

# Sarah's Journey



**Sarah's journey is one of perseverance, disappointment and positivity at the end of the tunnel.**

On September the 14th 2007 at 11.30 am I gave birth by c-section to a beautiful baby boy weighing 8lb 7oz. Like all new parents we thought it would be perfect but what did we know! Within 12 hours he was in SCBU (Special Care Baby Unit), within 24 hours we were told if he didn't get treated by a specialist machine called an ECMO that he would no longer be with us in 36 hours!

You would have thought that at this moment breastfeeding would have been the furthest thing from my mind but ..... You would have been wrong! I always knew that I wanted to breastfeed so when these complications arose I decided that if we were going to get him better I wanted to do everything I could and this included giving him the best possible start that I could as a mum, my breast milk! So that's when it started, the expressing, the sterilising, the labelling and the transporting of my colostrum and then my breast milk.

We as a family ended up at the ECMO centre in SCBU in Leicester's Groby Road Hospital. For the next 8 days if I wasn't with Samuel I was expressing and sorting the milk and even sometimes I was sleeping!

After a week we were moved to Sheffield. At 9 days we started reattachment and Samuel started to breastfeed as nature intended it. We were then moved back to Barnsley. At 2 weeks and three days old we were finally allowed home exclusively breast feeding! It was perfect I had done it and I was home, however this didn't last.

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At 6 weeks I started with nipple thrush and it didn't improve with treatment. At this time there wasn't the support available that there is now. When the doctor didn't support me and my health visitor had exhausted all her avenues and I started to be down about the pain I stopped breastfeeding a 9 - 10 weeks. This was the biggest disappointment of my life as a mum.



I wasn't about to let this happen to another mum so I went on to complete my peer support training and then went on to become a Breastfeeding Link Worker. Things have changed a lot since my experience not only with the training of doctors and the support given in Barnsley from Midwives, Health Visitors and Breastfeeding Link Workers. I know if I help and support as many mums as I can, to be able to carry on breastfeeding successfully then all that I went through as a new mum will be worth it!

Oh and if you were wondering what the answer to the biggest question is..... **YES of course I will breastfeed any other children I may have in the future because BREAST TRULY IS THE BEST!!!!**

With Love, Sarah and family x