

# Mum hails baby unit staff after Jacob's early arrival

**A MOTHER has told of the emotional roller-coaster she and her husband experienced after their baby was born eight weeks early.**

Sian and Gareth Evans say they cannot thank staff at the Countess of Chester Hospital enough, and are urging people to back the Babygrow Appeal to build a bigger, better-equipped neonatal unit at the hospital.

Jacob was born on June 6, weighing 3lbs 10 ozs, which doctors said was a good weight considering his prematurity.

Sian said: "It was all so unexpected. I'd had a good pregnancy, and nothing seemed any different to when I had my daughter Amelia four years ago. I was at home, and then suddenly without warning or any pain, my waters broke. Then the contractions started. I came in on the Friday night and there was just enough time to give me one steroid injection to try and help my baby's lungs, before Jacob was born in the early hours of Saturday morning.

"It was all very quick. Jacob arrived kicking and screaming and once he had been delivered I was able to hold him for a couple

of minutes before he was taken to the neonatal unit. I didn't even know the unit existed! Jacob had to be sedated as he was so lively and he did have some problems breathing as his lungs weren't properly formed."

When Sian and Gareth next saw Jacob he was in an incubator hooked up to various monitors.

Sian said: "It was quite distressing to see him like that, with tubes and monitors everywhere, because everything had just been so normal when I had my daughter in October, 2011. I have to say that the staff have been amazing and so supportive every step of the way, explaining everything to us. Jacob spent his first week on a ventilator then moved on to CPAP followed by nasal prongs to help him breathe. We were happy when Jacob was able to move out of the intensive care nursery, then unexpectedly at eight days old he became very poorly with septicaemia and his arms leg and tummy all swelled up. He was obviously in a lot of pain and had to be transferred to Liverpool Women's Hospital."

She continued: "It was very traumatic, seeing Jacob going over in an ambulance and he had to be sedated again and put on a



■ LEFT: Mum with Jacob, aged nine weeks.

an operation.

Sian said: "He was very poorly again at this point. But he is a little fighter and he has managed to overcome every setback. Before he was discharged at the beginning of September Jacob was feeding and breathing quite well, having been on and off the ventilator for quite some time. His weight on discharge was 6lbs 14ozs.

"We wouldn't have got through everything at what has been a very difficult and emotional time without the support of the brilliant staff here and our family and friends, especially Gareth's mum who has been staying with us since Jacob arrived to help out.

"The staff here are just amazing, we cannot fault them and their expertise, and we know that the NHS is providing all the equipment that the unit needs. However, having spent a lot of time here over the past nine weeks, I can appreciate why the charity is raising money to build a larger unit with more space.

"The Babygrow Appeal is so close to our hearts and such a great cause we hope everyone can get behind it and show their support in any way they can."



■ Ella with her framed picture and giant duck.

● FIVE year old Ella from Broughton was delighted with her prize of a giant duck and tickets to the circus for being one of the winners of the Duck Colouring competition at the Chester Duck race held earlier this month.

## And finally, a message from the fundraising team:

"Good luck to everybody raising funds for the Babygrow Appeal by taking part in this weekend's MNBA Chester Marathon."



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