

YOUR ECHC

News from Edinburgh Children's Hospital Charity

echcharity.org

Autumn 2024



Meet Indira — a teeny tiny TOF warrior!

Read how your support helped Indira through tracheo-oesophageal fistula (TOF) surgery



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**Edinburgh
Children's
Hospital Charity**

More than Medicine

Scottish charity number SC020862

Welcome

from ECHC CEO, Roslyn Neely



Welcome to the autumn edition of *YOUR ECHC*.

If you're reading this, it means you made it through the summer holidays. Congratulations! What better way to celebrate than to brew a cuppa, put your feet up, and take 10 minutes to read how your incredible support is helping children in hospital?

It's been a jam-packed one here at the Royal Hospital for Children and Young People (RHCYP). And thanks to your fundraising efforts and kind donations, children and their families facing life-changing hospital visits have continued to get the extra help they need.

Children like Indira, who was born weighing just 3lbs and had to undergo major surgery at 16 hours old. Read more on pages 4 and 5 to discover how your support helped Indira's family every step of the way.

In our spring edition, we asked for your support as we urgently sought to raise £50,000 to see The Haven, our Tranent-based children's mental health service, through its second year. Spoiler alert – you did it! Read more overleaf.

Hospital can be a noisy place, and unknown sounds and sights can be scary for children. To help them cope, we've funded amazing new virtual reality headsets. Through VR, children can be transported to worlds of wonder without leaving their bed! Adventure awaits on page 6.

Despite the greatest challenges a child can face, the hospital is a place where being sick doesn't have to mean being sad. And that's because of you. Thank you for everything you continue to do to bring more than medicine to seriously ill children.

Roslyn





You did it!

Another year of The Haven

Earlier in the year, we told you we urgently needed to raise £50,000 to see our children's pilot mental health service, The Haven, through its second year.

Well the numbers are in and... you did it! It was a big ask but, in the final week, your incredible support got us to that ambitious target.

The Haven can now stay open for a second year, giving even more children struggling with their mental health in East Lothian, and their families, the opportunity to get support.

If your child is struggling with their mental health, the last thing you want is to be told you need to wait. But sadly, that's the reality of mental health support for children in Scotland. Services are stretched to breaking point.

The Haven is our solution. It's free, it's inclusive and there is no waiting list. And it's succeeding.

Since opening last September, The Haven has supported over 2000 children, young people and their families, and we have been staggered by the impact the service has had.

Parents have told us they are "drowning", they "don't know where to turn", and visiting The Haven has given them relief.

One young person we supported can now sleep in their own bed again; another told us, "Things are a lot better. I don't have any worries at the moment."

The Haven is working, but we need to do more. We want a Haven in every community, so no child, parent, carer, or sibling ever feels they have nowhere to turn. This essential £50,000 funding brings us one step closer to achieving this.



If you agree there is no time to wait when it comes to children's mental health, scan the QR code to add your name to our campaign today.



Meet Indira

A teeny, tiny TOF warrior!

Indira was born weighing just 3lbs, 1oz after doctors discovered she had stopped growing in the womb – but couldn't work out why.

At birth, she had lots of bubbling at the mouth and was diagnosed with a tracheo-oesophageal fistula (TOF) – her oesophagus hadn't formed properly and was connected to her windpipe. Her parents, Neil and Alyssa, were told she would need major surgery immediately. She was just 16 hours old.

Dad Neil says: "The whole experience was terrifying but also surreal. We knew she was small in the womb, so we were prepared in a way but had no idea what to expect.

"After surgery, she spent almost a month in intensive care, sedated for a good part of that time. One of her lungs had to be punctured, so she was on 100% oxygen for the first few weeks

before she started breathing on her own again. Thinking about how the doctors performed that incredible surgery on someone so little is truly mind-blowing.

"We got to hold her the day before surgery, and then had to wait over two weeks to hold her again. It was petrifying at first as she was so tiny and hooked up to a ventilator. Seeing her with all the tubes and wires was overwhelming, but we gradually got used to it."

"Her stay in neonates lasted seven weeks. We were thankfully given a room in the hospital accommodation so we could stay by her side the whole time.

“It would be easy to go stir crazy, sitting there day in day out, listening to all the beeping and hospital sounds. You just have to make yourself get used to it – you kind of numb yourself to it.”

Things were going well until May this year when Indra caught a virus and started having trouble with her milk. This led to a three-week stay in hospital, where she was put under the care of a gastrointestinal (GI) team.

Neil continued, “The GI team decided she needed a special tube to help with feeding, which made a huge difference. She gained a third of her body weight in just one month.

“So far, we’re very lucky that the operation seems to have worked and now she has her NJ tube, Indra is stronger than ever. Another complication with TOF is limb abnormalities and in Indra’s case, she’s missing a thumb on her left hand so she might need surgery for this down the line.



“We were very grateful to have access to ECHC’s complementary therapy service during our stay. Getting that break from the hospital ward and getting a massage, even just for half an hour, made all the difference to how you felt that day.

“We’ve also since discovered the charity’s Hub, so it’s great to know we can go there for a chat, a cuppa and a little bit of a breather when we’re back in for appointments in future.

