Baby Loss Awareness Week 2018

Thursday 4 October, 2018

The Sick Children's Trust is joining leading children's charities to raise awareness of baby loss and back the campaign to secure the support of MPs for the provision of better bereavement care.
Baby Loss Awareness Week takes place 9 to 15 October. During this time, families from all over the world commemorate the lives of their babies and share memories of the all too brief time they had together.
Organisations involved in Baby Loss Awareness Week provide support to anyone affected by pregnancy loss and the death of a baby. Together, with health professionals and services, they are committed to raising awareness of pregnancy and baby loss.
One of these organisations is The Sick Children's Trust, a nationwide charity that supports families in free 'Home from Home' accommodation when they have a seriously ill child in the country's leading paediatric hospitals. A number of the families supported by the charity have critically ill babies that require specialist care miles away from home. By giving them free 'Home from Home' accommodation just minutes from their baby the charity enables families to spend as much time as possible with their loved one, whilst, at the same time, offering practical and emotional support and easing financial burdens.
Gareth and Tracy Wood's son Lewis was delivered by caesarean in December 2017 and it quickly became clear he was seriously ill. Doctors at Northumbria Specialist Emergency Care Hospital made an immediate decision to transfer the newborn to the intensive care unit at Royal Victoria Infirmary (RVI) in Newcastle upon Tyne, 30 miles from the couple's home. Following further tests, specialists identified multiple developmental problems with Lewis' organs within his chest cavity. Sadly his condition was too severe and, despite the doctors' best efforts, Lewis passed away just four days later. However, during his short life his parents were given a room at Crawford House located at RVI and as a result were never more than a few moments from his side. Gareth, who has raised over £1,000 to thank The Sick Children's Trust since Lewis' death, says:
"I couldn't believe such a place even existed. It was the first I'd heard of the charity and was exactly what I needed during the worst days of my life. The facilities were amazing and the staff in the house knew how to support me but, most importantly, it meant I was never more than a couple of minutes from my Lewis' side.
"The Sick Children's Trust allowed me to spend every possible second I could with my son during his short life. He will never be forgotten and we're so grateful for the time we got to spend with him."
Another parent, Becky Petch, who was recently supported in one of the charity's ten 'Homes from Home' has spoken about how The Sick Children's Trust helped her following the birth of her twin boys, Cain and Alfie. Tragically Alfie passed away just hours after birth, but whilst Cain underwent many months of lifesaving treatment in hospital, Becky was supported at Eckersley House, located within the grounds of Leeds Children's Hospital. Becky, says:
"Hours after giving birth I was planning a funeral for one baby as his twin fought for his life in hospital. The Sick Children's Trust kept me beside Cain throughout the darkest days of my life. I honestly cannot imagine having to leave him in hospital every evening and travel home. The key to my recovery and grieving process was knowing I was never more than a few moments from my surviving baby.
"The charity gave me a room when there was nowhere else to go in my time of need. They provided a shoulder to cry on and they supported and reassured me during the dark times when I began to lose faith. They did everything they could and so much more to help me. I will never be able to thank them enough."
Charities like The Sick Children's Trust are vital for families experiencing complex trauma. On average, 2 million children in the UK require hospital treatment each year. Every day, babies are diagnosed with serious and life-threatening illnesses that leave them fighting for life. They often have to be transferred to specialist hospitals far from home to receive critical medical treatment. Joy Darling, Head of Operations at The Sick Children's Trust, says:
"Baby Loss Awareness Week is a time for bereaved parents and families across the world to commemorate their babies' lives and an opportunity to break the silence around pregnancy and baby loss in the UK. It is also an awareness campaign to ensure all parents in the UK get the best possible care, wherever they live, when they need it most.
"Sadly many of the families we support have babies who never make it home. However, we are working towards a future whereby every parent with a seriously ill baby never has to be more than a few moments from their hospital bedside."
For further information about Baby Loss Awareness Week, please visit https://babyloss-awareness.org/
For further information about The Sick Children's Trust, please visit http://www.sickchildrenstrust.org/

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Baby Loss Awareness Week

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About The Sick Children’s Trust

The Sick Children’s Trust is working to a future where every family with a seriously ill child in hospital will be able to stay together, just minutes from their child’s bed during their treatment.

We believe keeping families together significantly improves the recovery of seriously ill children. We provide free, high-quality ‘Home from Home’ accommodation, as well as emotional and practical support, to families with sick children in hospital in the UK.

The Sick Children’s Trust was founded in 1982 by two paediatric specialists Dr Jon Pritchard and Professor James Malpas. Today we have ten ‘Homes from Home’ at major hospitals around the country where families can stay free of charge.

We support 4,000 families every year, and there is a growing demand for our ‘Homes from Home’ as children must increasingly travel long distances to get the specialist treatment they need.
www.sickchildrenstrust.org

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