

MORGAN, Heidi

Heidi 'fair' after surgery

By CP - INTELLIGENCER STAFF

LONDON Ont., - Heidi Morgan, the six-year-old Eldorado girl whose fight against a disfiguring bone disease has won the hearts of residents in her North Hastings community, is listed in fair condition in hospital here recovering from surgery Thursday.

Dr. Robert Colcleugh, a plastic surgeon at the Children's Hospital of Western Ontario here, performed a seven-hour operation to halt a rapidly-growing bone in Heidi's face from becoming a permanent disfigurement.

Heidi's case spurred Eldorado area residents to begin a fund which has raised more than \$13,000 after the surgeon who was to have conducted her surgery moved to Texas last month.

Dr. Ian Munro was to have performed the surgery to correct Heidi's problem, which is a result of her condition with the rare disease fibrous dysplasia.

Two weeks ago, Dr. Colcleugh contacted Christine Morgan, Heidi's mother, on the urging of the Ministry of Health. He told Heidi's mother the surgery to correct Heidi's problem could be done in London, eliminating the possible need for her and her mother to travel to Texas for a series of operations.

The Ontario Health Insurance Plan would have covered the cost of the operations in Texas if it was found the surgery could not be performed in Canada, but would not have paid for travel and accomodation for Christine and Heidi Morgan. The fund set up in Heidi's name was designed to pay those expenses.

Christine Morgan was not available for comment after the operation, but Dr. Colcleugh said Heidi will remain in hospital in London for two to three more weeks before it can be determined if more surgery is required.

He said potential patients in cases such as Heidi's may not be aware of the specialty surgery available in London "because we've never promoted ourselves."

"We're experienced and able to treat these kinds of conditions," said Dr. Colcleugh. "We just never made a big deal about it."

The London team, headed by Dr. Colcleugh, has been "busier than usual" following the departure of Dr. Munro, who moved to Texas in search of better medical equipment for his practice.

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