Father Pushes Himself to Raise Money in Memory of Baby Daughter

Friday 2 September, 2016

The father of a little girl who tragically passed away at just six weeks old is taking on a trio of challenges to raise money for The Sick Children's Trust and East Anglia's Children's Hospices (EACH).

Rich Stainthorpe, 37, from Norwich, has already undertaken the 75 mile Tour de Broads cycle challenge and raised over £1,000 as a thank you to the two charities he and partner Donna feel made a huge difference in helping them coping with the loss of their beloved daughter Imogen.

Much-missed Imogen Grace was born in 2014, but during a complicated delivery suffered irrecoverable injuries. First time parents Rich and Donna were told their baby had a minimal chance of survival and after three weeks in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital she had to be transferred to Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge, for specialist treatment.

Rich, who has an Olympic distance triathlon and marathon yet to complete, says: "I couldn't wait to become a Dad, and when Imogen arrived the feeling was wonderful. But sadly, it soon became apparent that something was wrong. Our baby wasn't breathing and she was floppy. She was immediately given manual respiratory aid before being transferred to NICU at the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital.

"We'd waited so long to meet our baby and didn't even get our first cuddle until days later. We couldn't understand what had happened, the doctors couldn't either. Imogen had been very active during pregnancy and labour – but something changed, and no one knew what.

"When the doctors found out what happened, they took us into a room and we were given the horrendous news about the catastrophic scale of Imogen's injuries sustained during her birth. We were told that it was extremely unlikely that Imogen would ever be able to breathe on her own, she was permanently paralysed from the neck down and her chances of survival were minimal.

"It was truly devastating news for both of us. We had put our complete, unwavering faith in the hospital to deliver our baby safely, and it had gone wrong in the most horrible way imaginable. We knew our lives had changed forever, but we were going to do whatever was best for our brave little girl, who was fighting for her life in NICU."

At just 21 days old, the decision was made to transfer Imogen to Addenbrooke's Hospital – over 60 miles away from home. It was here, that Rich and Donna were introduced to The Sick Children's Trust where they lived in Acorn House for three weeks, so they could spend every moment with their daughter. **Rich continues:**

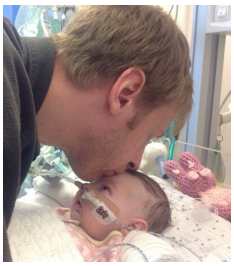
"When we were told Imogen needed transferring so far away from home, it wasn't easy but we knew it was best for her. For us, we felt that if it improved Imogen's chances, it was essential that she went there. There were so many unknowns, but we were prepared to try anything to give our daughter the best possible chance.

"When we arrived at Acorn House, we were absolutely amazed, as we assumed we would be forced to book into a hotel or commute from Norwich. Neither of those options would have been good for us, as we couldn't really afford the hotel, especially for an indefinite period of time. Travelling home was simply not going to happen. We desperately wanted to be as close as possible to Imogen at all times, and the wonderful Acorn House gave us the chance to do that.

"Acorn House was just few minutes' walk to the ward where Imogen was, which meant we could spend literally every waking moment with her. If we woke in the night, we could be there in just minutes to see how she was doing, even if it was to just watch her sleep. But it wasn't just how close we were to Imogen – Acorn House is a truly wonderful place. It definitely lived up to its moniker of being a 'Home from Home'. There were times when we desperately needed to rest, eat and shower - it gave us all that and so much more."

Imogen sadly passed away at just over six weeks old and now her family and friends are raising money in her memory. Rich, who recently became a Dad to Imogen's little brother Isaac, says that although his challenges are big, there are two things that will keep him going. **He continues:**

Media:







Related Sectors:

Charities & non-profits :: Health :: Men's Interest :: Sport ::

Related Keywords:

North Norfolk Triathlon :: Fundraising :: EACH :: Sick Children's Trust :: Norfolk :: Norwich ::

Scan Me:

“Knowing I’m raising money for two incredible causes that deserve every penny will encourage me to push myself. The Sick Children’s Trust gave us a ‘Home from Home’ so we could be with Imogen throughout her painfully short life – something we can never thank the charity enough for. And EACH gave us a huge amount of support after Imogen died – which has really helped us cope with our loss. We cannot praise both charities highly enough for what they did for us, and many of our friends have been supporting The Sick Children’s Trust by organising and attending Big Chocolate Tea parties, or even shaving their head, like our mate Alexandra Bone. We want to raise awareness and to explain to people just how important both charities are to those who need them.

“Also, I'm doing it for Imogen. She suffered so much in such a short space of time and had the chance to do things like this taken away from her. I'm doing it for her because she could not.”

Rich’s next event will take place on 4 September where he will do the North Norfolk Triathlon.

Acorn House Manager Sandra Peckham says: “Imogen’s story is so tragically sad, but to see all that Rich is doing, along with his friends and family is so inspirational. We really do appreciate everything he is doing for us, and the money he raises will help support another family with ‘Home from Home’ accommodation so they can be close to their seriously ill child.”

To support Rich, please visit:

Company Contact: