



# **5-YEAR RETROSPECTIVE**

FEBRUARY 2025

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# INTRODUCTION



*Created from the collective voice of our community, today we raise the curtain on our new 2020-2025 Strategic Plan. And with those words, on March 2, 2020, a new era of unprecedented outcomes powered by Precision Child Health began. Unprecedented indeed, as just over a week later, came these words: *The WHO has declared COVID-19 a pandemic event.* Spoken at our very first COVID-19 Virtual Town Hall, it launched a new era, one that would challenge the organization like never before.*

Despite organizational bandwidth being diverted to our pandemic response and recovery efforts over the next two years, staff banded together in true SickKids

spirit to advance SickKids 2025, a testament to their resilience, determination and belief in our vision. And as we returned to a new normal, their efforts in support of SickKids 2025 only accelerated.

In the three years that followed, weary but with a steadfast resolve, staff delivered a remarkable number of accomplishments across the six strategic directions of SickKids 2025. That is why this retrospective must begin with a sincere thank you to our people for their strength, compassion, commitment, and tenacity to serve the patients and families of Ontario, Canada, and abroad.

The team's efforts have set the foundations for the era of Precision Child Health, made drastic enhancements to patient and family experiences, kept our community safe, advanced critical data and technology foundations, churned out discovery and translational research, transformed education, started the shift to a more sustainable employee experience, and lifted our beautiful Patient Support Centre skyward.

To our patients, families, partners, donors, and especially our staff, we thank you for your commitment and collaboration to achieving SickKids vision of:

**Healthier Children. A Better World.**





COMPASSION

INTEGRITY

COLLABORATION

INCLUSION

INNOVATION

EXCELLENCE

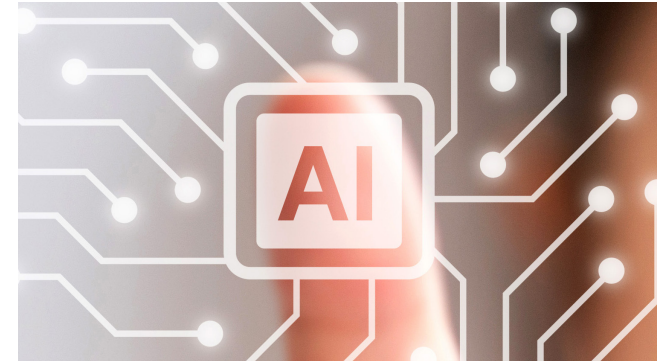




# INDIVIDUALIZE CHILD AND YOUTH HEALTH CARE

## SICKKIDS 2025 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Leverage artificial intelligence integrating big data spanning the genetic code to the postal code
- Fuel discovery and accelerate translation to groundbreaking clinical trials and care
- Ensure every patient has the opportunity to engage in and the right to benefit from research



## SUCCESS MEASURES

# 3,364

FY20/21Q1 to FY24/25Q3

### Sequencing use in Clinical Care

Number of SickKids patients receiving sequencing at SickKids for clinical care.

# 25,032

FY22/23Q1 to FY24/25Q3

### Sequencing use in Research

Number of samples receiving sequencing for research at SickKids.

# 2,627

FY23/24

### Active research projects

Number of research projects with active spending held at the Research Institute.

# 2,977

FY23/24

### Publications

Number of publications from SickKids.

### Why are these important?

Use of patients' genetic information is essential to fuel discovery and translation to individualized care, a critical component of the Precision Child Health movement.

### Why is this important?

All forms of research are critical to generate new knowledge to improve child and youth health.

### Why is this important?

Publication is a key knowledge translation tool to fuel progress in child and youth health, nationally and globally.





## ACHIEVEMENTS

### FUELING OUTCOMES THROUGH PRECISION CHILD HEALTH

The Precision Child Health (PCH) movement has grown significantly, inspiring all staff to reimagine their roles in shaping the future of paediatric care. With the shift comes many milestones:

- In 2022, SickKids delivered its first single-patient gene therapy clinical trial, providing an individualized gene therapy for a patient with SPG50.
- The opening of the Cellular Therapy Facility in 2023 is helping to create a more sustainable path to individualized therapies.
- Our understanding of the clinical utility of whole genome sequencing and RNA sequencing across diseases has deepened, leading to the establishment of a Genome Board to support translational research.
- The visibility and impact of PCH grew exponentially through the launch of SickKids VS Heal the Future Foundation campaign, multiple staff engagement events, the International Precision Child Health Partnership and the Precision Child Health Partnership with CHU Sainte-Justine.

