

Midnight walking for Sophie



At Midnight on June 5th, Hayley Costa and 11 of her friends will be stepping out onto the streets of Stevenage to complete our Midnight Walk.

Hayley's team will join many others on the 10 mile ladies-only sponsored walk to raise funds for our children's hospice. But Hayley has a very special reason for taking part.

Last October, Hayley's whole world fell apart when her seemingly healthy 4 year old daughter, Sophie, had a stroke and was rushed to hospital. After spending some time at Great Ormond Street, Sophie was diagnosed with malignant Rhabdoid tumours, a very rare childhood cancer - causing tumours in her lungs, liver, kidneys, heart and brain. Sophie sadly died at Keech Hospice Care on Sunday 13th December.

At the time of her stroke, Sophie had only had the cancer for a few weeks but it had progressed rapidly and soon after diagnosis she was unable to talk or move very well. When Hayley and her husband, Kos, were allowed to bring Sophie home from Great Ormond Street, Keech Hospice Care stepped in to support the family.

Hayley said: "We had to administer so many different drugs to Sophie every 4 hours and it was a terrifying and nerve wracking experience. Thankfully, Beth - our nurse from Keech - visited us as soon as we arrived back home, made us a cup of tea and helped us get through it. She went through all the practical things, like clearing out a cupboard for all the drugs. I don't know what we'd have done without her support that week while Sophie was at home."

Sophie's condition quickly went downhill and she was moved to Lister Hospital. It was there that Hayley and Kos were invited to bring Sophie to our children's hospice.

"If I'm truthful, I was dreading taking Sophie to Keech. I was in a panic as she was so ill and not really able to move any more – I had no idea what to expect. We really wanted to bring her home but we just couldn't cope with all her medication and special care needs. But going to Keech was such a relief after our experience in hospital. As soon as we walked through the door we knew it was the right place for Sophie to be. They were so helpful, so lovely and we were made to feel so comfortable."

"Sophie hadn't been comfortable and pain free for such a long time, but within two days the team at Keech had stopped her pain and enabled her to relax. We didn't leave her side and Keech looked after all the family as well as they looked after Sophie. Keech made our last few days with Sophie as special as possible. They tried to make sure that we had many memories of Sophie by giving us a DVD of her with Father Christmas and making a cast of her hands and feet to cherish

Since Sophie's death, Keech has continued to support the family and Hayley says the Midnight Walk is her way of doing something for the children's hospice and for Sophie.

"I've started to get myself together now and want to do something for this special place where Sophie spent her last days with us. We've even got someone coming all the way from New Zealand to take part in the walk with us! My friends have been fantastic all the way through Sophie's illness and I am so proud that we're doing it together!"

Hayley and her team have already raised over £1,500. To sponsor them visit www.justgiving.com/Hayley-Costa. Or, why not enter yourself for one of our [Midnight Walks](#) this year? Choose to take part in Stevenage, Luton or Bedford and help us raise even more for the charity.

Related Links

- [Enter a Midnight Walk](#)

External links

- [Sponsor Hayley and her team](#)