

Media Advisory

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UPDATE: POSSIBLE LIVER FOR LUCAS

Pittsburgh, July 1, 2015 – 2-year-old Lucas Goeller has received his first ever offer for a lifesaving, direct donation of a liver, after 18 long months on the waiting list. This is only the beginning of what the Goellers hope will be a successful transplant story, although many challenges lie ahead. The family is enroute back from Ohio to Pittsburgh now with Lucas, who was undergoing further evaluation.

This private and direct organ donation opportunity has only arisen because of the success of the grassroots organ donor awareness campaign. So many people have rallied around Lucas, and today, the Goeller family hopes these same people will keep the donor and the donor family in their thoughts and prayers. This family is coping with the loss of their loved one, while at the same time selflessly trying to help others through the amazing gift of organ donation.

The Goellers first learned of this possibility over the weekend, through a private facebook communication from the mother of a terminally ill child. Knowing time was limited for their little one, the family offered to make a directed liver donation to Lucas. On Monday evening, the donor family's worst fears came true when their child was declared brain dead. Currently, the donor family is working with their local organ transplant team to recover organ and tissue, in hopes of giving other children, including Lucas, the gift of life.

Many hurdles still remain. First, the donor does not share Lucas's blood type, although Lucas's doctors are reassuring that this discrepancy is manageable. Second, the child did have a terminal illness, and physicians must determine if the liver is safe for donation; this hurdle also seems to be surmountable. Finally, the liver must be successfully harvested and transferred to Pittsburgh for surgery.

For the Goellers, they are overwhelmed with both hope for Lucas, and sorrow for the donor and donor family. Again, the Goellers ask that everyone who has shown support for Lucas please also offer up kind thoughts and prayers for a youngster who passed away too soon, and a grieving family with the strength and grace to take the time to think of others in their time of sorrow. # # #