### SHAPING THE FUTURE OF HEALTH CARE THROUGH AI

Based on lessons learned from field leading experts in health AI, SickKids is finalizing design of its enterprise AI program, SickKids AI:

- Set to launch in early 2025, this trailblazing program will revolutionize paediatric clinical care, education, research, and operations through responsible AI.
- Through work streams that include an in-house AI service, discovery arm for AI research, and a community of networked AI affiliates, SickKids will translate AI hype into positive impacts for patients, families, and staff.

### MEANINGFUL PATIENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IN RESEARCH

SickKids is strengthening our approach to meaningful engagement by embedding patient, family and community voices into research to improve study design, recruitment and patient outcomes:

- A centralized Office of Patient, Family and Community Engagement was established to align patient engagement practices across the institution, allowing the patient and family voices to inform the integration between research and care.
- The Research Family Advisory Committee advises researchers on making study recruitment and participation more effective and inclusive, helping study teams increase recruitment numbers and improve data quality.
- The Patient Engagement in Research Program has introduced over 200 early career researchers to the value of patient partnership, shaping a generation of clinicians and research staff who now recognize how patient engagement enhances research and can improve patient outcomes.





# CREATE A SEAMLESS CHILD AND FAMILY EXPERIENCE

## SICKKIDS 2025 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Partner purposefully to advance health system integration and value creation
- Transcend geography with virtual care
- Integrate physical, mental, and behavioural health care
- Advocate for equity and action on social determinants of health



## SUCCESS MEASURES

# 91%

FY20/21Q1 to FY23/24Q4

### Compliance to Connected Care Bundle

Percent of patients/families who received 100% of their bundle components after being discharged home through Connected Care with medical technology and home care nursing.

# 34%

FY20/21Q1 to FY24/25Q3

### Virtual Care Utilization

Percent of ambulatory visits completed virtually.

# 62%

FY24/25 Q1-Q3

### Mental Health Strategy

Completion rate across all clinics in which Measurement-Based Care is launched.

### Why is this important?

Seamless discharge from hospital to home is critical to improve health outcomes and the patient and family experience.

### Why is this important?

Appropriate use of virtual care is a valuable tool to enhance access, convenience, and continuity of care closer to home.

### Why is this important?

In the context of child and youth mental health, measurement-based care ensures that treatment decisions are guided by objective data rather than subjective impressions.





## ACHIEVEMENTS

### SHARING EXPERTISE TO HELP BUILD HEALTH-CARE SYSTEM CAPACITY, INCREASE ACCESS, AND IMPROVE SAFETY

The Connected Care team has developed an innovative program that has improved community transition for our most vulnerable patients and families, simultaneously elevating care provision within the home and community sector:

- Programs were extended to community hospitals to support capacity building through paediatric education and practice consultation from SickKids nurses and respiratory therapists.
- Enhanced support for home-care nurses and family caregivers by collaborating with AboutKidsHealth and paediatric centres to update a tracheostomy care manual.
- Data from 2023 shows 98 per cent of patients and families believe they were provided adequate information about their new medical technology before discharge.
- The team won the first annual Ontario Health System Quality and Innovation Award, taking the top prize in the Improved Patient Experience Award category.

### TRANSCENDING GEOGRAPHY WITH VIRTUAL CARE

What was a vision at the start of our SickKids 2025 journey is now a reality for many of our patients and families:

- A Virtual Urgent Care (VUC) program was launched enabling access to real-time guidance for urgent health concerns from any mobile device, tablet, or personal computer. As of January 2024, more than 10,000 patients have been seen virtually since the program launch in 2021.

- Launched a novel, health equity initiative to promote access to virtual urgent care through a self-serve kiosk at the Lawrence Allen Centre, providing an additional way for one of Toronto's most digitally underserved communities to access care.
- Established foundations for Remote Care Management (RCM), a form of virtual care, that is anchored in a defined care pathway for a more seamless patient and staff experience.

