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Rare Pediatrics Case Allows for Unique Learning Experience for MAHEC Medical Students

Bi-Lateral Branchial Cleft Cysts occur in only one percent of pediatric patients. While most medical students and residents read about this condition, few ever get to see it. Because of efforts by the Southwest Missouri AHEC staff, Missouri AHEC students were fortunate to be able to see the before and after of such a rare case – up close and personal.

Southwest AHEC student worker, Genevieve Lohr's, three-year-old son Randall had this rare birth defect. Randall's medical care was provided by Dr. Aaron Morrison from the Mercy Healthcare System in Springfield. The medical students assigned to the Southwest MO AHEC region had the unique opportunity to meet Randall before the surgery to observe the cysts prior to their removal and ask questions of Genevieve regarding the care up to that point. Eventually, both cysts were removed in one surgery and Randall is doing much better.

The Southwest Missouri AHEC partnered with the Mercy Healthcare System in Springfield to present a report on a rare pediatric case at the Mercy Hammons Heart Institute in October 2014. Southwest Missouri AHEC also invited providers from both Cox and Mercy Health Systems in Springfield to the lecture.

Additionally, because of the Southwest Missouri AHEC's participation in A.T. Still University-Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine AHEC (ATSU/KCOM) Missouri Region Lecture Series, we were able to share this important opportunity beyond Springfield. We set up a lecture by Dr. Morrison to share information about this rare birth defect, its treatment and the procedure used to correct the defect.

Because of the variability in distance from the main campus and size of Missouri training sites, provides a monthly lecture series to augment local educational resources. The Missouri Region Lecture Series is available to all ATSSU/KCOM medical students as well as students from other medical schools who are assigned to AHEC sites across the state. The lecture series is available via interactive video and each AHEC has the opportunity to invite speakers or preceptors from their region to attend and/or present a lecture. The Southwest Missouri AHEC has hosted the statewide lecture three times in the past year, but the October lecture was a bit more personal for our AHEC.



Randall Lohr, 3 years old, enjoys a local football game

MAHEC is a partnership of seven locally-governed organizations and three university-based health professions education programs working statewide to increase the numbers of Missouri youth entering stable, high-paying jobs as healthcare professionals and the numbers of professionals caring for underserved populations.

The MAHEC partners include:

- A.T. Still University – Kirksville
- University of Missouri – Columbia
- Saint Louis University
- Northeast Missouri AHEC – Kirksville
- Northwest Missouri AHEC – St. Joseph
- West Central Missouri AHEC – Lexington
- Mid-Missouri AHEC – Rolla
- East Central Missouri AHEC – St. Louis
- Southeastern Missouri AHEC – Poplar Bluff
- Southwest Missouri AHEC – Springfield

MAHEC: Connecting students to careers, professionals to communities, and communities to better health