Mum and colleagues wear pyjamas at work to raise money for charity

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A local mother, whose son became seriously ill and was readmitted to hospital at less than 48 hours old, has held a Pyjama Party at her workplace, to raise money for The Sick Children's Trust, which supported her family over Christmas and New Year whilst her baby was in hospital.

Jane Careless, 38, from Matlock, and three colleagues, joined in The Sick Children's Trust's Pyjama Party week last month to thank the charity for the support it gave her when her son, George, was diagnosed with Hirschsprung's disease.

George, who was born on 5 December 2014 at Chesterfield Royal Hospital, became increasingly unwell and stopped feeding only a day after being sent home. He was vomiting constantly and his tummy was bloated and swollen, so his parents rushed him back to the hospital, where doctors took X-rays and scans of their tiny baby. They identified a severe obstruction in his bowels and tentatively diagnosed George with Hirschsprung's disease. Hirschsprung's disease is a rare condition where the nerves of the muscles that squeeze to push faeces through the rectum are missing. This meant that George's faeces couldn't be pushed through the bowel in the usual way and left him at serious risk of suffering a ruptured bowel. The doctors at Chesterfield quickly contacted the specialist transport team, Embrace, to transfer George to for urgent treatment at Sheffield Children's Hospital. **Mum, Jane, who works in Public Health, says:**

"We were terrified. My husband, Simon, went in the ambulance with George and I drove behind with our devastated little girl, Jasmine, trying to comfort her, but not knowing myself if my baby would survive. Four days after giving birth, sleep deprived and exhausted, I found myself in Sheffield, over an hour from home, watching our baby helplessly and wondering what the future held.

"I thought we would all be able to stay on the ward with George and panicked when it became clear that this wasn't going to possible, but then the nurses told us about The Sick Children's Trust. She told us the charity had two 'Homes from Home' located at the hospital, Treetop and Magnolia Houses that we could stay at for free whilst George was in hospital. Ann, the Manager, came to meet us and she was lovely. She reassured us we could have a room that would mean we were only a few minutes from George's side and that we needed to rest to be strong for our baby. When she showed us around Treetop House I couldn't believe that we were being given a room there and that it was totally free. The thought of travelling to and from our home in Matlock each day didn't bear thinking about.

"After a bad day on the ward, to come back to the house and sit around the kitchen table, drinking tea, and comforting each other, reminded me that I wasn't alone and there were other people in the same boat. What's more, there was a homely environment, it was full of toys and was away from the distressing ward environment. And there was a huge kitchen, where I could make Jasmine tea whilst she played, on the days she visited her brother."

The Sick Children's Trust runs ten 'Homes from Home' across the country, supporting families with seriously ill children in hospital. Although the accommodation is provided free of charge to families, it costs The Sick Children's Trust £30 to support a family for one night. **Mum, Jane, continues:**

"Just before Christmas a room became available at Magnolia House, which meant I was even closer to George. Many times, during my stay, the nurse would call during the night and I would put on my slippers and make the short trip down the corridor to be with my baby. George was discharged the day before Christmas Eve and we thought we would have him at home over his first Christmas, but by early evening the next day we were back in Sheffield, and back at Magnolia House with the snow falling around us.

"Christmas Day came and my parents brought Jasmine to be with us. We sat in Magnolia House and took it in turns to visit George. The staff were amazing and lifted our moods and filled our heads with positive thoughts.

"George underwent his first of three lifesaving operations on Boxing Day, so while most people were enjoying their festive holiday, we were watching our baby being wheeled into theatre. Fortunately the doctors successfully formed an opening in George's ileum, which is the last part of his small bowel and brought it to the surface during a procedure known as an ileostomy. He was fitted with a stoma bag,

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which collected all the waste products that would usually pass through his colon. Jasmine gave George his first feed after the operation and over the weeks that followed he grew stronger."

Jane and her husband, Simon, 40, stayed at Magnolia House until George was discharged in the middle of January. Since being discharged George has undergone two further corrective procedures and although he still has to make regular trips to Sheffield Children's Hospital, he is excitedly preparing for his third birthday and Christmas, along with his seven year old sister, Jasmine. **Vicki Roots, Community Fundraising Officer at The Sick Children's Trust, says:**

"It sounds and looks like Jane and her colleagues had great fun at their Pyjama Party! The photos are great and I can't believe they went into meetings in their dressing gowns and with their slippers on. From what Jane said she thinks that next year there will be a lot more people who will want to get on board and support The Sick Children's Trust which is fantastic.

"As a charity we rely entirely on voluntary donations, so all the money raised from the Pyjama Parties will enable families to stay together, just minutes from their children's hospital bedside."

If you would like to find out more about fundraising for The Sick Children's Trust, please visit www.sickchildrenstrust.org or email fundraising@sickchildrenstrust.org.

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