### MEETING THE RISING TIDE OF MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS

Mental health challenges among children and youth are common and lead to significant delays in the attainment of important adult milestones. SickKids is uniquely positioned to take on this challenge:

- Launched its first Mental Health Strategy with five directions aimed at transforming care delivery, accelerating research, prioritizing child, youth, and family needs, achieving literacy for all, and championing system evolution.
- Partnered with donor Garry Hurvitz on a transformative gift of \$50 million to SickKids Foundation, unveiling the Garry Hurvitz Centre for Brain & Mental Health and The Garry Hurvitz Centre for Community Mental Health.
- Advanced our commitment to mental health literacy, with over 1,000 staff and trainees participating in a Mental Health Foundations course.
- Initiated work collecting patient-reported outcome measures (PROMS) in support of measurement-based care, to better identify patients with mental health challenges and see change over time.





# ENSURE QUALITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN EVERYTHING WE DO

## SICKKIDS 2025 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Partner with patients and families in decision-making for clinical care, research and education
- Exemplify compassionate communication and care
- Eliminate preventable harm
- Optimize efficiency and use of resources



## SUCCESS MEASURES

**40%↑**

FY24/25 Q1-Q3

**Inpatient experience  
survey response rate**

Percent of inpatients who completed the inpatient experience survey sent out by email through Qualtrics.

**46%↓**

FY21/22Q1 to FY24/25Q3

**Reduction in Potentially Preventable  
Hospital Acquired (HAC) Conditions**

Change in cumulative fiscal year rate of select current HACs reported on the hospital Harm Index Report/1,000 patient days.

**45%↓**

FY21/22Q1 to FY24/25Q3

**Reduction in Serious  
Safety Events Rate**

Change in number of patient Serious Safety Events per 10,000 adjusted patient days.

**12%↓**

FY22/23Q1 to FY24/25Q3

**Reduction in Total Cases  
on Surgical Waitlist**

Change in the number of cases currently waiting for surgery.

### Why is this important?

Timely feedback from the community we serve is essential to fuel improved patient and family experiences.

### Why is this important?

Reducing HACs and SSEs is a critical component of SickKids' journey to increase patient safety and eliminate preventable harm.

### Why is this important?

Timely access to surgical services for children, youth, and families is important to improve short- and long-term health outcomes.



## ACHIEVEMENTS

### DELIVERING WHAT EVERY PATIENT AND FAMILY DESERVES

Knowing that positive health-care experiences lead to positive health outcomes, we've re-focused our efforts on the fundamentals that are most important to patients and families:

- SickKids redeveloped our Patient and Family Experience (PFX) Strategy in 2024, enabling us to reimagine our services to ensure a more human-centred experience.
- The PFX Strategy will elevate patient and family experience from the boardroom to the bedside and re-focus our efforts on the fundamentals that are most important.
- By embedding partnership in all we do, and under the pillars of the Patient and Family Experience, Authentic Engagement, and Caregiver Wellness, the PFX Strategy promises that SickKids will:
  1. Continue to strive for exemplary child, youth and family centred services
  2. Support families being families and kids being kids
  3. Foster healing digital and physical spaces
  4. Establish an experience improvement loop

### A SAFER SICKKIDS

The Caring Safely program has accelerated our progress toward eliminating preventable harm by setting ambitious targets, leveraging transparency, comparative data and introducing principles and practices from ultra-safe industries outside of health care, known as high reliability organizations:

- A suite of education sessions and programs have been created to build and reinforce expected safety behaviours and to provide knowledge and tools.

- All new Trustees must be members of the Board Quality and Safety Committee (BQSC) when they start. Trustees routinely attend safety program training and findings from the Governance of Quality Assessment tool are routinely integrated into the BQSC workplan.
- Emphasis is placed on targeted areas for improving staff safety by ongoing analysis of reported employee injuries and lost time.
- Safety successes and milestones are celebrated organization wide through stories that recognize excellence demonstrated by our staff to help reinforce best practices in safety.

