Castleford dad's thanks to charity for keeping family together with newborn sons

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A Castleford dad is hosting a night full of entertainment for charity The Sick Children's Trust to say thanks for its support in keeping his family close to his son's hospital bedside.

Paul Swift's twin boys, Kieron and Cameron, were born eight weeks premature in April 2010. Kieron was diagnosed with a heart condition before being born and by the time he was five months old, he was in and out of hospital.

A month later the family were transferred to Leeds Children's Hospital so that Kieron could have open heart surgery. With the family living in Rotherham at the time it would have taken them over an hour to get to hospital each day. Support from The Sick Children's Trust's 'Home from Home' Eckersley House relieved this pressure by giving Paul, Heather and Cameron a warm and comfortable place to stay just minutes away from Kieron's hospital bedside. To thank the charity for its support Paul has organised Laugh out Loud, an event to raise vital funds for Eckersley House, taking place on 6 December **Paul said:**

"We were in the hospital for three months and under a lot of stress. We wanted to care for both our sons and needed to figure out how this would be possible with Kieron being in hospital.

"I started to look at the prices of B&B's and hotels as we didn't want to risk trying to get to the hospital in rush hour but that was going to cost a fortune. Thankfully all the financial concerns and travel worries were taken out of our hands as we were given a room by The Sick Children's Trust just minutes away from the hospital.

"Having a place to stay at Eckersley House alleviated a lot of the pressure as we could get a decent night's sleep while being safe in the knowledge that we could be at Kieron's hospital bedside at a moment's notice. We could also look after ourselves by cooking a homemade meal and taking five minutes after being on the ward all day.

"During this time, Heather really struggled being away from Cameron but Eckersley House made it easier as he could come and stay with us occasionally, which made sure we could still be a family.

"We'd like to say a big thank you to everyone who has helped to organise our event and a special thank you to local dance group, Freedom 2 Dance, who have given us free lessons ready for the big night."

All proceeds from Laugh out Loud will go towards giving families with seriously ill children in hospital a 'Home from Home'. Tickets to the event, which can be purchased via: https://www.facebook.com/laughoutloudcastleford/

It costs The Sick Children's Trust £30 to support a family for one night. £30 gives a family so much more than just a roof over their heads when their child is in hospital. £30 gives them someone to talk to, and a calm place to rest with their family. **Eckersley House Manager, Jane McHale, said:**

"We are really grateful to Paul for organising this event to fundraise to keep families together with their seriously ill child in hospital. While staying in a 'Home from Home' is free, it does cost The Sick Children's Trust £30 to support a family for one night. As a charity we rely entirely on the generosity of our supporters to keep our 'Homes from Home' running so we'd like to say a big thank you to Paul for his support and wish him all the best with his event."

For further information about The Sick Children's Trust, please visit sickchildrenstrust.org

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