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Children's Wisconsin Earns National Recognition as Top-Level Pediatric Trauma Center

Reverification reinforces commitment to excellence in pediatric trauma care

MILWAUKEE, Wis., July 16, 2026 – Children's Wisconsin successfully completed reverification as a Level 1 Pediatric Trauma Center by the [American College of Surgeons \(ACS\)](#). This achievement recognizes the trauma team's ongoing dedication to providing the best and safest care for all kids and affirms that Children's Wisconsin meets the nation's most rigorous standards for pediatric trauma care.

As one of only two hospitals in Wisconsin with this designation, Children's Wisconsin provides comprehensive, around-the-clock care for children with traumatic injuries, from pre-hospital and emergency care to inpatient care, rehabilitation and follow-up care and recovery through our specialty clinics.

"This national recognition reflects the dedication and expertise of our entire trauma team," said Dr. Katherine Flynn-O'Brien. "From the moment a child is injured through recovery and follow up care, we are here to provide the highest level of care every step of the way."

The ACS Committee on Trauma is a scientific and educational organization committed to raising standards in trauma care. It grants Level I verification – its highest distinction – to trauma centers that demonstrate system leadership and comprehensive trauma care.

Children's Wisconsin first received ACS recognition in 2001 and continues to meet more than 300 certification standards to uphold its reputation as one of the top 10 verified sites in the country.

ACS verification occurs every 3 years. Some of the criteria include:

- 24-hour pediatric-trained specialists in all surgical specialties, anesthesia, critical care, emergency medicine and the full spectrum of surgical and medical specialist availability to treat any patient who is injured, every day of the year.
- Specialized facilities (imaging, surgical, etc.) dedicated to trauma cases, including emergency services and operating rooms.
- High education standards, requiring Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) and Emergency Room nurses who attend trauma activations to meet the same education requirements as those who work in the Emergency Department.
- Anesthesia services, intensive care units, rehabilitation services, CT and other imaging facilities are made available to trauma patients at all times.
- Full-time trauma program manager, trauma registry support staff, performance improvement coordinators, outreach programs and an organized research effort to help direct new innovations in trauma care.
- Requirement to benchmark our clinical outcomes against peers nationally to ensure we provide the very best care.

Children's Wisconsin provides comprehensive emergency and trauma care 24/7 to kids with all types of illnesses and injuries. The ability to provide all levels of care for more than 60,000 visits to the Emergency Department and Trauma Center annually plays a substantial role in upholding the reputation of Children's Wisconsin as a national leader in pediatric health care.

During the reverification process, ACS reviewers highlighted several areas where Children's Wisconsin excels and serves as a leader in pediatric trauma care.

Highlights include:

- **Exceptional Pediatric Trauma Care:** A highly collaborative team of trauma surgeons, emergency medicine physicians, neurosurgeons, orthopedic specialists, anesthesiologists and critical care experts provides seamless, around-the-clock care for injured children.
- **Leading Pediatric Neurotrauma Expertise:** Dedicated neurosurgical specialists deliver rapid consultation and intervention for children with traumatic brain and spinal injuries, ensuring timely access to advanced care.
- **Comprehensive Orthopedic Trauma Services:** Eleven dedicated pediatric orthopedic surgeons provide timely fracture care and specialized treatment, supported by additional orthopedic trauma expertise for complex injuries.
- **Regional Leadership in EMS and Prehospital Care:** Strong partnerships with EMS agencies, extensive provider education and ongoing performance improvement efforts help ensure children receive high-quality trauma care from the moment an injury occurs.

ACS reviewers also commended Children's Wisconsin's strong participation in state and regional trauma systems, innovative injury prevention initiatives, robust trauma education

programs and comprehensive rehabilitation services that often begin within the first 24 hours of a patient's admission.

This verification shows Children's Wisconsin's continued dedication to providing expert, high-quality care for children throughout Wisconsin and the region.

About Children's Wisconsin

Children's Wisconsin is the region's only independent health care system dedicated solely to the health and well-being of children. The hospital, with locations in Milwaukee and Neenah, Wisconsin, is recognized as one of the leading pediatric health care centers in the United States. It is ranked among the top pediatric hospitals in the country by U.S. News & World Report's 2025-26 Best Children's Hospitals report. Children's Wisconsin provides primary care, specialty care, urgent care, emergency care, mental and behavioral health care, community health services, foster and adoption services, child and family counseling, child advocacy services and family resource centers. Children's Wisconsin achieves its mission in part through donations from individuals, corporations and foundations and is proud to be a member of Children's Miracle Network.

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