### FACILITATING TIMELY ACCESS TO SURGICAL CARE

New and innovative approaches to reduce wait times for surgical procedures and specialist appointments are paying off for SickKids and, more importantly, for our patients and families:

- Co-led by SickKids and Ontario Health Toronto Region, and supported by six community hospital partners across the Greater Toronto Area, the Surgical and Endoscopy Community Partnerships Program was established as a successful system-wide approach to reducing wait times and ensuring timely access to high-quality paediatric care.
- Since its launch in early 2023, the program has referred over 1,000 surgical and endoscopy cases, and along with other departmental initiatives, the success of this program supported a 10 per cent reduction in the SickKids surgical waitlist.
- The majority of patient families indicated they were satisfied with the program and would recommend the experience to others.
- In January 2025, the Surgical and Endoscopy Community Partnerships Program was recognized as a Leading Practice by the Health Standards Organization.





# UNLEASH THE TALENT OF OUR PEOPLE

## SICKKIDS 2025 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Champion equity, diversity, and inclusion
- Support psychological safety, emotional health, and wellness
- Expect a culture of professionalism and respect
- Bolster creativity and agile decision-making



## SUCCESS MEASURES

**71%**

FY24/25

### Employee Engagement Index

This is an overall score based on four questions in the Employee Engagement Survey. This engagement index reflects the extent to which employees are motivated to work harder and care more.

### Why is this important?

Employee Engagement is an important factor to improving team performance. Receiving input and experiences from staff at SickKids helps us make positive change.

**40,168**

FY20/21Q1 to FY24/25Q3

### Peer Support Activations

Number of activations through SickKids' Peer Support Program.

### Why is this important?

In challenging times for the health system, peer support is an invaluable tool to preserve staff health and well-being.

**85%**

FY20/21Q1 to FY24/25Q3

### Health and Safety Compliance

Average of scores for manager responses to occupational health recommendations within 21 days, manager responses to employee safety reports, and respirator fit testing compliance.

### Why is this important?

Timely responses to occupational health recommendations is essential for staff safety.



## ACHIEVEMENTS

### SETTING THE STAGE FOR A MORE EQUITABLE AND CULTURALLY SAFE SICKKIDS

SickKids' EDI Office launched its inaugural strategy in 2022, reflecting our commitment to creating an environment where every person feels acknowledged, valued, and respected:

- Developed SickKids' first Anti-Racism Policy.
- In partnership with HR, developed an Inclusive Recruitment Pathway, a learning resource designed to equip leaders and administrative staff with practical knowledge to minimize barriers and bias in the recruitment process.

### A HEALTHY WORKPLACE WHERE TEAMS AND INDIVIDUALS CAN THRIVE

Our Staff Health and Well-being Strategy has a singular focus on the physical and mental health and well-being of the SickKids team.

- Developed the Comfort and Safety Bundle for staff to identify patients who may require additional supports, ultimately decreasing patient stress and increasing staff safety.
- Launched the Caregiver Wellness initiative to identify and address caregiver mental health concerns in the hopes of preventing escalation to violence.
- Developed and launched the Family Caregiver Behaviour Escalation Policy to help staff identify family caregiver behaviour that is escalating to aggression or violence, and assist them in developing a response in consultation with appropriate partners and resources.
- Reviewed our Code White policy to improve organizational response to escalation and violence.
- Opened a new Wellness Centre with free memberships for staff.

- Launched the inaugural Schwartz Rounds at SickKids, an opportunity for staff to reflect on experiences, share insights, and support one another.

### TRANSFORMING RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Efforts to address staffing challenges and workload include:

- Re-designed the employee Group Health and Dental program with a specific focus on mental health supports and family-forming benefits.
- Launched new salary structures for non-union roles which appropriately reflect our external market positioning.
- Developed a Nursing Workforce Optimization Strategy to strengthen recruitment and retention of nurses with terrific results.
- Designed the unique Clinical Advancement Nursing Fellowship, allowing nurses to work part-time in an area of nursing leadership or specialized non-clinical practice, to promote career development.
- Launched the Flexible Scheduling Retention Program, recognizing nurses working in 24/7 clinical areas with cumulative scheduling perks after 15 or more years of consecutive service.
- Implemented technology interventions that are enhancing nursing well-being and releasing more time to care for patients, decreasing non-actionable critical alarms by 30 per cent and eliminating 900 hours per year spent by nurses on high-firing, low-action alerts.
- Recent productive conversations with the MOH related to our physician AFP model which will hopefully lead to modernized compensation agreements.
- Implementation of the GROSS initiative (Getting Rid of Senseless Stuff) that aims to eliminate unnecessary tasks that contribute to clinician workloads and burnout.

