11 year old Maisie Finally Goes Home After 259 Days in Hospital Battling Brain Tumour

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A brave 11 year old girl who has been battling a brain tumour in hospital for the past eight and a half months was finally able to go home last week.

Inspirational Maisie Lossau, from Spixworth, was welcomed home by friends and family after spending the majority of 2016 in Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge, over 70 miles away from home.

In February this year, Maisie underwent major surgery to remove 80% of a tumour in her brain, just weeks after it was discovered. A year ago, Maisie had begun to experience neck pain, double vision and her parents noticed her eye had turned inward. Maisie was then referred to an optometrist, but when she lost movement in the left-hand side of her body in January she was taken for an MRI scan which revealed the devastating news that she had a brain tumour.

Maisie was admitted to Addenbrooke's Hospital where she underwent life-saving surgery. However just six hours after the operation Maisie became seriously ill – she was struggling to breathe due to a collapsed lung and was put into an induced coma. She then spent the following months on the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) and then on the High Dependency Unit (HDU) where she started her long road to recovery.

Last week, her parents Dawn, 44, and Darrell, 39, were told Maisie was allowed to go home for the first time since February. **Dawn says:**

"We never imagined we'd be going home. It seemed so far away, especially as in September we were told the heart-breaking news that after all our little girl had been through, she needed to go through six weeks of radiotherapy. The tumour – Bob the Blob as Maisie likes to call it – was growing back. However, Maisie got through it with a smile on her face and fortunately, we were told that we could take her home, at last.

"Our lives changed so quickly. Maisie had always been perfectly healthy and it was as if overnight everything changed. I want to do all I can to share our story so that other parents can be aware."

For the duration of Maisie's treatment, her parents were supported with free 'Home from Home' accommodation run by The Sick Children's Trust. The accommodation – Acorn House – is located on the hospital site and is just a few minutes' walk from PICU and HDU. **Mum, Dawn continues:**

"The Sick Children's Trust's Acorn House is a godsend. What it does is very special and we are so grateful for it being there for us, so we could be at Maisie's bedside 24/7.

"After Maisie's operation, I thought we were going to lose her. We were staying in Acorn House, just minutes from the ward, when I got a phone call. In Acorn House there's a direct telephone line from the ward to your room, and I hoped with all my heart that it would never ring, as it could only be bad news. But it rang and I was told to come over straight away as Maisie's condition had worsened. That phone call, and the moment I saw my daughter in that state is something I could never relive. But had we not been given free accommodation at Acorn House, I wouldn't have been able to be by her side in just a matter of minutes.

"We honestly don't think Maisie would be at the stage she's at now if we hadn't been at Acorn House. Because we had a 'Home from Home' we could keep Maisie's spirits up, keep pushing her and encouraging her with her rehabilitation."

Maisie still has a long journey ahead of her. The family – who have had to move to the other side of Norfolk to a more accessible house – will continue to help Maisie with her recovery. They are focusing on the hope that her treatment has worked and in December will know more about what the future holds following an MRI scan. However, for now, Dawn, Darrell and Maisie are planning to enjoy some well-deserved family time at home. **Dawn continues:**

"There really is no place like home and I am so pleased we have finally got here. Maisie's taken everything in her stride and we think she's just amazing. She's always smiling and tries to stay positive, even though she still has a long way to go.

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“We cannot thank The Sick Children’s Trust’s Acorn House for being there for us, practically and emotionally. The staff supported us through the tough times and celebrated with us in the good times. They will always be in our thoughts and we will continue to fundraise for them.”

The Sick Children’s Trust runs ten ‘Homes from Home’ across the country supporting families with seriously ill children, two of which are in Cambridge. **Acorn House Manager, Sandra Peckham, says:**

“Maisie is a delightful little girl who you’d never believe has been through so much. We are so pleased that we could be there for her parents. Acorn House made a huge difference to Dawn and Darrell’s emotional well-being, as well as Maisie’s recovery. We hope they stay in touch and wish them all the best at home.”

For further information on The Sick Children’s Trust, please visit: www.sickchildrenstrust.org

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