



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Jessica Catlin
(602) 546-5877
(480) 206-8073 (cell)
jcatlin@phoenixchildrens.com

**Former Mayo-Rochester Physician Jeffrey Buchhalter, MD, PhD
Arrives to Launch Phoenix Children's Comprehensive Pediatric Epilepsy Program**

Approximately 1,800 children in Arizona need specialized epilepsy care

PHOENIX, Ariz. (Oct. 26, 2006) – Jeffrey Buchhalter, MD, PhD, a pediatric epileptologist most recently with the Mayo Clinic at Rochester, has arrived at Phoenix Children's to launch a comprehensive pediatric epilepsy program within the Hospital's Center for Neuroscience and Behavioral Medicine. An avid researcher into the surgical treatment of epilepsy, Buchhalter has either directed or co-directed epilepsy programs at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, Oregon Health Sciences University, and the Mayo Clinic.

"As Arizona grows, so must this Hospital, and the addition of Jeff Buchhalter and his highly regarded epilepsy program is just another demonstration of our commitment to provide the best care for children who require highly specialized care," said Bob Meyer, president and CEO of Phoenix Children's Hospital.

Epilepsy is a disorder that commonly begins during childhood; approximately 50 percent of all individuals with epilepsy in Arizona are under 18 years of age. An estimated 6,100 children in Arizona have epilepsy, and about 1,800 of those children have intractable seizures that require specialized care beyond common epilepsy medications [Source: *Epilepsy Foundation of Arizona*]. In addition to the physical consequences of the disease, intractable seizures often limit a child's social life and can prohibit activities like bike riding, swimming, and driving.

While Phoenix Children's has been treating epilepsy patients for some time, Phoenix Children's first comprehensive epilepsy program includes several new components, including a Pediatric Epilepsy Monitoring Unit and a dedicated nursing staff specially trained in pediatric epilepsy. In addition to standard antiepileptogenic drugs, the program will provide alternatives for intractable seizures such as the ketogenic diet, vagus nerve stimulator, and epilepsy surgery. Buchhalter is committed to building the program quickly; he has started recruiting additional pediatric epileptologists, training or recruiting one pediatric nurse practitioner, and bringing a fellowship in pediatric epilepsy to the Hospital.

“You can buy all the technology you want, but you can’t buy the kind of personal dedication you find at all levels within Phoenix Children’s, from the nursing staff to the administrative executives to the physicians. It made it an easy choice to come here and build the kind of program Arizona deserves,” said Buchhalter.

Buchhalter received both his MD and PhD (neuroscience) degrees at the University of California at Los Angeles; earned his pediatric residency at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center and his pediatric neurology fellowship at the Harvard-Longwood Neurological Training Program in Boston; and completed his fellowship training in clinical neurophysiology at Beth Israel Hospital in Boston.

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 website at www.phoenixchildrens.com.

EDITOR’S NOTE: For a photo of Buchhalter, please call or email the contact at the top of this release.