



China

China is the world's most populous country and one of the fastest growing economies. While this presents great potential for medical advances, it also sets the conditions for enormous disparities. The opportunity for a child from a rural village born with heart disease is practically nonexistent, whereas a middle-income child from the city has access to some of the best medical care in the world. Since 1999, Children's HeartLink has been working with partners in China to close this gap. In 2019, our five partner hospitals – including two Children's HeartLink Centers of Excellence served more than 28,000 children. We are working to develop nine Children's HeartLink Centers of Excellence by 2030. Our approach is built around sustainable health systems strengthening, with a focus on increasing clinical and administrative capacity, and supporting advanced medical education. Our investment in China, direct and in-kind, has surpassed US \$4 million. Children's HeartLink's commitment to China's growing pediatric cardiac care infrastructure is strong and will remain so until all children have the care they deserve.



Partner Hospitals

First Hospital of Lanzhou University
Children's HeartLink Center of Excellence
Lanzhou
Partner since 1999
Children Served* (2019): 2,800

Qingdao Women and Children's Hospital
Qingdao
Partner since 2018
Children Served* (2019): 17,800

Shanxi Women and Children's Hospital
Taiyuan
Partner since 2020
Children Served* (2019): 2,500

TEDA International Cardiovascular Hospital
Tianjin
Partner since 2017
Children Served* (2019): 1,600

West China Hospital
Children's HeartLink Center of Excellence
Chengdu
Partner since 2006
Children Served* (2019): 3,500

Volunteer training partners

- Alder Hey Children's Hospital, Liverpool
- Children's Hospital of Georgia, Augusta, Georgia
- The Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto

* Data was collected pre-pandemic (in 2019) based on clinic visits.

The Need

- 1 out of 100 babies is born with congenital heart disease
- 165,000 babies are born with congenital heart disease each year
- 20,515 children under the age of 5 died from congenital heart disease in 2016 – this represents 1.8 million years of life lost
- Another 1.3 million youth continue to live with congenital heart disease
- There are fewer than 2 cardiologists per 100,000 people in China, even fewer that have specialized training in pediatrics. Nearly all are concentrated in urban centers.

Our Vision

Our vision is a world in which all children have access to the cardiac care they need. In China, our goal is to develop nine Children's HeartLink Centers of Excellence by 2030. To achieve this, we are establishing long-lasting partnerships with local stakeholders — including providers, clinic administrators and government officials – to increase awareness of the need for pediatric cardiac care. Our focus is on building clinical and organizational skills, and increasing support for the inclusion of universal access to pediatric cardiac care into China's health care system.

Congenital Heart Disease

Every year around the world, 1 in 100 children is born with a birth defect within the structure of their heart. This condition is called congenital heart disease. It is the seventh leading cause of death under 1 year of age. Cardiac anomalies are the most common of all birth defects, and 70% of them are surgically correctable. These children can live full, productive lives if they get skilled care. Unfortunately, 90% of children with heart disease live in regions of the world without access to pediatric cardiac care; far too many of them will die preventable deaths.

Children's HeartLink

Since 1969 Children's HeartLink has been dedicated to caring for children with heart disease. We invest in long-term, multi-phase partnerships to build centers of excellence in pediatric cardiac care. Our goal is to develop 35 Children's HeartLink Centers of Excellence by 2030. In 2019, over 177,000 children were served at our partner hospitals, more than ever before. Because the COVID-19 pandemic curtailed travel and in-person training in 2020, we increased remote training to ensure our partners continue to get the support they need. More than 2,800 medical professionals around the world have benefited from remote training we've provided in conjunction with our volunteers.

Children's HeartLink Partner Hospitals in China

First Hospital of Lanzhou University

Children's HeartLink's partnership with First Hospital of Lanzhou University (FHLU) is Children's HeartLink's longest running partnership in China. FHLU is a public hospital that serves the 26 million people of Gansu province – one of the poorest and least developed in China. A key objective for FHLU is the development of a regional referral, treatment and training network for northwest China. In 2015, FHLU was designated a Children's HeartLink Center of Excellence.

Qingdao Women and Children's Hospital

Qingdao Women and Children's Hospital (QWCH), is one of the largest heart centers in the country and serves children in a heavily populated region of 30 million. Our partnership is focused on increasing the volume of patients treated, through quality improvements, safety and patient-centered care, as well as expanding the surgical repertoire and complexity of cases. The Alder Hey medical team from England, their training partner, will help develop a cohesive surgical team with state-of-the-art techniques, a clinical cardiology team skilled in preoperative and postoperative management, and an expanded intensive care team to support the increase in volume and complex cases. QWCH served almost 17,800 children last year and performed 406 surgeries.

Shanxi Women and Children's Hospital

Shanxi Women and Children's Hospital, southwest of Beijing, is our newest partner in China. Together with its mentor Children's Hospital of Georgia, they are focused on improving access to heart care for children in Shanxi province (population 36 million). This provincial hospital treats an average of 1.2 million outpatients and 48,000 inpatients per year. It is affiliated with Shanxi Medical University and a member of Beijing Children's Hospital Group, carrying out teaching and scientific research for undergraduate and postgraduate students.

TEDA International Cardiovascular Hospital

Children's HeartLink's partnership with TEDA began in 2017, together with The Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto. It focuses on improving the multidisciplinary approach to pediatric cardiac care, developing a cohesive team of pediatric specialists, quality and patient safety, and parent education. This public nonprofit hospital opened in 2003 and specializes in the treatment and management of congenital heart disease. It is located in the Binhai New Area of Tianjin on the east coast. The hospital has an active charitable program and conducts off-site screening camps to treat children from provinces and autonomous regions throughout China.

West China Hospital

West China Hospital (WCH) became Children's HeartLink's second partner in China in 2006 and a Children's HeartLink Center of Excellence in 2017. This 5,000-bed public hospital is one of the largest hospitals in the world, yet has a shortage of specialists trained in diagnosing and treating children with heart disease, resulting in a long waiting list. With their mentor team from The Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, WCH has focused on developing an interdisciplinary care model, strengthening postoperative care, and in-house and distance-learning training opportunities. With Children's HeartLink support, WCH established fellowship programs in pediatric cardiology and critical care, including at The Hospital for Sick Children. Other notable WCH milestones include the start of an ECMO program in 2015 and participation in an international research collaborative examining current practices for treating Tetralogy of Fallot.



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