Mum Raises over £3,500 for Charity as Twins Celebrate First Birthday

Friday 1 July, 2016

The mum of premature twin girls who've just celebrated their first birthday despite being born at just 25 weeks old, has raised £3,732 for The Sick Children's Trust.

Serena Hanks, 41 from Linton, completed 'Millie and Lottie – The Journey Home' - a sponsored ten mile walk from The Rosie Hospital, Cambridge, to their home in Linton. The walk, which represented the journey Serena and husband Nev, 48, would have had to make every day for four months, had it not been for The Sick Children's Trust giving them a 'Home from Home' while the girls underwent life-saving treatment in hospital.

Last year, Serena and Nev welcomed Millie and Lottie into the world, but the girls were seriously ill after arriving at just 25 weeks - with a combined weight of just 3lbs. For 120 days, both girls fought numerous conditions which came with their prematurity, from respiratory distress to heart defects. However, while Lottie got stronger, Millie became weaker after contracting the life-threatening bowel condition necrotizing enterocolitis, and their parents were told she had just 12 hours to live. Millie underwent extensive surgery, and thankfully started a long, bumpy, recovery process. While Lottie was allowed home after 120 days, it took 185 days for her sister Millie to leave the hospital.

During this time, the family were supported at Chestnut House, a 'Home from Home' run by The Sick Children's Trust. Chestnut House is located just a lift ride away from the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU), and supports parents with free accommodation while their baby is seriously ill in hospital. **Mum Serena, says:**

"We had a fab day doing our charity walk to raise money for this wonderful charity. We were also joined by Chestnut House Manager Abi, which was great. The Sick Children's Trust came to our rescue and meant we could spend precious time with both Millie and Lottie. We hope the money raised will help many more families who may find themselves in a similar situation to us and who are in need a 'Home from Home'.

Chestnut House is one of ten 'Homes from Home' run by The Sick Children's Trust. The charity supports around 4,000 families a year with free accommodation so that they can stay close to their seriously ill child. **Chestnut House Manager Abi Abdel-aal says:**

"We're so grateful to Serena and Nev for organising 'Millie and Lottie – The Journey Home'. It was a fantastic day which raised lots of money for Chestnut House and The Sick Children's Trust. It costs around £30 per night to support a family in one of the charity's ten 'Homes from Home' across the country, so this money will help give many more families a much needed 'Home from Home' when their child is seriously ill in The Rosie Hospital."

If you'd like to find out more about 'Millie and Lottie – The Journey Home', please visit: http://bit.ly/22Md4Z3

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