Mum tackles great north run for twin girls

Friday 28 July, 2017

A local mum will be taking on the Great North Run this year to thank The Sick Children's Trust for its support while her premature twin girls fought for their lives in intensive care.

Michelle Wroe, 30, from Whitehaven, will be undertaking this year's Great North Run to raise money for The Sick Children's Trust which supported her with free 'Home from Home' accommodation when her twin girls, Maddison and Mila, were born 11 weeks prematurely at West Cumberland Hospital in Whitehaven.

When she was just 29 weeks pregnant, Mum Michelle was rushed into West Cumberland Hospital in Whitehaven and within hours underwent an emergency caesarean- two and a half months before her due date. Weighing just 2lb 13oz and 2lb 7oz respectively, Maddison and Mila were resuscitated by doctors and kept in the special care baby unit before being rushed to Newcastle upon Tyne's Royal Victoria Infirmary (RVI) for lifesaving treatment. There, the tiny twins desperately struggled to survive and were kept on the breathing aid CPAP for three weeks in the hospital's high dependency unit.

During this time, Michelle was never more than a few minutes' walk away from her babies' hospital bedside because she was supported by The Sick Children's Trust which gave her free 'Home from Home' accommodation at Crawford House. **Michelle says:**

"The RVI is a brilliant hospital and I cannot speak more highly of it. Both my partner Paul and I stayed on the ward for a couple of days while I recovered from the caesarean. It was then that we were told that The Sick Children's Trust was offering us a room at Crawford House.

"I don't know what we would have done without The Sick Children's Trust since the RVI is over a two hour drive from our home. Having that support really took the pressure off and it was an immense comfort for both Paul and I to know that we had a place to stay so close to our darling girls. The charity kept our family together during some of our darkest and most difficult times."

The Sick Children's Trust supports around 4,000 families with seriously ill children in hospital every year and runs ten 'Homes from Home' across the country. Although the 'Homes from Home' are free of charge for families, it costs the charity £30 to support a family for one night. It relies entirely on voluntary donations. **Michelle, who is currently training for her first half marathon, adds:**

"At the time we didn't know anything about The Sick Children's Trust but having benefited from their help first-hand, I think it's so important to raise funds and awareness for the vital work that they do. The charity offers so much practical and emotional support to so many families, and more people should know about it."

Maddison and Mila were allowed home at 37 weeks, three weeks before their official due date, and have gone from strength to strength. **Michelle continues:**

"The girls are turning four this October and are doing absolutely brilliantly. Maddison has an inhaler and is also prone to chest infections but they haven't suffered from any lasting illnesses. The doctors think she will only improve as she gets older. They're both bright and active girls, and they have so much ahead of them."

Crawford House is one of two 'Homes from Home' based in the North East. It has 23 family bedrooms, 14 bathrooms and a fully equipped kitchen, dining room and playroom. **Crawford House Manager, Gail Stonley says:**

'Whenever a child is seriously ill in hospital it's always extremely stressful and emotional for the whole family. To be separated at a time like that can be agonising for both child and parent.

"For Michelle it was so difficult to see her two tiny newborns fighting for their lives, especially before they were even due to be born. Crawford House supported her with a 'Home from Home' and meant that Maddison and Mila's Mummy could be by their bedside, night and day."

If you would like to support Michelle, please visit: https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/michelle-wroe1

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

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