



July 17th, 2014

Families' £1,000 thank you to hospital

A bumper cheque for £1,000 was handed over to say thank you to nurses and doctors at South Tyneside District Hospital for the care they provide.

Rob Mackins, 41, of South Shields, presented the donation to elderly care staff on Ward 19, where his father, Tom, was frequently a patient.

Mr Mackins Senior, also of South Shields, served in the Army for 27 years, rising to the rank of staff sergeant, and, in civilian life, he worked in security for Port of Tyne. He died in April, 2012, at Primrose Hill Hospital in Jarrow at the age of 84. He suffered from a number of health problems, including dementia, and his son estimates that in the last three or four years of his life, his father was admitted to the District Hospital about 30 times, often to Ward 19, where he is still remembered with great fondness.

Rob said: "The staff on Ward 19 were so lovely, considerate and genuinely caring. They have a difficult, busy job to do but they always had time for him. When he was in a side ward, they moved his chair so he was sitting facing the door and could see people going past. That sounds like such a small thing but it had a huge impact on him because it meant he didn't feel lonely or isolated. Not only was the care he received there outstanding, but they also supported us as a family. My mother, Joyce, had died aged 79, in May 2011 and we were still grieving but they saw we were struggling and they were able to prepare us for his passing."

Rob, who owns a scuba diving centre, Arbeia Diving, in South Shields, decided to turn the centre's Christmas night out last year into a fundraising event at The Office pub in aid of Ward 19, with entertainment provided free of charge by friends' bands. Family and friends lent their support and about £800 was raised. A donation of £200 from the grateful family of another patient, Marion Nolan, boosted the total to £1,000.

Ward manager Ann Callaghan said: "We're always touched when families show their thanks for the care their loved ones have received. This donation of £1,000 is incredibly generous and we're very grateful for it."

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Pictured above: The photograph shows: Rob Mackins presenting the cheque to Ward 19 staff, left to right, Hannah Forster, Julie Woodhouse, Zoe Potter and Sam Nicholson.

Issued on behalf of South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust by Kay Jordan
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