD, Surgical Pediatrician-in-Chief. "Once completed, the new room will provide the space families need to alleviate their anxiety and gather strength before being with their child in recovery."

"This project is a great example of how donations impact children's hospitals and the families who rely on them for care," says John Lauck, President and CEO, Children's Miracle Network Hospitals. "The Izzy Foundation recognizes the importance these special areas hold, both for families and for kids' care. We are grateful to the Izzy Foundation for the difference they are making in children's healthcare."