

# This Family’s Pediatric Experience Went “Above and Beyond” the Textbook

By Sam Kennedy

BETHLEHEM - It’s the trip no parent wants to make: A frantic car ride to the hospital with an inconsolable child who clearly has broken something.

That was Warren Shotto and his 4-year-old daughter, Charlie, this past summer, and he thought if he could just get her to the emergency room, everything would soon be better — but that’s not exactly how it worked out.

After a sliding accident this past summer, Shotto, of Dunmore, Pa., rushed his young daughter to the ER at an area hospital where they experienced one disappointment and frustration after another. Shotto said the team of providers at the ER barely communicated with him and failed to directly address his distressed daughter. After trying and failing to force feed her liquid ibuprofen, they told him to go home and get powdered Tylenol. They let hours pass before stabilizing Charlie’s multiple fractures.

And then, when Charlie was finally discharged some nine hours later, they waited for a follow-up call from an orthopedist that never came. In the end, Charlie, who had two fractures in her lower leg, would have to wait a week in a temporary splint before seeing a specialist.

That’s when Shotto decided to seek care elsewhere. He turned to St. Luke’s University Health Network, and suddenly everything got way better. He requested an appointment with pediatric orthopedist Nicolas Grimm, D.O., and he met with him the very next morning in Bethlehem, about an hour away.

“The difference was palpable,” Shotto said, from the moment he and Charlie drove into the parking lot. “The valet greeted us and escorted us in. The volunteer smiled, said hello and asked if we needed help. Down the hall, the telephone operator greeted us. Every person we encountered on our way to the doctor’s office was incredible.”

When patients experience that kind of can-do and can-help attitude with every person they encounter, it “speaks volumes about the culture of St. Luke’s,” Shotto said.

It was 59 minutes from the time Shotto parked to the time Charlie was on her way out in a cast. And she didn’t fuss at all.

Dr. Grimm, who also practices in Stroudsburg, offered to follow up with Charlie at that office, 30 minutes closer to the Shottos.

Shotto has little doubt that the initial experience at the first hospital will hold a negative space in Charlie’s memory—days after the accident she refused to let her dentist touch her. But the experience she had with Dr. Grimm and the St. Luke’s care team will also have a lasting impact, a positive one.

He credits the exceptional care of St. Luke’s Children’s Hospital, which offers a wide variety of pediatric specialists such as Dr. Grimm.

“The contrast between the two experiences was... One was completely textbook of what not to do, and the other was above and beyond the textbook of how to make patients happy,” he said.

Over the course of Charlie’s 10-week treatment with Grimm, she became more and more comfortable and happy with the care team. After Charlie was healed up and all done with her treatment at St. Luke’s Children’s Hospital, Shotto said, she “was sad to know she wasn’t going back!”





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