



The Royal Hospital  
for Women  
FOUNDATION

# ROYAL NEWS

NOVEMBER 2009

## With fantastic care, the light shines brighter every day for a tough little star

The birth of your first baby is meant to be extremely joyful, very exciting and full of hope for a bright future at the end of a long nine-month wait. For some new parents, that nine months is suddenly cut very short and their only hope is that their tiny little baby will cling to life and survive its first 24 hours.

Elinya McDonnell and her husband Joe found themselves in this situation on 30 May this year. Their beautiful little daughter Lucy, would wait no longer, making her first appearance into the world at just 25 weeks and three days gestation, weighing only 970 grams.

For Elinya, the road to Motherhood had been a rough one from very early on. What began as a small bleed at 10 weeks amounted to her waters breaking at 17 weeks which, despite healing with bed rest, broke again at 24 weeks. Fortunately Lucy held on for another 10 days, making an enormous difference to her chance of survival.



*Mum Elinya watches over Baby Lucy*

The Royal's Newborn Care Centre (NCC) has been Lucy's home for the last five months and a second home for Elinya and Joe. The first few days, even weeks, of a premature baby's life are nothing but precarious. The list of possible complications is seemingly endless, of which Lucy has had her fair share.

Before the birth, Elinya was given steroids to fast track the development of Lucy's lungs – the last organ to grow and the one causing the most problems for premature babies. Once born, a ventilator helped Lucy breathe for three to four weeks, followed by C-Pap for the next three months and now Lucy's on high flow oxygen.

Apart from breathing issues, Lucy also had an operation at five days old to close a PDA valve in her heart, has suffered a pulmonary bleed in her lungs and had a bleed on the brain. Fortunately, the bleed has now stabilised, but the worry for Lucy's parents doesn't end here.

"The bleed on the brain was a pretty tough time. The damage is still unclear but if there's been an effect then it's

(cont ....)

## Our Vision

*'Helping provide care  
in partnership with women'*

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