

**Children's Memorial Hospital**  
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www.childrensmemorial.org



April 27, 2011

Ms. Ellen Steele  
Executive Director/Co-Founder  
The Christopher Steele Foundation  
P.O. Box 6188  
Buffalo Grove, IL 60089-6188

Children's Memorial  
Foundation

Children's Memorial  
Medical Group

Children's Memorial  
Research Center

Pediatric Faculty  
Foundation



**NORTHWESTERN**  
UNIVERSITY

Faculty of  
Northwestern University's  
Feinberg School of Medicine

Dear Ms. Steele:

On behalf of the children and families in our care, thank you for your interest in supporting the Adolescent and Young Adult Oncology Program at Children's Memorial Hospital. We are truly grateful for your desire to be part of our efforts to address the needs of adolescents and young adults living with cancer. At Children's Memorial, we believe that those whose young lives have been derailed by cancer deserve the chance to survive, to thrive and to smoothly transition to adulthood.

Nationally, despite the prevalence of cancer in those between 13 and 18 years of age, programs and research focused specifically on teens has lagged behind those for younger children and adults with cancer. Children's Memorial's oncology program cares for more than 250 adolescents and young adults with cancer. Our program was created in response to studies by the National Cancer Institute and the Lance Armstrong Foundation outlining ways to improve the cancer care for adolescents and young adults through patient care, research, education and advocacy. With our strong track record of clinical and academic excellence, Children's Memorial now offers the only adolescent oncology program of its kind in the Midwest.

Many teens living with cancer face difficult challenges, including uncertainty about the future, loss of independence, changes in appearance and the ability to one day have children. Therefore, a successful program for this age group must include peer interaction, psychosocial support, fertility preservation, access to the latest clinical protocols, collaboration with adult institutions and close monitoring of patients to ensure treatment adherence and participation in clinical trials.

In 2008, I was recruited as Director of the Adolescent Oncology Program. Previous to my time at Children's Memorial, I completed my post-doctoral training at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, where I was fortunate to participate in several psycho-social intervention programs. Prior to my medical education, I also completed a Masters in Social Work at Smith College and worked as a psychotherapist with teenagers. I am currently a member of the Adolescent and Young Adult Committee of the Children's Oncology Group, a member of the Lance Armstrong Foundation's Young Adult Alliance, and a member of Fertile Hope, a group dedicated to the preservation of fertility in young cancer patients.



The program aims to provide teens with a multidisciplinary team of oncologists, nurse practitioners, school liaisons, dieticians, social workers and psychologists. The program currently includes care of teens as inpatients, an outpatient clinic, a community outreach component and a link to the hospital's long-term cancer survivors program, the STAR clinic. We schedule teen patients into designated clinic times, place teens together on the inpatient unit when possible, provide them with teen-focused playrooms, and engage patients and their families in monthly support groups. Collaborations with Children's Memorial's adolescent medicine specialists and medical oncologists at Northwestern Memorial Hospital help to ensure that all the needs of patients are met.

Still in its early stages, the Adolescent Oncology Program needs additional philanthropic support to achieve its ambitious goals. The next phase will include building capacity by increasing support staff (nurses, school liaisons, adolescent life specialist, etc.), providing training for clinical staff regarding issues unique to teenagers, and providing access to fertility specialists.

To give you some real-life context for this program, I have enclosed a copy of *Heroes* magazine, which highlights the unique needs and perspectives of our teenaged patients. Because of your interest in the Adolescent Oncology Program, I hope you will find the story on page 2 particularly noteworthy.

Once again, we thank you for your interest in supporting the care of adolescents and young adults with cancer. Your gift to this program will send a message of confidence to our entire team, and enable Children's Memorial to continue the momentum of this very important program. Please feel free to contact me directly at 773-880-4562 or [jreichek@childrensmemorial.org](mailto:jreichek@childrensmemorial.org) with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer Reich".

Jennifer L. Reich, MD, MSW  
Director, Adolescent Oncology Program  
Attending Physician, Division of Hematology, Oncology and Stem Cell Transplant