

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### **Eric Children's Encephalitis Foundation Makes \$5,000 Donation to New Nicklaus/Miami Children's Hospital Urgent Care Centers In Palm Beach County**

*Editor's Note: Attached is a photograph taken by Jim Mandeville of the Eric Dolch Children's Encephalitis Foundation's check presentation to the Nicklaus Children's Health Care Foundation (NCHCF). In the photo from left to right: Jack and Barbara Nicklaus; Eric's mom Ava Van de Water; Eric Dolch; President/CEO of Miami Children's Hospital Dr. M. Narendra Kini, NCHCF president Patty McDonald and Eric's father Craig Dolch.*

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. -- When Eric Dolch almost died from encephalitis in 2005, his parents airlifted the then-14-year-old West Palm Beach resident to Miami Children's Hospital (MCH), where he spent more than a year recovering from the near-fatal illness in the hospital's Pediatric Intensive Care Unit.

Now 19, Eric is helping other children fight back from life-threatening illnesses. Monday, the Eric Dolch Children's Encephalitis Foundation (EDCEF) made a \$5,000 donation to the Nicklaus Children's Health Care Foundation. The money is designated to be used for the new Nicklaus Urgent Care Centers that MCH is bringing to Palm Beach County to improve the area's acute pediatric health care.

Talk about good timing: The initial Nicklaus/MCH Urgent Care Center opened today behind Palms West Hospital in Loxahatchee. EDCEF's donation has been earmarked for the urgent care's neurology department. The Nicklaus/MCH Urgent Care centers will initially offer services in pediatric craniofacial, endocrinology, gastroenterology, neurology and orthopedic. Their presence will free many chronically-ill children in Palm Beach County from making the difficult drive to Miami Children's Hospital to receive services.

"We are very excited about the opening of the first "Care Center," and we hope and pray that it will be a blessing for Eric and many other children," said Barbara Nicklaus, who along with husband/golf legend Jack Nicklaus has been the driving forces behind the NCHCF. "MCH and our foundation are totally dedicated to making this work. This donation from the Eric Dolch Encephalitis Foundation will be a huge boost for the neurology department."

Eric was hospitalized June 20, 2005 at St. Mary's Hospital in West Palm Beach when he started having seizures. Eight days later, he was airlifted to Miami Children's Hospital because of the complexities of his illness. He was placed in a medically-induced coma for 115 days, emerging severely disabled because of the brain injury.

Although he returned to his West Palm Beach home in late 2006, where he has received around-the-clock nursing, Eric has undergone 14 surgeries, including two arduous operations on the brain that each required a minimum of 10 hours.

This marks the third contribution EDCEF – a non-private, 501 (c) (3) foundation – has made since it was founded in 2006 by Eric’s parents and close friends.

“We wish we could give 100 times this amount,” said Craig Dolch, Eric’s father and the founder of EDCEF, “but we’ve learned from experience that every bit helps.”

That sentiment was echoed by Dr. M. Narendra Kini, the President/CEO of Miami Children’s, who was at the presentation along with the Nicklauses; Eric’s mom and EDCEF board member, Ava Van de Water; NCHCF president Patty McDonald; Dolch; and, of course Eric.

“We’ve noticed that in these troubled economic times, most of the donations that we get are all of moderate and smaller size, and they happen to be more widespread in a new community than a single, large donation,” Dr. Kini said. “In a brand-new matter like this, every small amount counts because we want to set up the initial services in a community. To get it up and running is more important than the size and complexity of the operations

“This is a huge impact on starting the operation. We need to get the services to start. And that’s what’s most important for the community.”

McDonald said there are plans to open two more Nicklaus/MCH Urgent Care Centers in Palm Beach County, with the next one likely slated for the Jupiter area later this year.

### **About Eric Dolch Children’s Encephalitis Foundation**

The Eric Dolch Children’s Encephalitis Foundation is a not-for-profit foundation focused on raising money and awareness for the proper care and treatment for people with encephalitis while helping to find a cure for encephalitis and other types of epilepsy. For more information, visit [www.ericdolchfoundation.org](http://www.ericdolchfoundation.org).

### **About Nicklaus Children’s Health Care Foundation**

The Nicklaus Children’s Health Care Foundation is a not-for-profit foundation focused on providing charitable support to organizations and initiatives that advance and enhance the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of childhood diseases and disorders. In addition, the Foundation supports not-for-profit programs and projects aimed at children’s health, safety and well-being in five Florida counties: Palm Beach, Martin, St. Lucie, Okeechobee and Indian River. For more information, visit [www.nchcf.org](http://www.nchcf.org).

### **About Miami Children’s Hospital**

Founded in 1950 by Variety Clubs International, Miami Children’s Hospital® is South Florida’s only licensed specialty hospital exclusively for children, with more than 650 attending physicians and over 130 pediatric sub-specialists. The 289-bed hospital is renowned for excellence in all aspects of pediatric medicine with several specialty programs ranked among the best in the nation in 2008 and 2009 by U.S. News & World Report. The hospital is also home to the largest pediatric teaching program in the southeastern United States and has been designated an American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) Magnet facility, the nursing profession’s most prestigious institutional honor. Miami Children’s Hospital is one of 170 pediatric hospitals in North America affiliated with Children’s Miracle Network and South Florida’s only freestanding Hospital dedicated exclusively to children. For more information, contact [www.mch.com](http://www.mch.com).