

SCBU Dares Wins - Neonatal staff and supporters take on SAS challenge for special care babies

Monday 28 March, 2022

A group of specialist neonatal medics from The Great Western Hospital, Swindon, along with other long-time supporters of New Life will take on the gruelling 24k challenge used by the SAS. The Fan Dance is a 16-mile hike up Pen y Fan, the highest mountain in the Brecon Beacons and is renowned for its tough terrain and demanding conditions.

The Fan Dance is used as part of the Special Forces selection process to see if those wanting to be part of the British Army's elite force have the physical and mental stamina required.

Dr Sarah Bates, Consultant Paediatrician and Neonatologist has worked closely with New Life Special Care Babies for the past 25 years and her unit has benefited from over £500,000 worth of specialist lifesaving equipment funded by the charity. Dr Bates will be joined by members of her neonatal team as well as dedicated supporters and fundraisers of the charity. 'Trevor is an inspiration, she said. 'After the enormous tragedy of losing his twin boys 26 years ago, it is incredible that he has devoted himself to fundraising to help so many other babies and their families.'

The group of 20 will be led by a number of ex-Special Forces veterans, one from Newbury, who will be there not just to help them complete the course, but also to give support and guidance and boost their morale. Each of the supporting veterans know what a challenge the Fan Dance is, having previously completed the course within the obligatory 4 hours, carrying a 40kg bergen.

All the entrants have been training hard and are determined to raise as much money as possible for the charity.

New Life is dedicated to raising money for specialist neonatal equipment for hospitals across the UK. In 2021 it hit its first £1,000,000 and has recently been shortlisted for the Great British Business Awards in the Charity of the Year category.

CEO Trevor Goodall said 'I am delighted that we have been able to run this extremely exciting and unusual event. It is the first time we have organised this challenge and without the help from the ex-Special Forces guys, it would not have been possible. There is so much required to run an event like this including a support crew providing transport, refreshments and medical backup. It will be such an achievement for everyone involved and I hope will raise a good amount of money.'

Each year the charity supplies equipment to neonatal units such as breast pumps, twin incubators, resuscitaires and hot cots meaning they get the equipment quickly so that they can give the premature and very sick babies they care for, the best possible start in life.

The challenge will take place on Saturday 30th April. Anyone wanting to donate can visit <https://justgiving.com/campaign/sasfandance?success=true>

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