

YOUR ECHC

News from Edinburgh Children's Hospital Charity

echcharity.org

Spring 2025

Supersonic Mason

How your support
helped 7-year-old
Mason through
chemotherapy



Vroom-ing marvellous

Mini cars ease hospital fears

Page 3

Ever wondered how your money helps?

Now's your chance to find out!

Page 7

**Edinburgh
Children's
Hospital Charity**

More than Medicine



Scottish charity number SC020862

Welcome

from ECHC CEO, Roslyn Neely



Welcome to a jam-packed spring edition of **your ECHC!**

It's an impressive showcase of how you, our precious supporters, continue to make a child's hospital stay at Edinburgh's Royal Hospital for Children and Young People (RHCYP) that bit better – and a lot more fun.

If you want to be inspired, read about supersonic Mason's grueling hospital journey on pages 4 and 5. I'm so delighted and proud that ECHC could be there for him and his family in such difficult circumstances. His mum says it all – "When you are in the Hub, it doesn't feel like you're in hospital at all." And that's because of you – funding our work, day in and day out.

Turn to page 6 for a whirlwind round up of the wonderful partnership visits that you fund. It's always a treat to see the effect that meeting a Stormtrooper has on a child, or how much noise and excitement a Chinese lion makes as it dances down a corridor. Without you, these kinds of experiences for children and young people simply wouldn't happen.

And we keep striving to make a child's visit to hospital great – from the moment they step through the doors. Read page 3 to find out more. It's wheel-y good!

Thank you to everyone who continues to support our efforts to take away fear, speed up recovery and bring a little magic along the way. We are deeply grateful.

Roslyn





Shifting gears to ease hospital fears

Question: How do you ease children's fears of coming to hospital? Answer: You put them in the driver's seat – literally!

Thanks to a wheel-y creative ECHC solution (if we do say so ourselves), the children's hospital now boasts a fleet of mini cars, pint-sized Mercedes, terrific tractors, coveted convertibles and even two taxis.

These little vehicles give children a sense of (cruise) control, transforming what could be a nerve-racking journey to an appointment or procedure into an awesome hospital adventure. As one parent said,

"The cars are so cool and such a great distraction. My daughter jumped straight on one and sped off, forgetting all about how anxious she'd been feeling just moments before!"

The 56 mini cars were generously donated by ECHC supporters Amazon, Central Taxis, Citylink, Denholm Energy and VMH Solicitors. And thanks to donations from wonderful supporters

like you, they will soon have designated parking spots in two 'wee car parks', located at either end of the hospital entrance, where they can be safely stored while awaiting their next drivers.

The initiative is part of a wider project to make the hospital atrium more welcoming and fun. Improvements will include better wayfinding with new signage, and kind-hearted volunteers to help visitors navigate their way around the hospital.

This vroom-ing marvellous project is only possible thanks to the support of the Craig Gowans Memorial Fund, and we are deeply grateful.

We're on the lookout for warm and welcoming volunteers to help visitors find their way around the hospital. If this sounds like you, we'd love to hear from you! Drop us an email at hello@echcharity.org or call us on 0131 668 4949



Supersonic

Mason

At just 7 years old, Mason's life – and his family's – changed forever when he was diagnosed with Stage 3 Choroid Plexus Carcinoma, a rare and aggressive brain cancer.

Mason had been complaining of mild headaches and exhaustion after school, but nothing seemed out of the ordinary. Then, one morning, he woke up with severe neck pain. When mum Carly tried to lift him, he screamed in agony.

She says: "It was so unlike him. I knew something was wrong. I rushed him to A&E, where I mentioned the headaches and tiredness. The doctor listened and suggested an MRI scan. I remember saying, 'Yes – let's do that, just for peace of mind.' Looking back, I'm so thankful for that moment. It saved his life.

"Two days later, our world turned upside down. Mason had a tumour on the left side of his brain. What if we hadn't done the scan? The thought still haunts me."

"He needed immediate brain surgery – 8.5 agonising hours. The worst wait ever. I had no idea how he would recover, but he amazed everyone and was able to leave the hospital just five days later. His strength and courage were beyond anything I could have imagined.

"Then came months of intense chemotherapy. The routine was grueling: one week of treatment, three weeks of recovery, over and over. Mason lost his hair. He struggled to understand why he looked 'different'.

