Darlington family thank charity for giving them a ‘Home from Home’ when son was in hospital

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The family of a teenage boy who was involved in a motorbike accident have thanked The Sick Children’s Trust for giving them a ‘Home from Home’ when he required treatment at Newcastle upon Tyne’s Royal Victoria Infirmary (RVI).

James Jenkinson, 15, was rushed to the RVI for urgent treatment following a motorbike accident and required major head surgery and multiple skin grafts.

For nine weeks, he remained in the specialist hospital which was an hour away from home. During this time James’ parents, Claire and Louis, along with brother Jake, were able to stay just minutes from his hospital bedside as they were supported with free ‘Home from Home’ accommodation run by The Sick Children’s Trust. The family stayed at the charity’s Crawford House, located in the hospital grounds. **Mum Claire says:**

“Crawford House really did become a ‘Home from Home’ for us. Mostly it was me and James’ dad who stayed there, with James’ younger brother Jake coming to stay on the weekends. When Louis had to go back to work, my Mum would come and stay with me. To have that flexibility meant so much to me. I didn’t want to leave James’ side, but I also needed support. And Crawford House made that possible.

“As James got stronger, we looked forward to getting him home. The first small step but huge milestone was getting James out of the hospital for a couple of hours. He asked to go over to Crawford House as he was very curious as to what it was like and to see where we were staying.

“We showed James around Crawford House and to our bedroom. When we opened the door to our room, James spotted the bed and asked if he could lie down on it. He said it had been so long since he’d been able to lie in a normal bed and that it just looked so comfy. And as soon as he lay down, he exclaimed ‘Oh, a real bed!’”

Since leaving the RVI, James’ recovery has gone from strength to strength and he has only been readmitted once more to hospital for further skin grafts. **Claire continues:**

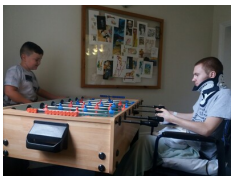
“Every person’s story is different, so James and I made the decision that it was important to share his story so that another family in a similar situation knows they’re not alone and they will get through it. Especially when there is fantastic support out there from charities such as The Sick Children’s Trust.”

The Sick Children’s Trust runs ten ‘Homes from Home’ across the country, supporting families with seriously ill children in hospital. Although accommodation is provided to families free of charge, it costs the charity £30 to support a family for one night. **Crawford House Manager, Gail Stonley, says:**

“It’s wonderful to hear that James’ recovery is going well, and we’re so pleased that we could ease some of the worries and stresses that come with having a seriously ill child in hospital by supporting them with free ‘Home from Home’ accommodation.”

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

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