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Thank you, Willow Park Charity Golf Classic!

Your generous support has enabled the Alberta Children's Hospital to help pioneer the field of pediatric medical simulation in Canada. In fact, the KidSIM team is providing international leadership - to save the lives of children in Alberta, western Canada and beyond. After years of providing the tremendous benefit of simulation training to health care professionals, our KidSIM team is now the first in Canada - and one of the first in the world - to provide education directly to the families of children with high-needs medical conditions.

Karen and Eric were thrilled to welcome a baby, Maya, into their family seven years ago. Doctors told them that the birthmark on the side of Maya's face may be an indication of a rare neurological disorder called Sturge Weber Syndrome. Only time would tell if it would cause some challenges for her. They held out hope that wouldn't be the case, but while waiting for MRI results before her first birthday, little Maya had her first seizure. Karen and Eric prepared themselves for the long road ahead.

When Karen first learned what would be involved in helping her little girl, it was quite overwhelming. "Maya's seizures are pretty intense," says Karen. "It's so important that we get rescue medications to her quickly in order to get them to stop. If we don't, she ends up in hospital for a couple weeks trying to recover." To add to that pressure, Karen also recognizes that the longer the seizure lasts, the higher the risk becomes of damage to her little girl's brain.

Thanks to support from the hospital's KidSIM Family Centred Care Seizure Program, she was able to receive one-on-one training with a highly realistic

mannequin which mimicked an actual seizure. While the mannequin seized, Karen practiced stabilizing the head in order to give a nasal spray of medication. From there, she was able to practice drawing up a syringe of medication to inject into the leg. "It was so helpful," explains Karen. "Helen, the KidSIM facilitator, walked through all the different scenarios and locations I could be in when Maya might seize. If I was alone, if I was home with my son, if I was at the mall. Every scenario required a different kind of action." Karen was grateful that Helen let her practice giving the medications as many times as she needed in order to become comfortable with the routine.

As Maya grew, it was time to start thinking about preschool. Karen and Eric wanted her to experience as many milestones as she could. The independence of going to school was important, but how could they send her off without one of them by her side?

Once again, KidSIM stepped in and offered to train up school staff so that they could be prepared to deliver the nasal spray medication. "It gave us such peace of mind to know that Maya would be well cared for should she seize," says Karen. "The training gave the teachers great confidence. They didn't need to be afraid." The school went on to create a plan with nearby EMS so, in an emergency, paramedics would be able to give an injection to Maya to stop her seizure and transport her to the hospital.

"KidSIM has made a normal childhood possible for Maya. We couldn't do this without them."

- Maya's mom, Karen

Throughout Kindergarten and into Grade One, Maya has been thriving at school. Karen is humbled by the incredible support their family has received. "To see the principal and all Maya's teachers and other staff take time out of their day to learn how to care for her was so amazing. KidSIM has made a normal childhood possible for Maya. We couldn't do this without them. I'm beyond grateful for the community support that made this incredible program available for our family."

Thanks to generous support from the community, last year 21 families received specialized training to care for their children with seizure disorders or tracheostomies.