"He'd ask why him? Why was nobody else at school like him? He thought that none of his friends would want to play with him any more. He would shut himself in his room and just cry. It broke my heart."

Mason playing in the Hub

"But through it all, he also found moments of joy. He discovered the ECHC-funded virtual reality headsets which helped him through long chemo sessions. He loves technology, and the VR became his escape, transporting him to other worlds, far away from the tubes and medicines.

"Mason has autism spectrum disorder so finds changes to his routine difficult.

"ECHC's Hub became our sanctuary – a place where he could laugh, play and just be a kid. It doesn't feel like you're in hospital at all."

"He also loved the arts and crafts. One of my favourite memories is, one autumn day, while other children made hedgehogs with colourful leaves, Mason coloured his bright blue to show his love for Sonic the Hedgehog! It's still on the wall there.



"On December 17th, after nearly a year of surgeries, chemotherapy, and countless hospital visits, Mason rang the end-of-treatment bell. His October MRI was clear—he was in remission. I'll never forget the sound of that bell or the joy we felt that day.

"You never imagine hearing the words 'Your child has cancer.' It makes you realise how fragile life is and to make the best of what you have. We are cherishing every moment.

"To anyone reading this, thank you for supporting families like mine. Your generosity makes those wonderful extras like the Hub possible and gives children like Mason moments of happiness when they need it most. Your support really does make such a difference."



Your donations help children like Mason through life-changing hospital stays. Scan the QR code to help more seriously ill children today.

Hospital Happenings



In a galaxy not so far away...

...the bravest young Padawans had the chance to meet some iconic Star Wars baddies in real life, along with everyone's beloved Wookiee, Chewie.

A huge thank you to Imperial Scottish Garrison for this awesome treat. The Force was strong with every high five and fist bump!



Extinguishing fire safety worries

Burns are a common occurrence for children presenting at the A&E department, so our friends from the **Scottish Fire and Rescue Service** dropped by to chat all things fire safety.

Young patients had the chance to dress up in firefighter gear and experience a little of what a rescue might be like. Just like real firefighters, they couldn't see anything during the "rescue" and had to rely on touch to "find the fire" – safely, of course, with no real flames involved!



A roaring good time!

Children and families witnessed a whirlwind of vibrant colours and rhythmic beats, thanks to a super special Lion Dance performance from Yee's Hung Ga Kung Fu.

Decked out in dazzling red and gold, the majestic lion playfully interacted with children on the wards, bowing, nodding and even "nibbling" on outstretched hands, bringing plenty of smiles!

Doors Open Day

Ever wondered how
your money helps?

Now's your chance to come and see the magic happen! Join us for a special Doors Open Day on Saturday 29th March at the RHCYP and see firsthand how your donations make an impact for children and families, day in, day out.

Rest assured, we won't be disturbing any children by taking you to the wards. But you will discover how your donations change clinical spaces into wonderful worlds. You'll visit our Hub, where our team is always on hand with a cuppa and a listening ear. Plus, you'll find out about the state-of-the-art medical equipment you are funding.

Are you part of a local community group, school or rotary club? We have space for up to five visitors. Or perhaps you might like to come on your own, or with a friend?

We can't wait to welcome you. Spaces are limited and will be available on a first come first served basis so be sure to book your spot today by scanning the QR code.

See you then!



Leave a lasting legacy — Become a Future Funder

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

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.

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 Joe Newell, ECHC Volunteer



Looking for fulfillment and a renewed sense of purpose? That's exactly what Hibs FC Captain Joe Newell was seeking when he contacted ECHC about volunteering at the children's hospital.

Since then, Joe's weekly visits – offering support both in our Hub and on the wards – have given him a fresh outlook, helping him cope with his toughest year yet at the Easter Road club.

Joe says: "Every time I arrive at the hospital, it puts everything into perspective. It's incredibly hard to hear some of the stories. But it's also a reminder that you can't carry the weight of the world on your shoulders over a game of football. These kids are facing challenges far greater than anything I encounter on the pitch."

Joe first felt inspired to get involved with our charity after a Christmas visit to the hospital with his teammates. The experience stayed with him.

"It's not just about the children; it's about their families too. Parents and carers often just need a break from being on the ward. The Hub offers them a space to have a coffee and some time out.

"As I've grown older, I've come to realise how much influence we can have through sport. We're in a unique and privileged position, and I'm a big believer in using that to help others whenever you can."

