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THE Babygrow Appeal will receive 10p for every person that subscribes to the Big Daily Deal Company and signs up for their Chester deals.

"This is such an easy way to raise money for our appeal and anybody joining will also benefit from some fabulous deals," said Kathy Kenney from the Countess

fundraising office.

The Big Daily Deal Company provides discounted deals of between 50 and 90 per cent off great things to eat, drink and do in and around Chester, providing the opportunity to save money on things to do locally but at the same time help to raise the much needed funds to build the new

neonatal unit.

The company has already supported the appeal with donations from previous events and has committed its support for at least the remainder of 2013.

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# Neonatal unit has provided vital support for little Erin

**A MALPAS mum is backing the Countess of Chester Hospital's Babygrow Appeal after the help given to her daughter at their neonatal unit.**

Little Erin Jones was born to mum Gaynor and dad Carl prematurely in November last year at just 28 weeks, leaving her requiring ongoing medical attention for the first months of her life.



**It was a very traumatic pregnancy**

Erin was on a ventilator to help her breathe for the first four weeks, being transferred to Alder Hey Children's Hospital in Liverpool to have an operation on her heart valve before returning to the Countess' neonatal unit, where she



Erin Jones.

remained until she was able to go home for the first time on Wednesday, March 20, weighing 5lb 14oz.

Gaynor said "It was a very traumatic pregnancy from fairly early on. I had been told that my baby had a one in 15 chance of being a Down's baby, then at a scan I had at 19 weeks I was advised that the baby was very small and not growing as expected."

"I underwent all sorts of tests including one for dwarfism and another for cystic fibrosis but everything came back negative".

Gaynor had a Doppler scan, a form of ultrasound scan which measures if the placenta is working normally.

"The scan traces blood flow between the placenta and the baby through the umbilical cord. If the baby is not getting enough blood, it may be that the baby is not getting enough nutrients or oxygen which is one of the reasons it can be very small."

"Those first few days and weeks were touch and go."



**Those first few days and weeks were touch and go**

Erin was transferred back to the Countess Neonatal Unit where she was still oxygen dependant and expected to remain so for several more months.

By the beginning of March her weight had reached 5lb 5oz and Erin's big sister Gabby, eight, loves to visit at the weekend and helps her mum to bath Erin.

When asked about how she thought the Babygrow would be of benefit to future mums Gaynor said: "The extra space would be really welcome. I am breast feeding and to do this and express milk would be much easier if there was more privacy."

"Gabby would also benefit greatly from being able play in a designated area to relieve the boredom of spending long periods in the hospital. I hope a lot of people and local companies will think of ways that they can get involved and support this appeal."

The Countess in partnership with the Chester Standard has launched an appeal to raise £3million in three years to create a new neonatal unit.

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## Staff Profile – Lucy Letby

### How long have you worked here?

"I qualified as a Children's Nurse from The University of Chester in 2011 and have been working on the unit since graduating. "I also worked on the unit as a student nurse during my three years of training."

### What would a typical day in

### the neonatal unit involve?

"My role involves caring for a wide range of babies requiring various levels of support. "Some are here for a few days, others for many months and I enjoy seeing them progress and supporting their families. "I am currently undergoing extra training in order to develop and enhance my

knowledge and skills within the Intensive Care area and have recently completed a placement at Liverpool Women's Hospital."

### What will having a bigger neonatal unit mean to you?

"I hope the new unit will provide a greater degree of privacy and space for parents and siblings."

## Zumba event raises cash for appeal

MORE than 70 Zumba enthusiasts took part in a special event at Heswall Hall last month to raise money for the Babygrow Appeal. On Sunday, February 17, a 'Zumba Through The Decades'

charity event raised more than £300 for the cause.

Participants dressed up in costumes from the 50s, 60s, 70s and 80s and danced for two hours non-stop.

Jennifer Emery, the Zumba instructor who led the event, said: "It was a fantastic party atmosphere.

"Thank you to everyone who supported us."

## Pupils' fundraising plans are aiding appeal

PUPILS from an Ellesmere Port school have seen their efforts raise £260 for the Babygrow Appeal.

Rivacre Valley Primary School pupils raised the funds after holding a Christmas raffle and a variety of other activities during recent months.

The school regularly fundraises for various charities and teaching assistant Helen Pirie nominated the Babygrow Appeal because her two and a half year old grandson Joshua spent several months in the neonatal unit after he was born.

Fundraising manager Janet Ratcliffe was invited in to a school assembly recently to tell the children a bit more about the appeal and learn about the children's latest fundraising activity, an 'Alphabet Hunt'.

For the event each child has been given a sheet of paper with each of the 26 letters of the alphabet written in a separate panel on the sheet, with the task to find and attach an item that begins with each letter to the sheet and getting family and friends to sponsor their efforts.

"I think this is a really unique idea and a fun way to get the children involved in supporting their local hospital," said Janet.

"There were some really brilliant items attached to the sample sheets I saw and I know that quite a



■ Rivacre pupils Mason Mallon, Sam Douthwaite, Liam Morris, Jessica Quirke, Erin Dolan, Ellie May Johnston, Jade Stride, Ebony Jenkins, Isha Kamara Mort and Alia Abdel Samie.

lot of sponsorship has started arriving in at the school already.

"I understand that the staff are also organising an Easter Hamper raffle as well to raise further funds."

If there are any other schools with

great fundraising ideas for the Babygrow Appeal, please ring Kathy Kenney, community and event fundraiser on 01244 366672 and she will be happy to support your event or attend an assembly.



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