



EAST TENNESSEE

Children's  
Hospital

PAIN & PALLIATIVE CARE

*Annual Report*  
2022



# Growth & commitment

The Pain and Palliative Care Program at East Tennessee Children's Hospital strives to minimize pain and maximize comfort for every child during each visit. Our team takes a collaborative and comprehensive approach to support the physical, psychological, spiritual and social care of children and their families. The program has seen some exciting growth and enhancements in recent years. By streamlining practices, doubling down on our commitment to comfort, and expanding our core family, we continue to make exciting improvements to our services to better meet patient needs.

East Tennessee Children's Hospital became ChildKind certified in 2022 -- a distinction that only 13 other hospitals hold nationwide. Our promise has always been to proactively reduce and prevent patient discomfort. As a ChildKind facility, we can now show documented proof of our efforts to keep patients safe and comfortable.

This report will highlight some of the accomplishments from our team members over the last year. For more information, visit [etch.com/medical-services/pain-palliative-care](http://etch.com/medical-services/pain-palliative-care).

*On the cover:  
2022 Children's Hospital  
Ambassador Champion  
Harper leads the runners in the  
2022 Butterfly Run, an event that  
raised more than \$50,000  
for Pain & Palliative Care.*





## Pain and Palliative Service Team

1. Dr. Jessica Nicholson, *Medical Co-Director* | 2. Dr. Oliver Hoig, *Medical Co-Director* | 3. Dr. Joni Oberlin, *Hospitalist* |  
4. Dr. Kara Cockrum, *Hospitalist* | 5. Tammy Childers, MS, APRN, CPNP,CHPPN, *Palliative Care Coordinator* |  
6. Casey Morrison, MSN, RN, *Nursing Director* | 7. Joni Pappas, MA, MT-BC, *Music Therapist* |  
8. Rachele Wiley, *Occupational Therapist/ Massage Therapist* | 9. Jodie Manross, L.Ac, *Acupuncturist*

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The 2022 Pain & Palliative Care Annual Report  
is produced by the Marketing Department  
at East Tennessee Children's Hospital,  
in conjunction with the Pain & Palliative Care Department.

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Co-Director

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Editor

## A word from our medical director

Sitting down to write this to you in the year 2022, I cannot help but reflect upon the beginning of my journey with the Pain and Palliative Program.

The year 2020 was a challenging year for all of us across the world. In healthcare specifically, we saw the effects of the pandemic up close and personal. However, I feel blessed that I was given the opportunity to play a role in the restructuring of our Pediatric Pain and Palliative Care program at ETCH. As a newcomer to Knoxville, with over a decade of experience as a pediatric hospitalist, I was proud to find myself a part of East Tennessee Children's mission to serve children throughout the area with a wide variety of complex medical needs. I was also pleasantly surprised to learn of our evolving Pain and Palliative Care program – which has at its forefront a commitment to comfort for all of our patients and their families. I joined PPC in July 2020 as a co-medical director and have continued to serve in that role.

Our Pain and Palliative Care team exists to consult on any patient in the hospital, with specific goals to reduce or eliminate unnecessary pain or other sources of discomfort, to help navigate complex medical decision making, and to support our families throughout the entire hospitalization and beyond. Palliative care does not immediately equal end of life care – we encourage our involvement in any patient's care who needs more focus on improving their quality of life, whatever that may look like.

*(continued on page 5)*



*Dr. Jessica Nicholson and music therapist Joni Pappas with a young patient*



EAST TENNESSEE

# Children's Hospital

*(continued from page 4)*

I have had the privilege to work with two additional hospitalists, an outstanding Pain and Palliative Care coordinator as well as our amazing integrative therapists (music, massage, and acupuncture). I have seen time and time again the benefit that our program brings to our patients, whether it is finding the right medication to ease their discomfort, providing a complex multimodal treatment plan involving the entire team to finally bring relief to the patient (and their family!), or simply being a friendly face to listen to what they are going through. I have also found that building relationships with the families we serve provides continuity for any future admissions or appointments. An added benefit for me – the families and their sweet children always bring a smile to my face!

This past year, our program has seen an astounding amount of growth and development. We now have the honor to be called a ChildKind certified hospital – one of only 13 in the entire world – as we place our commitment to comfort as a top priority. I am so proud of our team! We are constantly learning more through different educational opportunities to bring the forefront of pain management to the bedside in East Tennessee. We need more generous donors like you so we can continue our vision to expand the program and provide additional services for our patients and families. We thank you for your investment into this vital program here at ETCH!

Respectfully,

*Jessica Nicholson*

Jessica Nicholson, MD  
Medical Director, Pediatric Pain and Palliative Care

# Program Timeline

2013

## *Meeting a need*

Hospital nurse practitioner and anesthesiologist collaborated to devote special attention to post-surgical pain management, chronic pain management and end-of-life pain and symptom management. This later grew into the Pain and Palliative Care Program.

