





A LETTER FROM THE CHIEF

Dear Friends,

As we near the 30th anniversary of the Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center of Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, I remain grateful for the support of our donors, who have enabled us to be at the forefront in the field of pediatric hematology/oncology. Each day our faculty and staff commit themselves to serving our community, including the nearly 9,500 patients we saw in 2023.

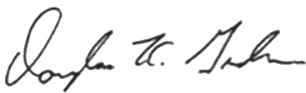
Along with excellence in clinical care, our team is devoted to finding more cures and better treatment options for the patients we see today, and those not yet diagnosed, through innovative research in the labs and at the bedside. As part of the Children's Oncology Group, we are the second-largest institution for clinical trial enrollment. We have more than 330 clinical trials open for children currently diagnosed with cancer, 34 of which are investigator-initiated.

I hope you are inspired by our patients as you read this report. You will meet Noey, Sawyer and Saxton, and you'll be compelled to further your commitment when you read about Emerson, who fought so courageously but ultimately succumbed to a brain tumor.

Ranked a top 10 program by US News & World Report, we are one of the largest programs in the country and the largest in the Southeast. Our size allows us to care for the most complex cases while also learning from each child treated. Our collaboration with hospitals across the country helps expand the impact of your investment, both here in Atlanta and across the state of Georgia and beyond.

On behalf of everyone at the Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center, thank you for your commitment to the children we serve. We are grateful for your generous support of our efforts to give them the long, healthy and happy lives they deserve, because we believe Every Child Deserves a Lifetime.

Sincerely,

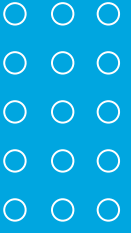


Douglas K. Graham, MD, PhD
Chief, Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center
Division Chief, Pediatric Hematology/Oncology/BMT Children's Healthcare of Atlanta
Professor of Pediatrics
Emory University School of Medicine
William G. Woods, MD Chair



ABOUT OUR PROGRAMS





THE AFLAC CANCER AND BLOOD DISORDERS CENTER CARES FOR MORE KIDS WITH CANCER THAN ANYONE ELSE IN GEORGIA

As Georgia's top pediatric cancer research center, we're developing new and innovative cancer treatments right here in Atlanta.

We are one of the **largest** pediatric cancer centers in the country, treating **more than 480** new cancer patients.

We have the **largest** pediatric sickle cell disease program in the nation, treating **more than 2,100** unique pediatric sickle cell disease patients.



2023 AT A GLANCE

We employ **125** faculty members—nearly **7** times as many as in 2000—including nearly **50** advanced practice providers.

Performed **74 bone marrow transplants**, making us one of the **largest pediatric BMT programs** in the country.

Treated patients from **43 states and territories.**

More than 330 clinical trials are available to our patients, **34** of which are Aflac investigator-initiated.

In collaboration with Emory University, our researchers are developing **new treatment options** for patients who need it most.



Cared for 2,179 kids in our Cancer Survivor Program over the last five years.

Completed **nearly 38,000** outpatient visits across three campuses.

Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center Inception Story

In 1995, the children's hospital clinical director needed \$25,000 to make improvements to the floor where they cared for children with cancer and blood disorders. A development officer on the team conducted research looking for a donor to fulfill this need and came across a company in Columbus, GA that sold cancer insurance.

After several attempts, Kathelen Amos invited her to Columbus to talk about potential funding. Dan Amos joined Kathelen for the meeting, and our development officer shared her personal story of her daughter's cancer and her need for a **life-saving** bone marrow transplant. Unfortunately, her daughter could not get a bone marrow transplant in the Southeast, so their family had to move to Seattle, WA, for four months for their daughter's transplant.



