



CMN Hospitals patient
JaKiah Collins, age 9,
with her mom.

Making miracles

KIRSTIN ROPER

CMN Hospitals balloons help save kids

BY STEVE FISHER

MIRACLES DO happen. Just ask any parent whose child has faced a devastating illness, only to be saved by the dedicated doctors, nurses and administrators in their local Children's Miracle Network (CMN) Hospitals.



John Lauck

CMN HOSPITALS

The *Connection* spoke with CMN Hospitals president and CEO John Lauck on the importance of the organization, and just how vital the funds from donations are to CMN hospital services.

The Costco Connection: *What is the mission of CMN Hospitals?*

John Lauck: The work we do helps support 10 million children who are being treated in 170 hospitals across the U.S. and Canada. Without these funds, the hospitals that treat these kids would have insufficient resources. Insurance, government, Medicaid—these things cover a portion but certainly not all of the necessary costs to treat kids. Without these funds every year, there are children who would not live.

CC: *What does it take for a hospital to be a CMN Hospitals member?*

JL: First of all, it has to be a not-for-profit hospital. It also has to be a hospital that has a significant commitment to treating kids. What that would mean is that there are pediatric specialists, neonatologists, hospitalists, neonatal intensive care units and pediatric intensive care unit specialists who offer advanced medicine capability for kids.

Not every hospital has that. Not every general hospital has that level of sophisticated care for kids.

CC: *Is there one thing that people might not know about CMN Hospitals?*

JL: We did a Harris Poll survey seven years ago, and we've done it every year since, and we asked, "Do you believe that your local children's hospital is in need of any financial support?" Two-thirds of the respondents responded "no" or "I don't know." The vast majority of the public does not believe that these hospitals are in need of any resources. They believe the insurance pays for it, Medicaid will pay for it, something else will pay for it, but they don't need to take care of it. It's not until a parent or grandparent has a child or grandchild who needs to be treated that you get into the system and realize that the resources are necessary. Even with families who have good coverage, it doesn't always take care of all the need that their children have for care.

It's not just on the pay side, but also necessary equipment, and some of the soft services that people take for granted sometimes. We call them "child life"—schooling while a child is in extended care in the hospital and play-time. Those are critical to the healing of a child, that they have as normal a routine as possible.

CONNECTING

Every May, colorful CMN Hospitals balloons are available at Costco registers in the warehouses. Buy a balloon as a donation and help a child.



OUR DIGITAL EDITIONS

Click here for a video about CMN Hospitals. (See page 10 for details.)

Often, these children come in under emergency conditions with their parents, and even siblings, and sometimes over a great distance. They may have to travel miles to get to the right children's hospital, and then they're there for six months. It's difficult, particularly if the parents have to go home and split duties and travel back and forth.

If you go into a progressive children's hospital today, you will almost always see a family area in addition to the patient area: a sofa that folds out into a bed, a shower, a bathroom facility where the family can literally be there almost 24/7 with their child. A lot of the money that's raised goes to the things that no one else is willing to pay for.

CC: *What is CMN Hospitals' connection to Costco?*

JL: We've been partners, wonderful partners, since 1988. Costco participates in a monthlong fundraising campaign every May. Since 1988, Costco has raised more than \$345 million with us. Last year that amount was \$36.5 million in the U.S. and Canada. That goes an awful long way toward helping and treating a lot of kids. **C**



**Children's
Miracle Network
Hospitals®**



KIRSTIN ROPER

Left: CMN Hospitals patient Carly Kudzia, age 7, and her mom. Right: CMN Hospitals patient Nathan Ferrell, age 10, and his mom.