

For Iowa. Forever More. Impact Stories
Yatin Vyas, University of Iowa Children's Hospital

Yatin Vyas, M.D., knows that two children can have the same type of cancer but require different treatments.

Dr. Vyas also knows that some children, or some cancers, do not respond to standard therapies.

That's why Dr. Vyas, director of the Division of Hematology/Oncology and vice chair of research in the UI Stead Family Department of Pediatrics, and others at UI Stead Family Children's Hospital were motivated to acquire the resources needed to begin hosting clinical trials for pediatric oncology patients.

"This will enable us to extend our same excellence in research, treatment, and care to that 20 percent of our patients, from Iowa and beyond, for whom standard therapies aren't working," says Dr. Vyas.

As a research-based institution, University of Iowa Health Care has some of what is needed, but clinical trials require dedicated resources—care providers, researchers, pharmacists, and space within the hospital—available only to clinical trial participants.

This, of course, is an expensive endeavor. But luckily, a generous group of UI students responded to the call for help.

In 2015, University of Iowa Dance Marathon committed \$2.2 million to the *For Iowa. Forever More.* campaign to establish a pediatric oncology targeted therapy program.

Now, thanks to the student organization whose mission is "For the Kids," Iowa is one step closer to offering clinical trials. For Dr. Vyas, it reaffirms his decision to make Iowa his professional home.

"University of Iowa Dance Marathon partially influenced my decision to come to Iowa," says Dr. Vyas, who began practicing at Iowa in 2013. "The concept that undergraduates dance for 24 hours and raise \$2 million for pediatric cancer? I thought, 'I want to be with that group.'"

"They're not doctors, but they have fire in their bellies," says Vyas. "I love that group. Dance Marathon makes me want to be a better physician and scientist."

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*The Campaign for
the University of Iowa*