Mother and Father team tackle half marathon for charity that helped after crash that paralysed daughter

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Lisa Orrock and her partner Chris Bootes, from South Shields, are taking part in the Great North Run in September to raise funds for The Sick Children's Trust - a charity that supported their family when their four-year-old daughter was in hospital after being seriously injured in a car crash.

In 2014 Jessica Bootes, now five, was left fighting for her life in the Royal Victoria Infirmary (RVI), Newcastle, after the family car was hit from behind by a taxi. For 11 days, Jessica was in an induced coma and although the doctors weren't sure if she would pull through, Jessica survived, but was left paralysed down the right side of her body.

For the next month, Jessica received specialist rehabilitation treatment at the RVI. During this difficult time, the family stayed in Crawford House - a 'Home from Home' within the hospital grounds provided for free by The Sick Children's Trust.

Now, Jessica is making good, steady progress, yet remains paralysed down her right side. To thank the charity for keeping the family together, her Mum and Dad are taking part in the Great North Run.

When the pair signed up for the run there was some initial friendly competition between the two, with both of them aiming to outperform the other. But since starting training and realising the extent of the challenge, Lisa, who describes herself as a very inexperienced runner, says that now all they are aiming for is to get round the course and finish in one piece. **She says:**

"The Sick Children's Trust was absolutely marvellous and everyone who worked there became like family, offering us a shoulder to cry on and a friendly ear to talk to. The staff at Crawford House were completely selfless and they always went above and beyond to be there for you and to do anything they could to make your life easier. Jessica still has a way to go but she's a trooper and we are just happy that she is here with us and that we are getting to see her grow up into a wonderful person.

"We live in South Shields so the Great North Run is a local event for us and that's why we chose to do it. The route goes right through where we live so we will be running through the community that did so much to support our family after the crash. The whole community rallied around us then and they are doing it again now - it's fantastic. There are lots of other people from the community running for a variety of causes including for The Sick Children's Trust."

The charity has ten 'Homes from Home' based at major paediatric hospitals across the UK which allow the families of sick children to go back to a comfy bed, a hot shower, and clean communal areas after long days spent on the ward.

Gail Stonley, House Manager at Crawford House says: "Since Lisa and Chris left Crawford House they have kept in touch and have continued to support us by bringing gifts and raising money - Jessica's school gave us a cheque and Chris's sister even shaved her head to raise funds!

"As a charity we rely entirely on donations so are hugely grateful for all of Lisa and Chris's support and we want to wish them good luck with the run."

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