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First-in-State Airway Program for Pediatric Patients Honored with Training Grant

Funds Allow Hospital Experts to Provide Families Specialized Training in “Trach CPR”

PHOENIX, Ariz. (June 28, 2006) – Phoenix Children’s Hospital’s new program to treat children with airway illnesses received a boost recently when Walgreen’s Homecare granted \$2,000 for Hospital experts to train patient families in specialized “Trach CPR” methods. The Tracheotomy and Airway Program at Phoenix Children’s Hospital, established last fall, is Arizona’s only comprehensive inpatient and outpatient service caring for kids with tracheostomies, home ventilators, airway surgeries, and neuromuscular diseases such as muscular dystrophy or spinal muscular atrophy. The program has already treated 262 inpatient children and trained their families to provide home care.

“With healthcare dollars shrinking, families of medically fragile kids have access to fewer and fewer resources. We strive to care for these sickest of children and to send them where every child belongs – home with their families. But parents, like healthcare professionals, need to learn and update skills like Trach CPR to respond to their child’s immediate medical needs,” said Penny Overgaard, RN, Tracheotomy and Airway Program Coordinator at Phoenix Children's Hospital.

Trach CPR is different from traditional CPR because the parent performs CPR using special equipment through the trach tube, instead of the child’s mouth, to directly reach the child’s airway. The \$2,000 grant will allow Phoenix Children’s experts to teach at least 75 Arizona parents these specialized CPR steps.

The 18-bed Tracheotomy and Airway Program at Phoenix Children’s is a highly specialized unit and the first in the state to treat such patients. It includes a team of pulmonologists, nurses, respiratory care therapists, nutritionists, case managers, and social workers who are all specially trained to treat children with airway illnesses. In addition to treating the patient, Hospital staff provides intensive teaching for

families about effective steps to care for their kids. For more information on the Tracheotomy and Airway Program, visit www.phoenixchildrens.com/about/programs/airwayfloor.html.

Phoenix Children's Hospital is Arizona's leader in pediatric care and is one of the 10 largest free-standing children's hospitals in the nation. The most comprehensive array of pediatric specialists in the State practice at this one organization. The outstanding clinical expertise, as well as high patient volume, and an unwavering commitment to caring only for children, all contribute to Children's leadership position. For information about Phoenix Children's, visit the Hospital's award-winning website at www.phoenixchildrens.com.

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EDITORS NOTE: For a true story about how intensive Trach CPR training from Phoenix Children's experts helped a West Valley (El Mirage) mom save her daughter's life, contact Jessica Wheeler at (602) 546-0824 to arrange an interview.