

Umbilical cord blood donation hailed



The News Journal/FRED COMEGYS

Kim Kuhl holds Sarah, her 3-month-old daughter. Sarah was one of the first to donate cord blood for a program unveiled Tuesday at Christiana Hospital. "I want my daughter to grow up knowing she can do something here in Delaware and help people everywhere," Kuhl said.

Donor program unveiled in Delaware for transplants, treatment of diseases

By ROBIN BROWN
The News Journal

Sarah Kuhl was wide-eyed and a bit startled by applause for her at a news conference Tuesday at Christiana Hospital.

The guest of honor even had a little spit-up on her face.

And, having only been born Nov. 19, she didn't understand a word as elected officials and medical leaders called her a lifesaver and a pioneer donor.

She's helping cancer victims and other critically ill patients — even before her first

ONLINE

Watch a video interview with a donor mother and of Tuesday's announcement at www.delawareonline.com.

steps — because her parents, Kim and Arthur of Wilmington, donated her umbilical cord so its blood can be used for transplants. Anywhere in the world.

The Kuhls were among the pilot donors in the state's first public program, unveiled

Tuesday, to collect cord blood. The blood is rich in stem cells used to treat more than 40 critical diseases.

As Kim Kuhl patted Sarah on her shoulder, she said she's thrilled the baby is starting life helping others. When Sarah is older, the Kuhls plan to tell her about how she helped start Delaware's free, public banking of lifesaving cord blood.

People may think cord blood is gross, she said, but "it's 100 percent amazing" reuse of what's otherwise medical waste.

"We have more than 7,000 babies delivered

See BLOOD — B2