When the development officer finished her story, Dan said that no child should have to leave home in order to save their life. He asked her what it would take to build onto the facility and name the floor where we treated children with cancer "The Aflac Cancer Center." Having never been asked that before, the development officer took it to the Children's board of directors and they said, "three million dollars." It was then that Aflac made a pledge of \$3M to name the **Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center**, which developed under the leadership of the late Dr. Bill Woods.



Aflac
**Cancer & Blood
Disorders Center**
Children's
— Healthcare of Atlanta —

The following year, Dan issued a challenge to the Aflac Sales Force, telling them he would match their gifts to the Aflac Cancer Center up to \$100,000. In usual Force fashion, they met Dan's match that year. Since the relationship began and the center's inception, Aflac has given nearly **\$190M** to the Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center. The Sales Force's gifts fund cancer and blood disorder research specifically.

What Sales Force Research Money has Supported

Cell and Gene Therapy

Starting in 2025, the Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center will open their doors to a good manufacturing practice (GMP) compliant advanced cell and gene therapy lab. The lab will manufacture and deliver cellular therapies to patients through clinical trials offered by the Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center Cellular Therapy team. Cell therapy uses cells, derived from a patient or healthy donor, to treat various diseases and conditions. With the manufacturing lab in-house at the new Arthur M. Blank Hospital, patient wait times will be reduced by half for some cell treatments, as the cells will not need to be transported from various other locations around the country. "The Children's and Emory cell therapy program is the only one in the country offering a full range of cellular therapy treatments, including regenerative medicine, for a broad spectrum of diseases addressing the whole child," said Edwin Horwitz, MD, PhD, Director of Transplantation Biology and Therapeutics for the Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center alongside H. Trent Spencer, PhD, Director of Gene and Cell Therapy at the Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center.

AML Trial

Building on three decades of work that led to the development of an oral drug to treat two forms of leukemia, the Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center research team has launched a phase I clinical trial to determine the maximum tolerated dose of the therapy, establish its safety profile and determine side effects in adolescents. Melinda G. Pauly, MD, Pediatric Hematologist/Oncologist and Medical Director of the Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center, is leading the 45-patient trial of MRX-2843, an oral therapy that inhibits the growth of leukemia cells in relapsed acute myeloid leukemia (AML) and acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL) at the Center. Simultaneously, as the first cancer trial at Children's to open for adults and children at the same time. A trial in adults and children is also taking place at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Douglas K. Graham, MD, PhD, Chief of the Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center, discovered the MerTK gene and his research has validated it as a target for leukemia therapy. Working with Deborah DeRyckere, PhD, Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at the Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center and scientists from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Dr. Graham developed MRX-2843 to specifically target these leukemia cells and stop their growth. His preclinical work showed that blocking MerTK with MRX-2843 effectively kills leukemia cells, especially in combination with chemotherapy. Preclinical findings have also shown the drug can activate the immune system to combat the leukemia cells. "Historically, new therapies are tried in adults first, but this will give children with relapsed and resistant acute AML and ALL the opportunity to access the drug sooner, hopefully improving their quality of life with an oral medicine taken at home," said Dr. Pauly.

Sickle Cell Disease Pain Program

Soumitri Sil, PhD, Director of the Pediatric Psychology Clinic at the Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center is working with the National Institutes of Health on an initiative titled: Helping to End Addiction Long-term (HEAL). Dr. Sil and team are developing and testing a new pain management intervention for adolescents with chronic pain related to sickle cell disease, a disease that primarily affects Black and African Americans in the United States. Dr. Sil will gather feedback from patients, families and community healthcare workers to form advisory boards on how best to modify an existing intervention for another chronic pain condition, juvenile fibromyalgia, to meet the unique needs of adolescents with chronic sickle cell pain.

At the Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center, we have a multidisciplinary program focused on the prevention and treatment of chronic pain in patients with sickle cell disease. The program will use a multifaceted approach, including multiple medications, intensive psychological therapies, physical therapy, child life and other supportive services provided through regularly scheduled outpatient visits, as well as frequent phone and electronic contact with patients and families between visits. Unique, individualized pain management plans will be developed for each patient with careful attention to ensuring consistency of care during emergency room visits and hospitalizations.

