Ossett dad laces up trainers for charity that kept him by son's hospital bedside

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The dad of a little boy who baffled doctors is rigorously training for the Great North Run to raise money for The Sick Children's Trust.

Paul Colenutt, 32 from Ossett, is hoping to raise £500 for The Sick Children's Trust, a charity which gave him a place to stay just minutes from his son's hospital bedside.

When George was just three days old he suddenly started coughing blood. He was admitted to the family's local hospital in Wakefield but was rushed to Leeds Children's Hospital for a lifesaving operation for an intestinal bleed. Paul and his wife, Jen, were offered a room, free of charge, by The Sick Children's Trust at its 'Home from Home' Eckersley House located within the hospital grounds while George recovered on the neonatal intensive care unit. **Paul, an Analytical Chemist at ALS Environmental, said:**

"The Sick Children's Trust supported us for a week when our world was turned upside down and since then I've really wanted to give back to them.

"It was very touch and go when George was rushed to hospital. Facing the unknown and not being able to do anything made us both feel so helpless. What helped us in this situation though was The Sick Children's Trust by giving us a place to stay at Eckersley House. Although we couldn't do anything to ease George's pain, at least we could be there for him day or night. He was never alone.

"At Eckersley House we were never too far away from George and therefore didn't have to worry about the time it would take to be at his side if he needed us. Because the 'Home from Home' is just a few minutes' walk away from the ward, when George was sleeping we could go over to cook a meal or do our laundry and be back within no time at all. We never felt like we were abandoning him which made a huge difference to the whole experience.

"The Great North Run will be a real challenge for me which is completely out of my comfort zone so I hope that will encourage more donations."

George, who turned three years old this month, is now doing really well. Despite never finding out what caused George's intestinal bleed, he has had no further issues.

Paul will join 70 other runners taking part in the UK's biggest half marathon to raise money for The Sick Children's Trust. The charity runs ten 'Homes from Home' across the country giving families a place to stay, free of charge. **Eckersley House Manager, Jane McHale, said:**

"For families with children in hospital, life can often feel all over the place. The Sick Children's Trust gives parents, grandparents, brothers and sister a place to stay and a bit of stability during this time.

"We rely entirely on voluntary donations to support families across our 'Homes from Home', it costs £30 to support a family for one night. With Paul's help, we will be able to be there for more families – offering them a comfortable place to stay just minutes from their child. So we'd like to say a huge thank you and wish Paul the best of luck!

To donate to Paul's fundraising page visit, virginmoneygiving.com/PaulGColenutt
and for further information about The Sick Children's Trust, go to sickchildrenstrust.org

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