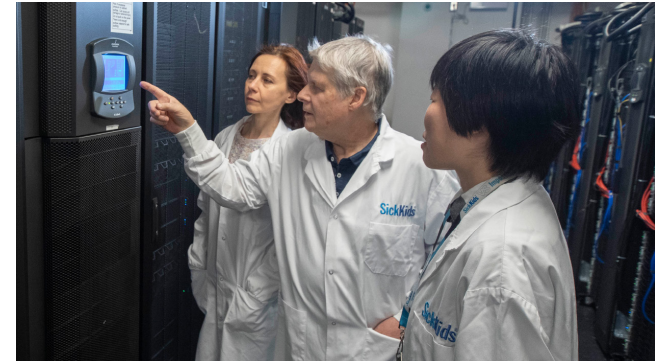




# DRIVE FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

## SICKKIDS 2025 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Secure funding tailored to the unique health needs of children and youth
- Diversify revenue streams and foster entrepreneurship
- Collaborate with our Foundation to advance a culture of philanthropy



## SUCCESS MEASURES

**\$328.8M**

FY20/21Q1 to FY24/25Q3

**Non-MOH Revenues**

Total non-MOH revenues (dollars).

### Why is this important?

Revenues generated by SickKids programs and services are a key source to ensure sustainability of services and fuel innovation.

**100%**

FY20/21Q1 to FY22/23Q4

**No Limits Campaign**

Percent progress toward \$1.5 billion  
No Limits Campaign goal.

### Why is this important?

The generosity of our community of donors is the spark that ignites advancements in child health research, education, and care.



## ACHIEVEMENTS

### COMMERCIALIZING SICKKIDS INNOVATION AND DISCOVERY

Industry Partnerships & Commercialization is supporting a culture of innovation, transforming research into real-world clinical applications. It has aided in the commercialization of numerous SickKids discoveries:

- Provided support to Dr. Jean-Philippe Julien's antibody platform that could revolutionize next-gen treatments for coronavirus, HIV and malaria. With additional external funding, this technology enabled the creation of Radiant Biotherapeutics, which secured \$8M in seed funding and \$35M in Series A financing for Multabody-based therapies in 2024.
- The 2020 acquisition of SickKids startup Simulare Medical by SmileTrain expanded access to its cleft lip, palate and rhinoplasty surgery training to over 2,100 medical partners globally. Continued innovation by Dr. Dale Podolsky led to the creation of the first Bilateral Cleft Lip Simulator (2022), Cleft Palate Simulator (2022) and Alveolar Bone Graft Simulator (2023).
- Co-founded by Dr. Michael Brudno, PhenoTips standardizes genomic health records to enable precision medicine in Canadian health systems, UK NHS Trusts and leading US hospitals. In 2024, PhenoTips was named one of Canada's Best Startup Employers and won the Human Resources Director Award for one of the best workplaces in the country.
- Generated an average \$3.5M annual gross revenue and secured approximately 500 active patents.
- Promising SickKids innovations have received \$1.2M in gap funding through the SickKids Proof of Principle Grant Competition.

### EXTERNAL OPERATIONAL REVIEW CONCLUDES SICKKIDS IS CLINICALLY EFFICIENT

Ontario Health commissioned a voluntary review to address financial concerns brought forward by the hospital. From June to October 2023, KPMG conducted a financial, operational and clinical review of SickKids:

- The report highlighted the fact that at least half of the province's specialized paediatric inpatient days are delivered at SickKids alone. These cases include high-cost and highly specialized patients that can only be treated at SickKids.
- KPMG recommended that potential underweighting of highly specialized cases should be addressed.
- The report concluded that SickKids is clinically efficient and that financial pressures cannot be fully addressed by finding further efficiencies.







# BUILD AN ACADEMIC HEALTH SCIENCES CENTRE FOR THE FUTURE

## SICKKIDS 2025 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Accelerate adoption of enterprise-wide data and information systems
- Drive impact through dynamic technology and infrastructure
- Mobilize a green-friendly organization



## SUCCESS MEASURES

# 97%

FY20/21Q1 to FY24/25Q3

### Progress on Epic Roadmap

Percent of milestones met in Epic roadmap.

# 89%

FY20/21Q1 to FY23/24Q4

### Project Horizon Progress to Plan

Percent of milestones met in Board-approved Project Horizon plan.

