Couple raise over £2,500 for charity that will keep them by their son's hospital bedside this Christmas

Wednesday 16 December, 2020

A Yorkshire couple whose baby boy will be spending Christmas in hospital are thanking The Sick Children's Trust for keeping their family together this Christmas.

Adele and Martin Jefferson, from Harrogate, have been in Sheffield for the last seven weeks as their son, Joshua, has been undergoing major surgeries at Sheffield Children's Hospital. Joshua and his twin brother Edward were born on 10 October 2020 at 34 weeks. They remained in the family's local hospital for 18 nights before being allowed home to meet their big brother, William. From that moment, their parents looked forward to showing the boys off to friends and family. However just four days later, Joshua stopped feeding. He was rushed to Harrogate Hospital where his condition deteriorated and his parents were prepared for the worst. 12 hours later he was in Sheffield Children's Hospital fighting for his life, and has been there ever since. In the last seven weeks, Joshua has undergone two major operations on his bowel due to a life-threatening condition called necrotising enterocolitis or NEC, an infection which causes the bowel to die. As a result he has had to have 30cm of it removed.

During this time, Adele and Martin, alongside Joshua's twin Edward, have been supported by The Sick Children's Trust at its Magnolia House. Magnolia House, which can be accessed via a corridor from the intensive care unit, gives families a warm and comfortable place to stay. Despite the coronavirus pandemic, the 'Home from Home' has remained open to keep families together. **Adele said:**

"Magnolia House changed our whole world by allowing us to be by Joshua's bedside. A baby needs their family, and we could be right there from the beginning with him. I don't know how over these last few weeks we would've been able to be with Joshua and also be there for Edward without it. It's really difficult to put into words how much Magnolia House means to us, we have been so focused on Joshua that we haven't had chance to really step back and think about it but when we do we can see just how much support it has given us.

"Joshua is doing OK but it will be a slow road to recovery, though things are looking upwards sometimes it feels like one step forward and one backwards. But he is making little steps and every step is important."

Although Joshua will be spending his first Christmas in hospital, he won't be alone as his parents will be able to be right by his side because of The Sick Children's Trust. To thank the charity Adele and Martin are supporting the charity's Together this Christmas appeal which asks supporters to donate £30 to give a family a place to stay close to their child's hospital bedside and have set up a Facebook Fundraiser which in 12 hours raised over £2,500. **Martin added:**

"It's massively comforting to know we have Magnolia House. It's made the impossible possible, without it we would've been struggling and worrying about where we would sleep rather than just focusing on Joshua. That means the absolute world to us and we can't thank the charity enough for making this happen.

"Right from the beginning, Magnolia House was there and it was that bit of support that we didn't realise we needed. Without it, we would've fallen over. Life is so stressful at the moment and the logistics of being there with him would've been a nightmare."

The Sick Children's Trust wants to keep families together by their child's hospital bedside, and a donation of £30 can do that. **Jane Featherstone, Chief Executive at The Sick Children's Trust, said:**

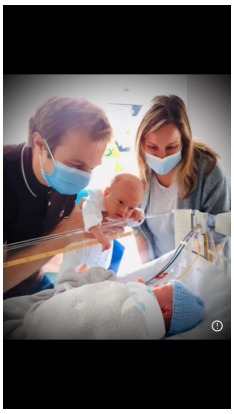
"As Christmas approaches, Martin and Adele are hoping to be able to see and spend time with all three of their children. Because of Magnolia House they will be able to wake up on Christmas Day and see Joshua first thing, then travel to Harrogate to see William open his presents from Father Christmas and spend time with Edward before going back to Sheffield to tuck Joshua in.

"Our 'Homes from Home' give families will be there for families like Adele's and Martins this Christmas, keeping them together and giving them one less thing to worry about.

"This year, we need your support more than ever to keep families together with their child in hospital. With a donation of £30 from you to our Together this Christmas appeal, we can ease their worries and

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give them a place to stay and ensure that they can be together this Christmas.”

To donate to The Sick Children’s Trust’s Christmas appeal, visit sickchildrenstrust.org/donate

To donate directly to Adele and Martin's fundraiser visit:
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