

**SCOTTISH RITE FOUNDATION 2020 ANNUAL REPORT  
CHILDREN'S COLORADO  
2020 ANNUAL REPORT**

**STATISTICAL SUMMARY**

In 2020, the Scottish Rite Foundation (SRF) helped 224 children achieve their full potential in communication and learning at Children's Hospital Colorado Denver Metro area through therapy, Cleft Palate Clinic, and/or camp programs and parent education. The table below shows the Scottish Rite Foundation's contributions to therapy, Cleft Palate Clinic, parent education, and Talking with Technology Camp. A generous contribution from the *Rollie R. Kelley Family Foundation* supported care for children and their families at First Steps Camps in 2020. The overall average cost per child for services at Children's Hospital Colorado Metro Denver area was \$3,291, an average increase of approximately \$1,169 per child relative to 2019, and a small investment for a lifetime of communication and learning. Please note a 64% increase in the number of children who received therapy more than one time per week during the COVID 19 pandemic compared to 2019.

Program (# Children)	Scottish Rite Foundation or Rollie R. Kelley Family Foundation contribution	Average Cost per Child
Therapy, Cleft Palate Clinic, Learning, and Parent Education (220)	\$734,672	\$3291
Talking with Technology Camp	Canceled due to COVID	
First Steps Camp (4) Rollie R. Kelley Family & Scottish Rite Foundation	\$3,640	\$910
<b>TOTAL (224)</b>	<b>\$738,311</b>	<b>\$3,296</b>

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The department offers various programs to meet the diverse needs of children with speech, hearing, language, learning, and other communication disorders. Within these specialty areas, we offer a wide range of services for individuals with autism spectrum disorder, apraxia of speech, augmentative/alternative communication needs, cleft lip and palate, developmental delay, fluency disorder, head injury and/or stroke, feeding disorders, hearing loss or deafness, learning disabilities, and voice disorders. Services are provided in locations convenient to the families' homes at Children's Hospital Colorado's Anschutz Campus (Aurora) and community-based Network of Care sites (Broomfield, Highlands Ranch, South, and Parker). For some families in rural/outlying communities, where there is no location close to their homes, we offer speech-language and learning therapy by telepractice. Telepractice is treatment by real-time video conferencing over secure Internet connectivity to families' homes. In 2020, with advances in technology, we provided telepractice at all sites, which was essential for service provision during a global pandemic. Our ability to provide services through telepractice allowed us to build a sense of togetherness and continue serving our patients even when the hospital and schools had to close. Fortunately, because of our support from the Scottish Rite Foundation, we had the infrastructure to support the children we serve, so there were no clinical services gaps.

Evaluation and addressing care models have continued this past year, especially with the COVID-19 pandemic. In March 2020, all outpatient therapy clinics closed, requiring speech-language pathologists and learning specialists to pivot to telepractice. From March 18 – 28, 2020 (the initial two weeks of closure) approximately 74% of patients receiving speech-language therapy and 100% of patients receiving learning therapy converted in-person therapy to telepractice. Speech-language therapy held via telepractice initially focused on individual therapy for 194 patients, resulting in all group therapy programs pausing. Throughout the remainder of 2020, access increased to include various group programs, all held via telepractice. Group programs offered during 2020 included Hanen More Than Words, Hanen Talkability, social skills, and early intervention groups. Speech-Language Pathologists demonstrated amazing creativity in developing programs for telepractice that are just as effective as those offered in-person. Parent education programs, such as Hanen More than Words and Hanen Talkability, will continue to be offered via telepractice in the future. The experiences of the past year will likely change service provision for years to come. The benefits of telepractice are that it reduces patient travel time, cancellations due to weather or sibling illnesses, bridges the gap of distance, and allows the improved implementation of treatments and therapies. The parents are the ones doing the intervention work while we provide support and feedback. Parents appreciated and took advantage of the convenience of telepractice for these parent programs.

For treating children with dyslexia, telepractice learning therapy proved very successful as many Learning Specialists could add additional children to their schedule. School-age children's flexibility in schedule due to school transitions to virtual teaching resulted in increased access to learning services. Telepractice learning therapy continues to be a convenient model of therapy services for families.