"When we visited in December, I didn't want to leave. You see the impact being there can have on these kids. It's a privilege to witness their incredible courage and play a small part in helping them through their most difficult days."



Are you ready to begin your own volunteer journey? Join us! Scan the QR code and fill in the form to show your interest.

The sky's the limit!

one year of Edinburgh Airport's support



When we partnered with Edinburgh Airport back in January 2024, it was truly **love at first flight!**

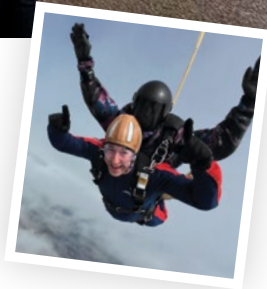
From the moment the partnership took off, the airport team has gone above and beyond, contributing a staggering **£40,037** and volunteering **150** hours to help seriously ill children.

Fueled by compassion, enthusiasm and boundless energy, the team has thrown themselves into fundraising, taking on challenges nothing short of first class. They have reached for the skies with sponsored bungee jumps and skydives, put their best foot forward with walking and running events, cycled the security hall, kicked off a football match, baked, raffled and so much more! Phew.

The team hasn't just smashed their fundraising goals, their efforts have also fostered whole team spirit, with every area of the business getting involved. Many staff say it makes them feel good, and they want to do more.

Paul from the Airport's security team – who has now conquered so many fundraising challenges for us we've lost count – says:

“Working with ECHC has been a life-changing experience, both professionally and personally.”



“Knowing that our efforts have contributed to helping sick children and providing support for their families has deepened my sense of purpose.”

As we enter the second year of this amazing partnership, we can't wait to see what's next. Whether it's more fearless fundraisers, creative conquests, or heartwarming moments, we know Edinburgh Airport will continue to make a difference for children and families in hospital.

Do you work for a company that could benefit from a partnership with ECHC? Get in touch by emailing hello@echcharity.org or calling 0131 68 4949.

Matthew's courageous Kiltwalk challenge



Matthew's hospital journey began with his first operation at six months old. From that moment, he became a regular at the children's hospital.

Marvellous Matthew (10) takes everything in his stride – so much so that last year, he conquered the Kiltwalk, raising an incredible £520 for seriously ill children.

Mum Coady said, "Matthew has hypermobility, which makes walking difficult, so uses a wheelchair. He wanted to give the Kiltwalk his absolute best effort and was determined to walk over the finish line. He did it, and it was just wonderful to watch!

"He absolutely loved the experience. Meeting people, getting dressed up in his kilt, seeing everyone cheering him on. It was really special.

"We've received a decade's worth of support from ECHC, so this was our way to give back. The hospital spaces feel so bright and inviting, thanks to all the work the charity has done.

"Matthew actually looks forward to going to hospital, and that's half the battle. In between appointments, we love visiting the Hub. Knowing he feels safe and secure is so important.

"We're thrilled with how much we managed to raise for other children like Matthew by taking on the Kiltwalk, and would encourage anyone reading this to sign up straight away. It was such an incredible experience – everyone should do it!"



Inspired by Matthew's incredible story? Want to take some big steps for little people too? Scan the QR code to start your Kiltwalk journey today!

Challenge Yourself!

Events



We have something for everyone! Sign up today to help seriously ill children. To find out more about any of the below and to get involved, visit echcharity.org/events or scan the QR code.

Spaces remaining for 5km, 10km, relay and junior races

- **April 26th**
Kiltwalk 📍 Glasgow
- **May 24th/25th**
Edinburgh Marathon Festival
- **May 31st**
Tandem Skydive 📍 Glenrothes
- **June 13th**
ECHC Get Together Ball
📍 Prestonfield House, Edinburgh
- **June 15th**
Women's and Men's 10k 📍 Glasgow
- **August 17th**
Scottish Half Marathon and 10k
📍 Edinburgh
- **September 14th**
Kiltwalk 📍 Edinburgh
- **September 18th**
ECHC Kick Off 📍 Edinburgh
- **September 21st**
Women's and Men's 10k 📍 Edinburgh
- **October**
Gamechangers: Gaming Marathon 📍 Virtual
- **November 1st**
Supernova 5k 📍 Forth Road Bridge

Corporate five-a-side teams wanted!



May 24th/25th –
Edinburgh Marathon Festival



September 14th
Kiltwalk, Edinburgh

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-TEXG-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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