



# Isaiah's new battle

## Brave boy off to New York in bid to save sight

LAUREN ZWAANS

A BRAVE Adelaide toddler battling a rare eye cancer will fly to New York today in a last-ditch mercy dash to save his sight.

Three-year-old Isaiah Muller has already had treatment at London's prestigious St Bartholomew's Hospital in a bid to save the sight in his left eye.

The youngster was diagnosed with retinoblastoma, a rare pediatric cancer of the eye, at just 18 months old, which resulted in his right eye being removed to prevent the disease from spreading to his brain.

Yesterday, his devoted mother, Olivia, wept as she spoke of the bravery of her little boy and their quest to save his sight.

"If this does not work it's the end of the road," Ms Muller said.

But the mother of six said the family was prepared for every outcome.

"He's a fighter, but he's also a very gentle little boy," she said.

The ground-breaking treatment Isaiah will undergo, at New York's Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Centre, is not yet available in Aus-

tralia.

The toddler will have high doses of chemotherapy injected through a catheter in an artery in his groin that threads all the way through his body directly to his eye.

The procedure costs \$50,000 a treatment and it is not known how many procedures he will need.

Ms Muller said the family was yesterday trying to think of the positives, aided by the support of relatives and friends.

"It changes your whole outlook on everything but at the same time there's always somebody worse off than you," she said.

Isaiah's father, Craig, said it had been "a massive relief" to learn that his son would be able to go to New York for the treatment.

"It's come together at the last minute, literally," he said. Ms Muller will be at Isaiah's side for the journey and during the treatment while her husband remains at home to care for Isaiah's five brothers.

He said staying behind would be "tough" but he was making the most of the hours before his wife and Isaiah flew out.

"We're just trying to enjoy the time we've had together because it's so precious," he said.

Ms Muller said the 10-week trip to New York was made possible because South Australians had contributed generously to last year's Women's and Children's Hospital Foundation appeal.

"You can't really put it into words," she said.

"Isaiah and our family are very grateful."

Women's and Children's Foundation acting CEO Trish Hansen said the specialised US treatment

was promising. "The outcomes have been really encouraging," Ms Hansen said.

Ms Hansen said the foundation had last year raised \$100,000, far exceeding its target.

It could pay for Isaiah's first round of treatments in New York from remaining funds.

She said South Australians could keep track of Isaiah's progress via the WCH Foundation's website at: [www.wchfoundation.org.au](http://www.wchfoundation.org.au)



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Page 2 of 2



**HIGH HOPES:** Little Isaiah Muller with his mum Olivia yesterday. **Picture:** Tait Schmaal