“For now, we’re taking things day by day, but we’re so proud of how far our little warrior has come!”



Your donations help children like Indra facing potentially life-changing hospital stays. Scan the QR code to help bring more than medicine to seriously ill children today.



Adventure awaits!

New Virtual Reality headsets help children through hospital treatment

Being stuck in bed, surrounded by bright lights, clinical-looking equipment, continuous beeping – it's a scary time for children in hospital.

But what if young patients could explore enchanted forests, dive into the depths of the ocean or even journey to outer space – all from the safety and comfort of their hospital room?

Well, thanks to your donations, now they can – with amazing new virtual reality (VR) headsets!

Made by Smileyscope, the VR goggles are proven to reduce patient pain by 60%, reduce anxiety by 40%, and reduce caregiver/clinician distress by 75%.

As well as swimming with sea lions, children can prepare for daunting procedures like MRIs (with the help of falling doughnuts!) and do meditative deep breathing for relaxation.

By immersing themselves in captivating virtual environments, children and young people are distracted from needles, tests, prodding and poking; procedures become more comfortable, less painful and, for a little while, they find escape from their challenging reality.

Emily Hill, Play Specialist on Lochranza (oncology) ward, said: "It's been amazing to see firsthand the joy the VR goggles bring to our young patients. They open up a world of adventure and really help to keep spirits up. It's not just about the escape they offer though. The relaxation options are also great for emotional wellbeing and helping the recovery process."

It is only thanks to supporters like you that we can bring incredible pieces of kit like this to the hospital, helping children to navigate their medical journeys with courage and confidence.

Book your tour today!

Want to discover a children's hospital reimagined?

We're inviting our wonderful supporters – that's you! – for an exclusive tour of Edinburgh's children's hospital.

Join us and hear some amazing stories of resilience and recovery, while you witness firsthand the incredible impact your donations have on seriously ill children.

Discover a hospital reimagined, where clinical spaces are changed into wonderful worlds, fit for active imaginations; visit our Hub, where our team is always on hand with a cuppa and a listening ear; and learn about the cutting-edge medical equipment that helps clinicians go above and beyond every day.

We have space for up to five visitors at a time and can't wait to welcome you through our doors. Scan the QR code to book your hospital tour today!



Become a Future Funder

The Sick Kids has been around for over a century. By leaving a gift in your will, you can ensure the hospital's legacy lives on, and many more generations of children are supported.

Sadly, children will always have to come to hospital. But with your help, we can be there to give them the support they urgently need, now and in the future.

Leaving a legacy is a powerful way to extend your compassion and care for children and families in your community for years to come.

You will likely have used the children's hospital yourself or know someone who has. We are already part of your family. Please be part of ours. Be a Future Funder and make an impact that lasts beyond your lifetime.

Email hello@echcharity.org to find out more.





Spotlight on Susie, Complementary Therapist

Meet Susie – our compassionate and caring complementary therapist. When Susie's around, rest assured calm and contentment are just around the corner!

Susie brings a soothing mix of holistic activities, massage and aromatherapy to children, families and staff at the hospital. Having worked with people with life-changing injuries and those in palliative care, Susie expertly adapts therapies to suit all ages, stages and conditions.

Susie says, "Complementary therapy can be used in so many areas. I've supported people through anxiety around driving tests, exams, transitioning from primary to high school, but my dream was always to bring complementary therapy into a hospital.

"I recently met a mum whose baby was in intensive care. Her little one was so poorly and she was stressed. I talked her through some relaxing hand massage strokes she could use on her baby, and she said it really bonded them during a difficult time.

"I also worked with a highly anxious young person. Together, we picked out relaxing scents and created an aroma stick they could inhale to regulate their breathing.

"We've created a cosy, complementary therapy room in the hospital. I want people to come in knowing nothing clinical will happen to them here, they're in a safe space. And to leave feeling soothed, supported and ready to face any challenges that day might bring."

"When my friend's child was seriously ill, I realised how beneficial it could be for both of them to feel some comfort in an otherwise horrendous situation. I thought, 'I'd love to be able to provide some relief here.'"



"A little bit of zen to our mayhem"

"For those 45 minutes of complementary therapy, I was able to switch off from being in hospital. You've no idea how much of a lifeline it is."

New mum Meghan came to hospital with suspected pre-term labour. Her family's hospital journey then became a months-long stint when baby Blake was born nine weeks early and admitted to the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU).

She says, "Having a baby in the NICU is a rollercoaster. It becomes your only focus and it's hard to think about anything else.

"It's difficult to disconnect from what's happening and easy to forget that you also need to be kind and take care of yourself."

"Until Blake had his surgery, I was breast expressing. Expressing at least eight times a day, 15 minutes at a time, takes its toll on your posture. I was really struggling with back aches and pains.

"My husband saw a poster for ECHC's complementary therapy with Susie and said, 'I think that would be really good for both of us'. He had been sleeping on a fold-out hospital bed for weeks, so was also feeling the physical impact.

"We both got massages. Susie's magic touch makes you completely lose track of time and transports you to a calm and happy place."



