

# Letter To The Editor

Dear Editor

I am sending to the Mitchell Ledger, as well as to 12 civic clubs in this area, this letter describing a situation that exists in Mitchell County

It is a "last ditch effort" to obtain the necessary funds to pay the medical costs of two children in our county who very much need medical services which their families cannot afford to provide.

Both of these children come from low-income families but are not eligible for assistance from the Department of Social Services.

One child is an 8-year-old boy (one of a family of six) who lives in the Bakersville area. The family income falls in the area of \$7,000. This boy has been seen at intervals at the Children's Clinic in the Mitchell County Health Department and it was determined that a hernia operation is needed. The family has no Health Insurance and are not able to pay more than a small portion of the estimated cost of \$400 for the hospital bill and surgeon's fee.

The other child is a 12-year-old girl living in the Spruce Pine area (one of a family of three) and this family's income falls in the neighborhood of \$3600. This girl has had several urinary tract infections over the past few months--the most recent about two months ago that required hospitalization. She was seen for the first time at the Mitchell County Health Department November 15. Considering the frequency and severity of her urinary tract infections, it was felt she needed to be evaluated by a urologist with an I. V. Pyelogram (x-rays of the kidneys). This family does have hospitalization insurance but it does not cover the first \$100 of the physician's fee or outpatient services. The estimated cost of the x-rays and urological consultation is \$100.

Applications for both of these children have been submitted to the ESEA School Health Program. Because these funds are quite limited and the cost of the medical services for these two children quite high, ESEA turned down the request.

We looked also to the Crippled Children's Section of the North Carolina State Board of Health. They have recently expanded their services beyond the field of orthopedics. However, a hemiorthomy is very clearly stated to be among those services not eligible for coverage. An application was submitted for the urological consultation and x-rays but this was denied.

And so we know not where to turn. These two children very much need these rather costly medical services but are apparently not eligible for any public agency assistance.

It could be that someone might like to contribute individually or perhaps a group could make a donation. If enough people show enough concern, it might well be that we could raise the \$500 necessary for the medical services needed by these two children.

If you have any questions, I should be glad to have you call me.

Sincerely,  
(Mrs.) Agnes J. Pieper  
Coordinator,  
Children's Services  
Mitchell County

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