2015

## *Welcome inpatient massage therapist*

Children who have chronic conditions or complex medical history/needs can often develop a fear of medical care/personnel. Our Pain & Palliative Care team needed to find ways for patients to cope with the variety of stressors, symptoms, and side effects related to their treatment and illness. We introduced healthy touch to restore trust and educate kids on how to effectively express their needs all while enhancing quality of life through the use of massage.

2016

## *Welcome music therapist*

Your dollars help our therapist provide one-on-one music therapy for patients to assist with pain management, enhanced breastfeeding, and better sleep.

Music therapy also provides an opportunity for patients to experience fun, learning, and a chance to take their minds off their illness.

2019

## *Welcome palliative care coordinator*

Navigating the health care landscape can be confusing for families. We hired the palliative care coordinator as a liaison for families, their care teams and their support network.

## *Welcome acupuncture/acupressure therapist*

Acupuncture and acupressure, provided by licensed therapist Jodie Manross, can help relieve a patient's uncomfortable symptoms like nausea, headaches, constipation and more.

# 2020

## *COVID-19 Pandemic*

The pandemic challenged our team to provide comfort when visitation and family support was limited.

## *New program structure introduced*

In 2020, Children's Hospital announced it will expand the Pain and Palliative Care Program. Hospitalist Dr. Jessica Nicholson is appointed the Pain and Palliative Care Co-Director. The hospitalists compliment the anesthesiologist's surgical patient pain management with pain and symptom management of patients experiencing serious acute and/or chronic illness

# 2021

## *Partnering with ETEH Pediatric Rehabilitation team*

Massage therapy becomes available every weekday through our rehab team. Expanding the benefit of massage therapy to more patients in need. Massage therapist Rachele Wiley joins the Pain & Palliative Care family providing a consistent massage therapist for patients experiencing frequent hospitalizations.



EAST TENNESSEE

Children's  
Hospital

# 2021 Pain and Palliative Patients Served

**2,125**

Total encounters  
with patients  
and families

**621**

Provider/doctor  
encounters

**236**

Palliative Care  
Coordinator  
encounters

**265**

Massage Therapy  
encounters

**735**

Music Therapy  
encounters

**9**

Acupuncture/  
Acupressure  
Therapy  
encounters

**259**

Encounters  
with Surgical  
Patients

**41**

Encounters  
with Post-op  
Scoliosis  
Patients





# 2022 Pain and Palliative Patients Served

**2,443**

Total encounters  
with patients  
and families

**747**

Provider/doctor  
encounters

**244**

Palliative Care  
Coordinator  
encounters

**339**

Massage Therapy  
encounters

**755**

Music Therapy  
encounters

**109**

Acupuncture/  
Acupressure  
Therapy  
encounters

**249**

Encounters  
with Surgical  
Patients

**29**

Encounters  
with Post-op  
Scoliosis  
Patients



# Spotlight on Massage Therapy

Children who have chronic conditions or complex medical history and needs can often develop a fear of medical care and personnel. Massage therapy supports children with finding ways to cope with the variety of stressors, symptoms, and side effects related to their treatment and illness. Introducing healthy touch to restore trust and educate kids on how to effectively express their needs all while enhancing quality of life through the use of massage.

Our pediatric massage therapist provides therapeutic touch to facilitate with pain and symptom management for kids recovering from surgery, rehabilitating from serious trauma or illness, and recovering from acute and/or chronic serious illness. Massage can help decrease “negative touch” to areas of pain sensitivity such as needle poke sites, surgical incisions, or wounds by introducing positive touch to decrease sensitivity. Therapists educate parents and families on providing appropriate healing touch to their children during their time in inpatient care to increase coping skills and comfort.

## Success Stories from *Massage Therapy*

**FROM THE CASE FILES OF  
Rachele Wiley, MSOT, OTR/L, Occupational & Massage Therapist**

A teenager with chronic illness struggles with severe headache limiting activity, sleep and nutrition. Massage therapist provides focused massage to neck and shoulders to alleviate pressure and pain.

*“I feel so relaxed and comfortable. I feel a big difference in my neck and shoulders and feel like I could fall asleep.”*

An infant with new cancer diagnosis suffers from temporary one-sided paralysis. Massage therapist provides light pressure massage on paralyzed side to promote circulation and sensation. Infant looks toward therapist as massage begins and enters sleep state upon completion. Therapists provided education to family.

*“I think my baby is responding to your touch by moving opposite arm and leg.”*



*Occupational and massage therapist Rachele Wiley provides massage therapy to a cancer patient*

# Spotlight on Music Therapy

Music therapy is the use of music experiences administered by a credentialed Music Therapist to meet the individual needs of a child through the child's musical preferences. Areas of need that are commonly addressed through music therapy include, but are not limited to, pain management, stress and anxiety reduction, relaxation, cognitive stimulation, fine and gross motor movement, self-expression, social interaction, and family connectedness.