# 365.3

FY20/21Q1 to FY24/25Q3

### Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The amount of greenhouse gas (GHG) emitted from supplying energy to Annex, Atrium, and PGCRL in kilograms (kg) of GHG per square meter (m<sup>2</sup>).

### Why is this important?

SickKids' electronic health record, Epic, is a foundational tool to advance quality of care, safety, and research.

### Why is this important?

SickKids' ambitious campus redevelopment, Project Horizon, will transform facilities and ways of working to improve child and youth health research, education, and care.

### Why is this important?

To achieve our vision of Healthier Children. A Better World. SickKids must act as stewards of the environment.



## ACHIEVEMENTS

### ACCELERATING DATA ADOPTION

Data is the backbone of our organization. We are transforming and continuously improving how we collect, use, access, manage and work with data to improve patient care and fuel Precision Child Health:

- Established the Enterprise Data and Analytics Office, bringing together expertise in decision support, data architecture, analytics and governance.
- The Analytics Hub provided action-oriented analysis to over 16 departments or clinics to inform decision-making, including supporting partnership decisions for the Surgical and Endoscopy Community Partnerships Program.
- Streamlined institutional data access and request with updates to ReportingNow.
- Launched Expedition, an enterprise-wide data discovery and analytics platform.
- Established a Community of Practice and launched new learning opportunities in collaboration with the Centre for Computational Medicine to help build community and increase data literacy.

### MOBILIZING A GREEN-FRIENDLY ORGANIZATION

The important work being done today will ensure a greener, sustainable future for SickKids:

- Exceeding or approaching targets in sustainability KPIs that gauge our performance in four key areas: greenhouse gas intensity, energy use, water use, and waste diversion.
- Preventing pollution in our wastewater is a focus and we've seen significant reduction in the chemicals we targeted to reduce. Dentistry, MDRD, Patient Support Services, and Plant Operations have been able to find alternative products, or ways to move away from using a product with one of the ingredients targeted for reduction.
- Embarked on a biomedical waste management initiative to educate staff on proper biomedical waste segregation. ORs and critical care units reduced the contamination of biomedical waste with non-biomedical waste by over 50 per cent.
- Environmentally Preferred Purchasing Policy for office supplies, packaging, office electric-powered equipment and appliances, furniture, renovations, and hazardous substances.







## ACHIEVEMENTS CONT'D

### A CRITICAL FIRST STEP IN OUR CAMPUS REDEVELOPMENT JOURNEY

The momentum from the opening of our award-winning Patient Support Centre (PSC) in 2023, the first new building in SickKids' ambitious campus redevelopment, Project Horizon, continued into 2024 with exciting news about a revised plan that will reduce the overall timeline, provide better value for money, and decrease complexity and impact on staff, patients and families.

- The PSC, a key enabler in the construction of a new hospital, opened its doors in October 2023. The 22-storey training, education and administrative tower accommodates approximately 3,000 staff members.
- The PSC's design features and purpose-built spaces, including a new state-of-the-art Simulation Centre, enables the seamless connection of clinical care, research and learning initiatives taking place across the SickKids campus.
- Extensive conversations with the Ministry of Health and Infrastructure Ontario on how to best move our campus redevelopment plans forward have resulted in a refreshed plan that calls for an alternate downtown site for our ambulatory services, within 15-minute walking distance of our existing campus.
- The end-state SickKids campus, like many other hospitals in the Toronto area, will have two clinical care sites – acute care/critical care in a new building and ambulatory care at an alternate site.
- Following on work throughout the summer and early fall, Project Horizon is now advancing more detailed planning with a focus on the programs and services directly impacted by the Ambulatory Care Tower.
- The planning process involves functional and architectural planning, with a submission to the Ministry of Health expected in the fall of 2025.

# KIDS' VOICE

(SICKKIDS' CHILDREN'S COUNCIL)



**EVOLVING THE  
FUTURE OF HEALTH**



**EASY  
EXPERIENCE**



**MAKING SURE YOU AND YOUR FAMILY ARE COMFORTABLE AND SAFE**



**GETTING THE BEST  
OUT OF EVERYONE**



**USING EVERY PENNY AND  
MAKING MANY MORE**



**USING TECHNOLOGY  
TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE**