Uncle’s tireless fundraising misson in memory of Hope raises over £1,200

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A devoted uncle has been completing a number of epic endurance challenges over the past year in memory of his niece, Hope, who tragically passed away at just six months old.

Allen Winter-Moore, 39, from Braystones in Cumbria, has been tirelessly fundraising for The Sick Children’s Trust, which supported his niece’s parents, Michael and Lisa Winter, with free ‘Home from Home’ accommodation, whilst their daughter underwent treatment in Freeman Hospital, Newcastle.

Hope was diagnosed with a serious heart defect – hypoplastic left heart syndrome – at Lisa’s 20 week scan, which meant the left side of her heart hadn’t developed properly. Shortly after Hope was born at Newcastle’s Royal Victoria Infirmary, she was transferred to Freeman Hospital for specialist treatment. During this time, her parents were supported at Scott House, free ‘Home from Home’ accommodation run by The Sick Children’s Trust. **Allen, who has raised over £1,200 to date and hopes to continue raising awareness for the charity, says:**

“I wanted to give a little something back to The Sick Children’s Trust because when Hope was in hospital it affected our whole family. My wife Claire and I were childhood sweethearts so I’ve known her brother Michael since he was just nine years old and we’ve always been very close.

“Michael and Lisa stayed at Scott House for three months when Hope was seriously ill in Freeman Hospital. I saw first-hand how the charity supported them, both with incredible accommodation, which was completely free, and the incomparable emotional support from House Manager Andrew and the team.

“Claire and her mother Maureen were regular visitors at Scott House where they’d go spend time with Lisa and Michael. They were made to feel so welcome and the house was amazing. By having Scott House a lot of the practical stress was taken away especially when emotionally everybody was struggling to hold it together.”

Since he began his fundraising endeavours, Allen has completed the Manchester Half Marathon, in both October 2016 and 2017, the Chester Half Marathon in May 2017, as well as three separate 10km runs in Gateshead, Gosforth and Carlisle. He also took on the challenging Great North Swim on Lake Windermere in June and is back training for the Lorton Half Marathon in Cumbria in January 2018 and the London Landmark Race in March. **Allen, who works as a Cost Engineer in the nuclear industry, continues:**

“When I began my fundraising challenges I was well over 17 stone and now, 13 months later, I am down to 13, with much more muscle! I can run 10km now in the time it used to take me to run only 5km and these challenges in memory of Hope have encouraged me to push for more and more on the fundraising front.

“The hardest challenge was the Manchester Half Marathon this October. I fell over early on in the race and really twisted my knee, so it was sheer determination and thinking about Hope that got me to the finish line. Luckily, after a few weeks off, I am back on track.

“The Great North Swim was another challenging event because the conditions on Lake Windermere were so bad. I was one of the last to swim on the Saturday and what was meant to be only a one mile swim became over two miles due to the currents and waves.

“I feel really invigorated to be supporting such an amazing charity that gave Michael and Lisa free accommodation for the three months Hope was at Freeman Hospital – we only live a few hours away, but not having to think about the cost of travel or how they were going to pay for a hotel took a little bit of the pressure off them during such a terrible time.

“My wife, Claire, has also helped our nine year old daughter Ellie with her fundraising for The Sick Children’s Trust. She has been really committed to supporting the charity that helped her little cousin Hope. She’s been raising money at school and also through her Brownies group.”

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The Sick Children's Trust supports around 4,000 families in its ten 'Homes from Home' every year – keeping families close to their seriously ill child's bedside. **Andrew Leadbitter, Scott House Manager, says:**

"We are so grateful to Allen for taking on so many tough fundraising challenges. I got to know his family very well when Lisa and Michael were staying at Scott House and it is very touching that they have all rallied together to raise money in Hope's memory for The Sick Children's Trust.

"Scott House is located in the hospital grounds, which meant Hope's parents were just minutes from her hospital bedside at all times. It costs us £30 to support a family for one night in one of our 'Homes from Home' and we rely entirely on voluntary donations to do this, so the team's fundraising will support other families when they need it the most."

To sponsor Allen, please click here: https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Allen-Winter-Moore4

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

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