A child will actively or passively engage during music therapy sessions. The child may play various instruments, move to music, sing, compose songs or listen to live music while guided through deep breathing exercises and relaxation techniques. Music is naturally engaging, motivational, and soothing for children and the music therapy experiences they have can assist in comprehensively treating their medical needs.

## Success Stories from *Music Therapy*

### FROM THE CASE FILES OF Joni Pappas, MA, MT-BC, Music Therapist

A premature baby in the neonatal intensive care struggles with frequent agitation. The baby was able to transition to a relaxed state with music therapy using soothing therapeutic humming. As the baby reached full term, interactive music therapy supported the baby's developmental needs.

*"Music therapy helped my baby calm some days and playfully interactive at other days"*

A school aged child suffers illness requiring a breathing tube and lengthy stay in the pediatric intensive care unit. Music therapy supports recovery by increasing strength while assisting patient with striking drum and strumming guitar. Once patient shows signs of fatigue, music therapy transitions to music guided relaxation leading to drowsy, restful state at end of session.

*"The patient gained strength over time and became very enthusiastic about playing the drums light up mallets."*



*Music therapist  
Joni Pappas  
works with a  
new mother  
in the NICU*

## Spotlight on Acupuncture

Hi! My name is Jodie Manross. I am a licensed acupuncturist as a part of ETC's amazing Pain and Palliative Care Team. You may think, "What?! Needles for kids?!" Actually most kids fall asleep during an acupuncture session and feel very relaxed! Twenty of my acupuncture needles fit into a regular needle - they are that tiny! Acupuncture is evidence-based and very helpful for pain, nausea, stress, and anxiety. I also do gentle acupressure which is similar to massage or healing touch therapy. I am so honored to be a part of such a caring integrated medicine team who helps kids.



*Acupuncturist Jodie Manross provides acupuncture therapy to a cancer patient*

# Success Stories from Acupuncture

**FROM THE CASE FILES OF  
Jodie Manross, L.Ac, Acupuncturist**

A child with multiple complex medical needs requires extended intensive care hospitalization following infection leading to respiratory failure and surgery for permanent breathing tube. Mom states her child is restless and agitated and likely experiencing post surgery pain and neuro irritability. The acupuncturist provides gentle acupressure massage to pressure points on patients arms, hands, legs and feet to manage pain, support relaxed breathing and decrease anxiety. Patient enters a calm and sleeping state as session is completed. Acupuncturist talked about essential oils since mom said that patient responds well to scents. Requested orange, lavender, and peppermint essential oils for patient.

*“I am very happy to have the acupuncturist help my child relax with her treatments”*

A teenager with a chronic illness resulting in frequent pain receives acupuncture to help with pain, nausea and vomiting. The acupuncturist provides acupuncture therapy to 9 points on arm, hand, legs and feet. Acupressure bands to help with nausea, constipation and anxiety provided along with education on usage.

*“I felt very relaxed and enjoyed the acupuncture therapy. I asked to have therapy again when I’m here.”*