Supporter Showcase



A True Legend

Let's hear it for Mark Innes, who conquered the mammoth Marathon des Sables – a 250km ultramarathon across the Sahara Desert! Mark fought his way through sandstorms and 60 degree heat, raising a **phenomenal £25,600** for the children's hospital, who cared for his son Lachlan when he was born prematurely.



...Ready for it?

Thanks to an incredibly generous supporter, we were donated two tickets to Taylor Swift's sold out Eras tour at Murrayfield. An opportunity beyond any Swiftie's Wildest Dreams, our prize draw raised a **staggering £23,130!** If you ever have gig tickets, please do keep us in mind. A donation like this can go a long way!



Step Aside, Euros

No matter that Scotland got swiftly ejected from the Euros, as the real football action was the Edinburgh Airport vs. ECHC Allstars game. In the end, the Allstars clinched the win with a narrow 4-3 victory. And they were certainly on the ball with their fundraising – bringing in over £2000, incredible!



A Shh-uper Sponsored Silence

How do you keep 20 boisterous boys quiet? Sponsor them to stay silent! The 1st East Linton Cub Pack completed a 45-minute sponsored silence, raising over £1,200. The boys played chair football, a Chinese whispers drawing game and completed 15 super-fast tasks, all whilst keeping schtum.



If you have an idea for a fundraiser, get in touch. We also have lots of our own challenges for you. Scan the QR code to find out more!

find us on  /echcharity

Sparkle and Shine Christmas Carol Concert

The Dean, Edinburgh
Thursday 12 December
6-8pm

Join us for our new Christmas Carol Concert,
a heartwarming evening filled with music, joy and the spirit
of giving, all in support of young patients and their families.

Scan the QR code below
to get your ticket!



Edinburgh
Children's
Hospital Charity

Sponsor
The Sparkle



Please donate today!

Yes, I'll help today with a gift of...

- £15** could pay for a child to understand, through play, the technology their surgeons use and help take away the fear of medical procedures.
- £44** could help provide a listening ear for a worried parent, a chance to talk through their emotions with someone who understands.
- £120** could provide escape and distraction through magic for eight children, whose stay in hospital could be painful and scary.
- Other** £

For security reasons do not send cash through the post

Cheque made payable to Edinburgh Children's Hospital Charity

Card

Card No:

Expiry: / CVC:

Signature

Date

MY DETAILS:

Title	<input type="text"/>
Full name	<input type="text"/>
Address	<input type="text"/>
	Postcode <input type="text"/>
Postcode	<input type="text"/>
Email	<input type="text"/>
Phone No	<input type="text"/>

You don't have to leave your email address or phone number, but if you do, we'll use these to keep you updated on our news, appeals and how you can get involved. You can opt out at any time by emailing hello@echcharity.org or calling **0131 668 4949**. We promise to keep your details safe and never sell them or swap them with anyone. Our privacy policy has been updated for fundraising purposes. The updated policy can be viewed at echcharity.org/privacy-policy or you can contact us for more information.

We have moved! Please note our change of address

PLEASE FOLD AND RETURN YOUR DONATION FORM TO:

Freepost Plus RTYB-TEGX-SZGG

**Edinburgh Children's Hospital Charity, c/o RHCYP & DCN Building,
50 Little France Crescent, Edinburgh EH16 4TJ**

You can also donate by scanning the QR code, visiting www.echcharity.org/donate or calling **0131 668 4949**



**Edinburgh
Children's
Hospital Charity**



Yes, I'll help long term by giving regularly

I want to give £

Every (please tick) Month Quarter Year
on the (please tick) 1st 15th 25th

Instruction to your bank or building society to pay by Direct Debit Edinburgh Children's Hospital Charity
Direct Debit Originator Number 801897



Account Name

Bank / Building Society Account No

Sort Code

Name of Bank / Building Society Branch

Bank Address

Postcode

Instruction to your bank or building society

Please pay Edinburgh Children's Hospital Charity Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Edinburgh Children's Hospital Charity and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my bank / building society.

Signature

Date

**BOOST YOUR DONATION BY
25P FOR EVERY £1 YOU DONATE
THROUGH GIFT AID.**

giftaid it

Gift Aid is reclaimed by Edinburgh Children's Hospital Charity from the tax you pay for the current tax year. In order to claim Gift Aid on your donation you must tick the box below.

I am a UK taxpayer and would like ECHC to reclaim the tax on donations I have made in the last four years and for all future gifts of money that I make to be Gift Aid donations. I understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year then it is my responsibility to pay the difference.

No I am not a UK tax payer.

Please email hello@echcharity.org if you wish to cancel this declaration.

THE DIRECT DEBIT GUARANTEE

- This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay Direct Debits.
- If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit Edinburgh Children's Hospital Charity will notify you 10 working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed. If you request Edinburgh Children's Hospital Charity to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request.
- If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit, by Edinburgh Children's Hospital Charity or your bank or building society, you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society. If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when Edinburgh Children's Hospital Charity asks you to.
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society. Written confirmation may be required. Please also notify us.

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