Dad Mark races to the finish line for baby Sophia

Thursday 1 August, 2019

A Dalston dad is lacing up his trainers to take on the UK's biggest half marathon to raise money for The Sick Children's Trust, a charity which gave him a place to stay close to his baby daughter's hospital bedside.

37 year old Mark Boyd is preparing to run the Great North Run on Sunday 8 September 2019 to raise £4,000 for the charity that supports families with seriously ill children in hospital in its free 'Homes from Home' minutes away from their child's bedside.

In February this year, Mark's little girl, Sophia, was born prematurely at 26 weeks. Weighing just over 2lbs, she spent ten weeks receiving lifesaving treatment in Newcastle upon Tyne's Royal Victoria Infirmary (RVI) – 60 miles away from her hometown. During this time, she was never separated from Mark or her mum Dominique as the couple were supported by The Sick Children's Trust, at its Crawford House. Self-employed Mark said:

"When we arrived in Newcastle, we didn't know what to expect. Within the hour, Sophia was born and rushed to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). Despite not knowing what was going on, we never felt helpless or lost as we were looked after too.

"We were introduced to The Sick Children's Trust almost straight away and it took such a huge weight off our minds. Knowing that we didn't have to worry about travelling back and forth from Carlisle every day to be with our poorly daughter was a huge relief. Crawford House wasn't just a roof over our heads – it became a 'Home from Home'. There was a big, modern kitchen filled with all the cooking essentials and there were huge fridges so we could buy our own food to make our meals throughout the day. With Crawford House only being a couple of minutes' walk away from Sophia's bedside, it meant we could walk back for a bite to eat without worrying about leaving her alone."

Once discharged from RVI, Sophia spent just over three weeks in her local hospital before being allowed home. The six month old is now being weaned off oxygen but is doing really well. Her dad Mark, who held a charity night which raised £2,700, added:

"The ten weeks Sophia was in hospital was very worrying, but we feel really lucky that our little fighter managed to battle her way back home.

"When I was at Crawford House I saw that other families had organised events and fundraised as the charity relies on people's generosity to support people like us, so that's why we held the charity night and I'm training for the Great North Run.

"I've done one race in the past which I really struggled with, but I'm sticking to my training this year so that me and Simon can get round the course and raise as much money as possible."

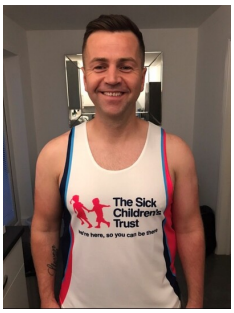
Crawford House is one of ten 'Homes from Home' run by The Sick Children's Trust. The charity relies entirely on voluntary donations to support around 4,000 families every year. Crawford House Manager, Andrew Leadbitter, said:

"Raising as much as they have so far is incredible and Mark, along with his family and friends, will ensure that many more families will have a comfortable place to stay just minutes from their child's bedside. From everyone at The Sick Children's Trust, we wish Mark and Simon the very best of luck!"

To donate to Mark and Simon, visit: https://www.justgiving.com/fun...

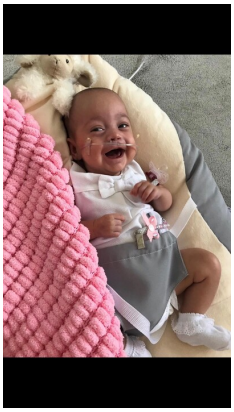
For further information about The Sick Children's Trust, please visit sickchildrenstrust.org

Media:









Related Sectors:

Charities & non-profits :: Children & Teenagers :: Health ::

Scan Me:

Company Contact: