

## **Pediatric Palliative and Supportive Care Team (PPSC) at Children's of Alabama (COA)**

Palliative and Supportive Care at Children's of Alabama is a team of four part-time physicians, full-time nurse and a part-time secretary. This team provides inpatient services at Children's of Alabama with occasional consultation services provided at UAB's RNICU and in-person or virtual palliative and supportive care assessments in the COA specialty clinics. The team began in 2009, as an inpatient consultation service for inpatients at COA. Since 2010, a PPSC physician has been an integral provider at the COA, Duchene's Muscular Dystrophy Clinic. Since 2016, the PPSC RN maintains and embedded service in the COA NICU. As an extension of the team's commitment to their patient, PPSC most frequently serves as the physician attending of record for their patients receiving home hospice services. Annually, the PPSC team provides approximately 500 patient visits.

The PPSC team maintains an interdisciplinary approach to caring for pediatric inpatients with rare, complex, chronic illnesses and special needs. These health professionals collaborate to care for seriously ill children with symptoms including agitation, anxiety, insomnia, dyspnea, pain, nausea, vomiting, constipation and other issues. The PPSC is frequently consulted to define goals of care and elucidate best interests. The goal is to help these children to fulfill their maximum physical, emotional, spiritual, educational, and social potential.

The team serves as an active clinical partner for a variety of palliative and supportive care studies. Ongoing studies include integrating PPSC into the care for children with incurable brain tumors and the effects of the provision of PPSC in the NICU. Current team leadership is provided by Dr. Sam Perna.