Family and friends of little Jack raise over £450 for charity that kept his parents by his hospital bedside

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Friends and family of a little boy born with a rare condition occurring in just 6,000 babies have raised £450 for The Sick Children's Trust.

Before little Jack Morphet arrived into the world, his parents Amelia and Steve were told that their son would need to undergo major surgery at just two days old. A scan at 28 weeks had revealed that Jack had a condition known as duodenal atresia in which the first part of the small intestine, just beyond the stomach, is closed off rather than being a tube. This stops food and fluid passing from the stomach into the intestines. Jack needed a specialist operation to repair this which had to take place at Newcastle's Royal Victoria Infirmary, 60 miles away from the family's home in Cargo, Carlisle.

Fortunately, Amelia and Steve were told about support available from a charity, The Sick Children's Trust which runs free 'Home from Home' accommodation for families with seriously ill children in hospital. For the duration of Jack's hospital treatment, Steve was supported at Crawford House while Amelia was able to sleep by her son's side on the hospital ward. To thank the charity for its support, the couple asked friends and family to donate to The Sick Children's Trust at their son's christening in lieu of presents. **Amelia, 36, says:**

"Crawford House was such a huge help, especially in those early days. We didn't anticipate that I would have an emergency caesarean and would be recovering in hospital while Jack was recovering in the paediatric intensive care unit (PICU), but because of Crawford House my husband Steve was there, at every opportunity, supporting Jack and me in our recovery.

"Steve and I felt very cared for at Crawford House, although I wasn't staying there the staff would always pop onto the ward to visit us and ask how we were getting on. They were always so lovely and friendly. And I was always welcome to pop over to have some time to relax and rest and even do our laundry, as being so far away from home the facilities were vital.

"Our daughter, Isabel, even came to stay and when she visited, she thought Crawford House was a brilliant adventure, she enjoyed breakfast in the kitchen, the playroom and visiting the park with her dad to take some time out from the hospital environment."

Jack, who just had his one year review and is slowly coming off his medication, is now at nursery making friends and charming everyone with his beautiful smile and cheeky personality. **Amelia continues:**

"Our stay was relatively short and we find ourselves fortunate in this respect. Until I was in that position I'd never considered how long some families are away from home and how difficult it must be to feel torn between staying and being with the rest of the family.

"We decided to ask Jack's family and friends to donate to The Sick Children's Trust as we wanted to say thank you for everything the charity offered us when we needed support. Giving to the charity was an easy choice, we christened Jack to bring him up in the Christian faith and although his Godparents chose to gift sentimental items, as a family we didn't need our friends to spend any money on gifts, we just wanted them to be present to celebrate. To our amazement £450 was raised. We can't thank Crawford House and The Sick Children's Trust enough for being the support we needed at that time."

Crawford House is one of ten 'Homes from Home' run by The Sick Children's Trust. Every year the charity supports around 4,000 families with children undergoing specialist treatment in hospital. It costs £30 to support a family for one night and the charity relies entirely on voluntary donations to meet this cost. **Crawford House Manager, Andrew Leadbitter, says:**

"We're so grateful to all of Jack's family and friends for giving so generously at his Christening. When a child is ill in hospital, all any family wants is to be there by their side giving them much needed comfort. With this donation we will be able to ensure more families are able to stay together. From all of us at The Sick Children's Trust, we'd like to say a huge thank you."

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

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