To improve access to evaluations in our department, we have added 42 team (speech-language pathologists and learning specialists) evaluations per month. These team visits address the child's academic and communication strengths and challenges. To ensure and maintain the health and safety of children, families and the clinical team members, telepractice speech-language and learning therapy remains prevalent within all the therapy clinics.

Currently, more than 114 speech-language pathologists, 38 audiologists, 19 learning disabilities specialists, a clinical social worker, deaf educator, and family consultant provide care to children and their families through the Department of Audiology, Speech Pathology, and Learning Services at Children's Hospital Colorado Metro Denver Area. Our services are the program of choice for families seeking speech-language, learning, and hearing services outside the educational system for their child.

Our leadership team continues to be active at the state, national, and international levels to guide best practices by conducting innovative research studies and quality improvement projects, leading to standardization of care. We continue to strive toward excellence in service provision by providing state-of-the-art care guided by evidence-based practices.

### **ACCOUNTABILITY**

Children's Hospital Colorado documents the effectiveness of treatment through validated, standardized clinical measures and parent surveys. We use our electronic health record to track outcomes for children who receive Scottish Rite Funding. These assessments are conducted based on evidence-based care and are part of the standard of care assessments, and all data are de-identified. These assessment tools in the database target social communication skills, language comprehension, expressive language, and articulation abilities. Assessments are administered upon a child's entry to therapy and in six months intervals thereafter. Pre and post-assessment scores are entered into the database every 6-12 months, depending on the acceptable timeframe for re-administered tools.

### **REPORT FROM THE ENDOWED CHAIR**

The Scottish Rite Foundation's gift of the *Kelley Family/Schlessman Family Scottish Rite Masons Endowed Chair in Childhood Language Disorders* in 2003 affords program improvements for services to children with language disorders throughout the state. This support enables program initiatives; Foundation recognition; and various other functions to enhance the Foundation, RiteCare Clinic, and Treasure Chest Program viability and visibility.

The income from the endowed chair supports Jeannie O'Neil, Program Assistant to the *Kelley Family/Schlessman Family Scottish Rite Masons Chair in Childhood Language Disorders*, in coordinating Scottish Rite Foundation patient databases, Children's Hospital Colorado Appraisal Committee Meetings, the Annual Luncheon, and other special events, and financial tracking for Children's Hospital RiteCare program. Jeannie also initiates and designs the statewide publication, *RiteView*, a publication for and about Colorado's RiteCare and Treasure Chest programs.

Jeannie's invaluable assistance makes it possible for the Chairholder, Kristin Uhler, to devote her efforts for the Scottish Rite Foundation to program development and implementation, grant writing, and service evaluation.

In 2020, the income from the endowed chair funded, in part or total, the following:

- Salary support for Program Assistant Jeannie O'Neil
- Salary support for Chair Holder Kristin Uhler
- Scottish Rite Foundation Annual Luncheon
- Coordination with Foundation Executive Secretary of the *Dwight A. Hamilton Scottish Rite Foundation Graduate Student Scholarship in Speech-Language Pathology* awards
- Publication and distribution of the *RiteView* tri-annual newsletter
- Chair Holder travel to and/or presentations at professional meetings
- Coordination of the RiteCare REDCap outcomes database
- Volunteer recognition expenses
- Development of a new grant initiative for consideration by the Board of Trustees

Per Children's Hospital Colorado Foundation, the Endowed Chair's market value on December 31, 2020, was approximately **\$4,069,923**. The anticipated 2021 annual distribution to Children's Hospital Colorado, Department of Audiology, Speech Pathology, and Learning Services will be **\$158,633**.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

We are honored to partner with the Scottish Rite Foundation in bringing therapy services and support for children with language disorders and their families throughout our state. In the years ahead, we will strive to meet the Foundation's vision that all Colorado's children will have access to speech-language and learning therapy services regardless of where they live in this great state.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristin M. Uhler  
Kelley Family/Schlessman Family  
Scottish Rite Masons Chair in Childhood Language Disorders