

Pioneering Service Helps Patients to Be Treated In Own Home

Monday, November 5, 2012



As baby James gurgles and laughs, his mum Sarah Button's smile is full of love and pride – and also gratitude.

Sarah suffered a rare illness during pregnancy which was potentially life threatening. As a result, for eight and a half months her life was put on hold until he was born by emergency caesarean.

Within days of finding out she was pregnant, Sarah was diagnosed with Hyperemesis Gravidarum (HG) which left her mainly housebound – bedridden, unable to eat and drink or tolerate light and noise.

She would have needed to be admitted hospital frequently, but a service being pioneered by our community IV therapy nurse specialist Emma Moxham allowed her to be treated at her Midsomer Norton home; in fact she is the only person in the country to have been able to be treated at home according to the Pregnancy Sickness Support charity.

“I was very excited to find out I was pregnant,” she recalls, James is the first baby for Sarah and partner Richard.

“But within days of finding out I was pregnant the nausea started; I couldn't get out of bed or keep anything down, it was then I soon began to realise this wasn't normal. The next day I was diagnosed with Hyperemesis Gravidarum”.

“HG is a condition at the extreme end of the pregnancy sickness spectrum and it was potentially life threatening for me and the baby,” she said.

Sarah, a health care professional herself, says within a week of finding out she was pregnant she had her first hospital admission as she needed to be put on a drip to replace the fluids she was losing.

Around half way through Sarah's pregnancy, Emma was briefing GPs about our new service which aimed to give intravenous treatment at home to avoid hospital admissions.

Among them was Sarah's GP, who asked Emma if she could help Sarah who, until then, was being admitted to hospital every other week.

Emma said: "The family environment was just amazing and having the IV fluids at home meant Sarah could stay at home".

"My job is to help people stay at home by supporting GPs to deliver acute care and administer the medication that patients would normally have to go to hospital to receive such as IV fluids, IV medications and blood transfusions."

When Sarah finishes maternity leave, she and Emma hope to work together to help others who suffer from HG. Sarah said: "If it wasn't for Emma, my GP, mum, dad and Rich there is no way I could have got through it. I will never forget what they did for me. If it wasn't for them there wouldn't be a baby or me here today."