

MORGAN, Heidi

## Heidi fund goes over the top

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The community fund to help an Eldorado girl suffering from a rare bone disease appears to have gone over the top with help from area doctors and a private donor.

On her sixth birthday last week, Heidi Morgan, of Eldorado, learned that the Ontario Health Insurance Plan has agreed to pay for a life-saving operation with Dr. Ian Munro in Dallas Texas.

Munro had been Canada's top specialist in rebuilding faces through plastic surgery, but left for the United States in the extra-billing dispute between Ontario doctors and the provincial government.

OHIP has agreed to pay for Heidi's operation anyway. But her mother, Christine Morgan, faced a minimum \$10,000 in added costs for travel and accommodation in Texas.

Many local groups have responded swiftly with donations and now the Hastings and Prince Edward County Medical Association, says area doctors will help too.

The association is donating \$200 and each member doctor \$50—which could total more than \$2,500 to the Help Heidi Fund.

Also last week Christine Morgan was phoned by Belleville businessman Maurice Rollins.

Rollins said he and his wife have been following the story and felt Heidi

and Christine had suffered enough worrying.

Rollins took the Help Heidi Fund to the \$10,000 minimum needed by giving Morgan a cheque for \$3,000, Heidi's mother said. She said she asked him if his name could be used and he agreed.

Christine is elated, saying that although she worried and cried during the two-month battle to get help, she will carry all the goodwill from the community with her to Dallas.

Heidi is scheduled to go to the Humana Institute, in Dallas, in late July where Munro has agreed to combine the initial testing and the major surgery in one stay.

An abnormally-growing bone in Heidi's face will be removed and replaced with other bone fragments.

Munro hopes to have Heidi back

home within two weeks of surgery, then later next fall the results will have to be checked in a second visit to Texas.

Followup surgery may be necessary, but then Heidi should return to the life of a normal six-year-old in Eldorado.

Meanwhile, Toronto news media reported an unidentified donor has also sent a cheque for \$3,000 which should bring the fund well over the top.

While not releasing his or her name, the Toronto donor told reporters: "I have a son who's handicapped and I think it's rather sad to have a child in that condition and have to fight to have her live a healthy life. I'm in a position where I can afford to give the money and I feel I must do what I can."

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