

# The Archie Foundation

We're here for you



## The Archie Foundation Newsletter July 2024

Dear Mel

Summer has finally arrived! I hope this finds you well and enjoying the sunshine and good weather. The school summer holidays definitely bring a change of atmosphere in the children's hospitals and wards we support, with fewer patients attending for elective procedures but sadly also an increase in visits to the Emergency Department as more time outdoors almost inevitably results in more accidents. For children and families who have lost a loved one a first holiday without their special someone can be a time of very mixed emotions and of course the Neonatal Units we support remain busy as ever, as babies take no heed of holidays!

All of this means that Archie's support remains in high demand and I'm ever grateful that, thanks to the kindness and generosity of Archie supporters like yourself, Team Archie can be here for patients and families when they need us most.

I hope you enjoy this little round up of some of our most recent support. Thank you so much for helping to make this, and so much more, possible.

Best wishes

Paula Cormack

Chief Executive

### More Funding Applications = More Direct Support Delivered To Children & Families



Changes made earlier this year to simplify our funding application process are really reaping rewards for babies, children and families in need. We welcome applications directly from families and from NHS colleagues on their behalf and have seen a significant increase in requests across all areas we support, from Dundee right up to Shetland. There's nothing makes our Support Manager, Gillian, happier than knowing she has made a difference for a family. Specialist medical equipment comes in many guises, including things that in other households might be non-medical like the food blender we funded recently for this amazing young man so he can follow the blended diet recommended by his NHS dietician. Whatever form Archie's support takes, it all makes the most enormous difference and it's all thanks to people like you - thank you so much for making this possible.

### Helping Families Enjoy Quality Moments Together During Very Challenging Times

It's not always "things" that make the difference. Very often quality time spent together and the memories made are the most precious gift and we are grateful to have the opportunity to help facilitate this for families in need. Harry and his family are a great example. As a baby Harry required corrective surgery on his heart, which sadly left him with further health complications requiring him to regularly attend at RACH. His most recent stay of 6 months has been his longest and hardest by far. His mum Claire said, "Being so far from our home in the Highlands and separated from Harry's two older brothers and all our family and support systems has been very difficult for both of us."



Thanks to supporters like you, The Archie Foundation have been here for Harry and his family for each of their many stays at RACH, providing support in a number of different ways. Claire makes good use of The Archie Family Centre (parent's accommodation) and really appreciates the support of the Play Team, including Archie Play Worker, Oria, who help keep Harry entertained and engaged, allowing her some much needed moments of rest. In addition to toys and resources The Archie Foundation funds arts and crafts sessions and music therapy, all of which Harry loves. We were even able to fund a day out for Harry and his brothers during his long 6 months in hospital so they could make up some of their lost, quality time together. Best of all, Harry went home just a couple of weeks ago!



### Archie & Physio Partnership Helped Alesha Become A Double Gold Winner in World Kick Boxing Championships!



Tight NHS budgets mean many departments are lacking vital resources to support their patients. The physiotherapy team at RACH recently applied to Archie to fund a BOSU balance trainer to support a young patient's rehabilitation following an injury. This support made an enormous difference for Alesha, who had a particular goal driving her rehab at home - getting back into her much-loved kick boxing. Alesha's dedication and diligent following of her rehab programme really paid off. Not only did she make a full recovery, Alesha also scooped TWO gold medals at the Kick-Boxing Association World Championships last month! Her physio, Alison, and all of us here at Archie couldn't be more proud to have helped her in this fabulous achievement.

### Supporting Learning For NHS Tayside Speech & Language Therapy

Training and development budgets are often the first to be cut when organisations seek to tighten the belt and the NHS is no different in this regard. Over the last year we have seen a significant increase in applications to support staff learning, to help our NHS colleagues hone their skills and improve the services they deliver for young patients.



"Excellent course! Best and most informative training I've had as a Speech and Language Therapist" Course attendee

Earlier this year we were proud to support a really significant two-day training session for the Tayside Child Health Speech and Language Therapy Service which addressed a crucial need to improve understanding of Speech Sound Disorders among clinicians. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with this quote in particular summing up the overall theme beautifully.

### The Grief Journey Is Long and Hard - Archie Is Here to Help Practically And Emotionally

We regularly receive funding requests to support travel costs. These are most often from families struggling to access healthcare services but in one recent case this very basic and practical support enabled a bereaved family to make the most of the emotional support we offer. The death of a parent meant the children had to relocate to live with another family member. The importance of maintaining existing friendships and relationships during a very difficult time was recognised by all involved, but with child benefits and universal credit not yet having caught up with the dramatic change in parental responsibilities the daily 100-mile round-trip was all but impossible. A financial grant from The Archie Foundation bridged the gap until state support and new school places were secured, helping maintain a degree of routine and stability through a devastatingly difficult time, and crucially allowing the children to keep in touch with their old friends as they adjusted to their new life.



### Tools, Resources, Experience and Compassion in Helping Bereaved Children



Demand for Archie's Child Bereavement Service continues to increase across all regions. In some cases our team engage during end-of-life-care, helping prepare the child (and often the whole family) for what is to come. Our Bereavement Support Workers have a raft of tools and resources which they adapt and use to meet the needs of the individuals they are working with, always allowing the child to set the pace. Jenny recently shared with us one of her favourite resources - a simple set of cuddly elephants. One of the elephants is given to the parent/carer, the other to the child. When the time comes to say goodbye, they swap elephants. The act of swapping, and being able to keep the parent's elephant, gives the child a continued physical link to their parent. In addition to working with the child and family Jenny also engages with the child's school, to help ensure a joined-up approach to supporting the child. And why elephants over any other cuddly toy? Because elephants never forget.

### New Beanbags to Further Improve The Archie-Funded Sensory Room Within Highland Children's Unit



Last year, thanks to a generous donation, we were able to create a new sensory room at Highland Children's Unit. This safe space is in regular use and makes a huge difference for children who are feeling anxious or overwhelmed and in particular for children with additional support needs. Knowing how appreciated this facility is we were especially pleased to receive an application from our NHS colleagues for beanbags to further enhance the Sensory Room and to improve the Play Room within HCU. These additions provide improved comfort and relaxation for patients during their time in hospital with beanbags in particular, as opposed to more rigid seating, helping patient's feel safe and secure and improving their general wellbeing.

### RACH Outpatients Department Revamp Nears Completion With Fabulous New Seating

Thanks to ongoing and incredibly generous support from Archie patron Johanna Basford, works to transform the Outpatients department at RACH are nearing completion. The final touches have been added to the waiting area with fabulous "new" seating. The team working on this wide-ranging project were really keen to refurbish and improve wherever possible so, rather than scrap the tired, old seats, we had them re-upholstered in bespoke fabric, specially designed by Johanna to complement the artwork on the walls. With strict NHS requirements around infection prevention and control this was no simple job! We contracted the work to local firm Luxous who enjoyed the project so much that they and our Project Coordinator, Sarah, made a lovely little video to showcase their beautiful work - you can watch it here.



### Funding Milestone Gifts For Neonatal Babies and Their Families



In addition to delivering to deliver the firmity at the new Baird Family Hospital, we remain firmly focussed on providing ongoing support for babies, families and staff at Aberdeen Neonatal Unit. This support comes in many forms and always in response to a request from our NHS colleagues or directly to neonatal families. One of the things staff members recently requested was funding to celebrate babies who turned 100 days old within the Neonatal Unit.

Eujin and his parents were recent recipients of a "100 Day Gift" and were bowled over by this kindness. Eujin, who was born at 25 weeks, celebrated his first 100 days last month. Better still, after 123 long days in Aberdeen Neonatal Unit, Eujin has now gone home! His parents were incredibly grateful for the care they received from staff in the Unit and for the gifts and support provided by The Archie Foundation during their stay.

Click here to find out more about Archie's work to support maternity and neonatal services and to find out how you can support.

### Linen Maid Marjory Made A Real Difference In Her Lifetime And Beyond

One of the aspects of my role that I most appreciate is the role that I most appreciate is the amazing and inspiring people I meet. Sadly I didn't get the opportunity to meet this incredible lady but I have had the pleasure of getting to know her son, who contacted us to advise that his mum had left a gift in her will for The Archie Foundation. Marjory had a very special connection with the charity, having worked as a Linen Maid at Aberdeen Maternity Hospital. In 1986 Marjory raised £1,000 to support the build of the current Neonatal Unit, by making and selling toffee, and through her generous legacy gift to Archie's Baird Appeal she will help thousands of babies and families for decades to come. To find out more about leaving a gift in your will, please click here.



### There Are Many Ways To Get Involved In Supporting Archie This Summer - What Will You Do?