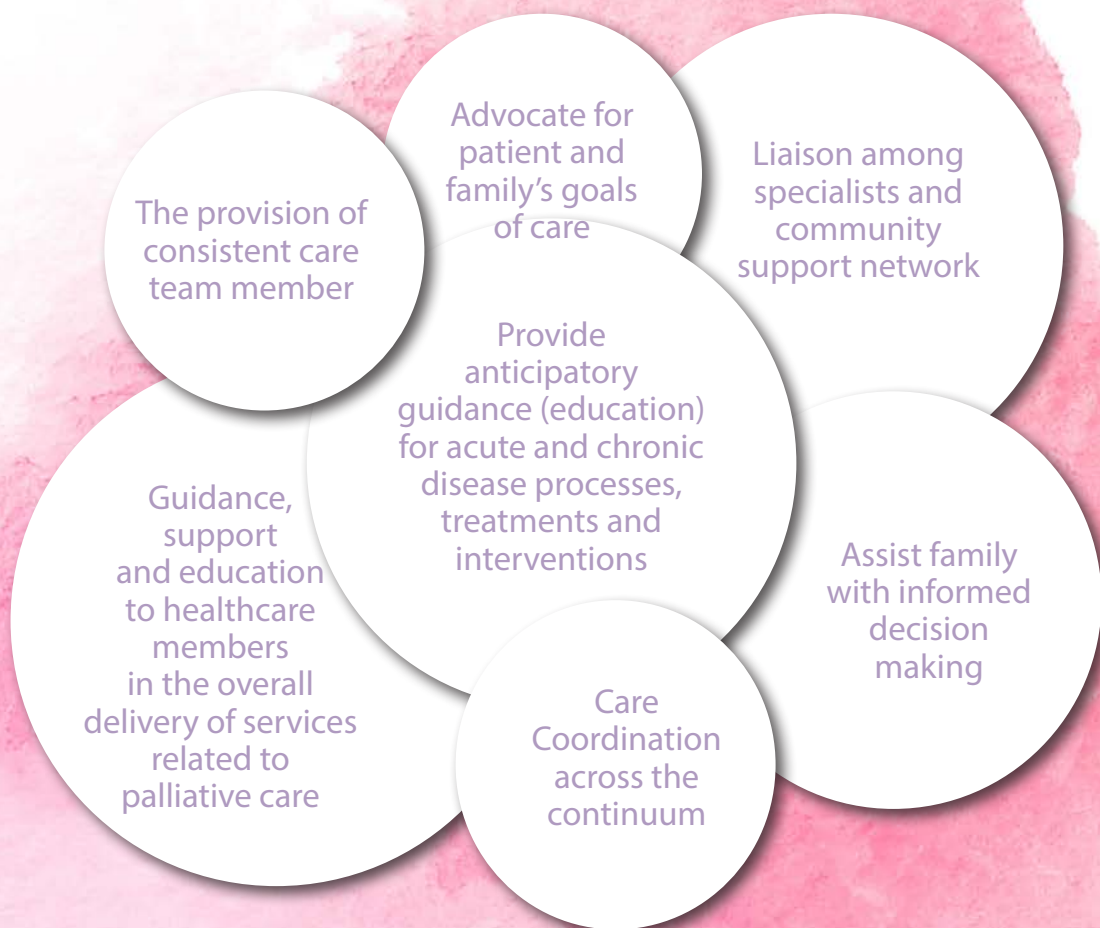
Care coordinator  
Tammy Childers and team  
meet with a patient in the PICU.



# What is *Care Coordination*?

The palliative care coordinator supports the comprehensive care of children living with serious illness, their families and their care team members. Through collaboration with patients, families and the multidisciplinary team including nurses, doctors, social workers, child life specialist, chaplains, therapists, and community members, the PCC aims to meet the physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs of patients and their families to enhance their quality of life.

Care Coordination includes:



# Commitment to Comfort

East Tennessee Children's Hospital continues to lead the way in safe, high quality pediatric health care. We are committed to care and comfort during your treatment. Our expert health care team work together to offer patients comfort. We supply physical, psychological and pharmacological treatments.

Our goal is to unite our institution on a shared mission of pain prevention. By continually re-committing to do no harm, we demonstrate our organization's core values to excellence and respect.

The following principles continue to shape our practice:

- **Undertreated pain is associated with negative consequences.**  
Children are at greater risk of experiencing unnecessary pain in a health care setting.
- **Pain is complex and each individual responds to pain differently.**  
Prevention requires planning with the child, their caregivers and their healthcare team.
- **Pain prevention and management must incorporate all of a patient's needs.**  
This includes physical, psychological and pharmacological needs.
- **Care givers should be actively involved in pain assessment and providing comfort.**
- **Staff, students, patients and caregivers receive education on pain management.**
- **Children's Hospital utilizes facility-wide policies on pain assessment, management and prevention with every child.**
- **We use self-monitoring programs, such as nursing pain management audits, to ensure quality pain prevention and management.**
- **We use feedback from surveys and audits through the Office of Patient Experience and adjust practices accordingly.**



# Program Accomplishments and Goals

## Hospital wide commitment to comfort

Pain Champion Task Force continues to work to support quality pain management through coaching evaluation and improvement of processes surrounding pain prevention, assessment and treatment for patients to minimize pain and maximize comfort utilizing a multidisciplinary team approach for every patient during each visit.

Continued hospital wide commitment to comfort begins at new hire orientation, which highlights every team member's part in creating a comfortable experience for patients and families.

## Surgery related pain management

- Scoliosis and Appendicitis care pathways
- Scoliosis pre-surgery site visit and education day.
- Improved Pectus repair

## Pain and Palliative care education

- Pain Masters Course Participation 12/3/22-12/9/22
- End of Life Nursing Education Course 4/29/21-4/30/21
- New Nurse Orientation Pain/Palliative education quarterly

## Future:

- End of Life Nurse Education Course April 2023
- Transition to Pediatric New Nurse Orientation Pain/Palliative education beginning May 2023
- Grand Rounds presentation August 2023

## *How you can get involved*

Pain & Palliative Care is not covered by most insurance providers. Your donation can help ensure more patients have access to healing therapies like massage, music, acupuncture and others.

**Visit [www.etch.com/pain-palliative-care](http://www.etch.com/pain-palliative-care) to learn more.**



Victoria, age 2  
2023 Children's Hospital  
Ambassador Champion