Kailey's Story
Written by Kailey

Hello, my name is Kailey Finlayson. My journey with pediatric cancer started on February 27th, 2017. I was 17 years old and a senior in high school. I stayed at my friend's house one weekend, and one night I was woken up multiple times by terrible chest pains. I tried every painkiller I could find and nothing was working. I called and woke my mom up at 5 o'clock in the morning because I knew something wasn't right. I've always had this terrible anxiety and at first that's what I thought it was. That evening we went to get checked out at Lehigh Valley Muhlenberg. They ran blood work, chest x-rays, and a cat scan. Everything looked normal besides the fact that my white blood cell count was high. That's when we heard the words… " We believe your daughter has Leukemia. There is an ambulance on the way to transfer her to Lehigh Valley Cedar Crest where an oncology doctor will meet you there." In that moment, my entire life changed.

On March 6th, 2017, I started my first round of chemo. After that we knew exactly what to expect every round of chemo. I had 4 rounds of chemo and on August 7th, I went down to Children's Hospital of Philadelphia to have my bone marrow transplant. After 3 months in Philly (7 weeks in the hospital and the rest in a hotel), we finally got to come back home. There were such strict rules of things I couldn't do and things I still can't do. But when given the opportunity for something I can do, we are very grateful.

While I was having my treatment at Lehigh Valley, a few faces became familiar to us…the oncologists, the nurses, child life, and the ladies of PCFLV. We feel lucky because the ladies at PCFLV still follow my journey and allow us as a family to go do fun things. They have also been the reason we have met so many amazing families that can relate to this "new normal" lifestyle.