



## **Almost Home Kids at OSF HealthCare Children's Hospital of Illinois Soon to Welcome First Patients**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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(Peoria, IL | August 24, 2018) – A blessing and ribbon cutting for the new [Almost Home Kids at OSF HealthCare Children's Hospital of Illinois](#) home in Peoria was held Friday, August 24.

Almost Home Kids (AHK) at OSF HealthCare Children's Hospital of Illinois will bridge the gap between hospital and home by providing important community-based transitional care in a home-like setting to children from newborns to 22-years old with complex health needs (which often requires the use of medical technology), training for their families, and respite care. Children receive 24-hour medical and nursing support from skilled pediatric nurses.

"Right now, children with medical complexities that are ready to be transferred home, are staying weeks to months in the hospital. At Almost Home Kids they will be able to come and stay in a warm, friendly, comfortable environment where they can really thrive," said Jennifer Shinnick, site director for Almost Home Kids. "For the parents, we can alleviate a lot of stress for them and be a support network for the parents. They can come here, we can teach them everything they need to know on how to care for their child in the home setting."

In the past, the providers at [OSF Children's Hospital](#) referred children from central Illinois to the AHK locations in Naperville or Chicago. The Almost Home Kids model requires parents or caregivers to be an integral part of their child's care and the six hour round trip to do that made it difficult.

Construction on the Peoria location at 5200 N. Hamilton Road, began in September of 2017 on the site of the former Wee Tee Golf Course. It is just the third facility of its kind in the nation, and the first one purpose-built.

The home will be able to accommodate 12 children with a maximum length of stay of 120 days. Respite care is offered from 24-hours to two weeks.

Pending routine facility approval by the Illinois Department of Public Health, Almost Home Kids at OSF HealthCare Children's Hospital of Illinois is expected to welcome its first children in late September.

The \$8.5 million home was built entirely from private donations and will serve as a prototype for future AHK sites around the country. Community donations will continue to provide support for the Peoria location. [A registry has been established through Target](#) where donations can be made.

"There are plenty of opportunities for volunteers at Almost Home Kids. Everything from helping us upkeep the landscape, decorating the house for holidays, coming and reading to the children, holding the children, rocking the children," added Shinnick.

Once the home is open in late September, interested volunteers can contact the Volunteer Coordinator or Community Outreach Coordinator onsite.

Additional media assets for this story can be found on the [OSF HealthCare Newsroom](#).