**Overall total
from Aflac Inc.
Nearly \$190 Million**

**Overall total
from Sales Force
Over \$119 Million**

Sales Force Testimonies



"As an Aflac insurance agent, I've always been proud of the services we provide, knowing their potential to bring real change to people's lives. This belief turned into a profound personal reality when my son, Logan, born in November 2016, was diagnosed with a rare brain tumor at just three months old. The exceptional team at the Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta crafted a comprehensive treatment plan with incredible compassion and expertise. We were fortunate to administer this plan close to home at Albany Medical Center, which significantly eased the logistical challenges of our treatment journey.

Logan's battles didn't stop there. Recently, he completed an intensive three-month outpatient feeding therapy program at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta. His courage and resilience throughout the process have been awe-inspiring, especially as he learned to eat by mouth—a milestone we once thought might be unattainable. Today, at nearly eight years old, Logan is joyfully meeting half of his nutritional needs through eating, a testament to his incredible fighting spirit and the high-quality care he received.

These experiences have deeply reinforced my trust in the mission of Aflac and my role within the company. They have intensified my commitment to ensuring every family can access comprehensive, compassionate care. The Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center is more than just a medical facility; it is a haven where families find hope and the strength to fight back. It embodies the promise that every Aflac policy holds—not just coverage, but a commitment to support, resilience, and recovery."

~ Jennifer Hendricks-Fogg



"The Aflac culture I joined in 2005, that Joanna had already been a part of for many years, was already one of "you give to the Children's Aflac Cancer Center." It's just what we did, starting where you could, and add as you go. I started a monthly statement donation of \$20 as soon as I was able.

Unfortunately, cancer has affected our lives very significantly, losing several close family members to the awful disease over the years. It was a goal of Joanna's to reach the Circle of Care level as soon as possible. That was a significant milestone for us to reach, and now, we have individually reached this milestone. Years later, I heard about the opportunity to name a room at the hospital, and we dedicated a patient room in honor of Joanna's parents. That was extremely special.

Donating to the Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center makes us feel great. The organization is doing such amazing things for families going through the roughest time of their lives, but also researching ways to stop families from ever having to experience it themselves. To be able to help that in any way will never stop being a priority."

~ Luke and Joanna Rockwell

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ARTHUR M. BLANK HOSPITAL NEW HOME, NEW FUTURE

- Already one of the largest institutions in the country caring for children with cancer and blood disorders, the Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center will expand to meet the growing needs of our patients and families when the doors of the new Arthur M. Blank Hospital open on Sept. 29, 2024.
- The new home of the Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center will consolidate both Scottish Rite and Egleston campus locations, merging hematology and oncology services to give our patients easy access to one of the largest teams of specialists in the country, all under one roof.
- A game changer for kids undergoing treatment for cancer and blood disorders, Arthur M. Blank Hospital will have:
 - More patient beds, increasing from 64 to 98.
 - Three floors of the clinic building dedicated to the treatment of cancer and blood disorders.
 - A consolidated space for research, promoting collaboration and increasing accessibility for patients who choose to participate in clinical trials.
 - Family lounges on every inpatient floor, especially for families of hematology-oncology and BMT patients.
 - GMP and GTP therapy labs dedicated to providing the most innovative care and treatment.
- This is an exciting new chapter in an extraordinary legacy, and we are grateful to have the support of our community as we strive to make kids better today and healthier tomorrow. We can't do what we do without you.





The opening of Arthur M. Blank Hospital allows us to consolidate campuses, giving patients easy access to one of the **largest teams** of pediatric specialists in the country, with **20%** of patient rooms devoted to the Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center.





Afric
Cancer & Blood
Disorders Center



**CONTINUE
YOUR SUPPORT
TODAY!**

