



## Final Photocall & News Release

The celebrated actor Christopher Timothy (*All Creatures Great and Small*) will be laying the final tile on the roof at the new Sick Children's Trust 'Home from Home' in the grounds of the Leeds General Infirmary on Friday the 6<sup>th</sup> of November at 11:30am. Interviews can be arranged by appointment, please contact [jennifer@lemonzestpr.co.uk](mailto:jennifer@lemonzestpr.co.uk) 01757-268283

### **Christopher Timothy "Tops out" New House to Boost 'The Big Move' Appeal reaches halfway point to raise £1.72 million to move vital 'Home from Home'**

Christopher Timothy, best known as Yorkshire vet James Herriot in *All Creatures Great and Small*, will be placing the final tile on the new Sick Children's Trust 'Home from Home' at the Leeds General Infirmary (LGI). It is hoped his visit will boost 'The Big Move' campaign which aims to raise £1.72million to move Eckersley House from its current location at St James's Hospital to the LGI.

Christopher Timothy, vice-president of The Sick Children's Trust is also marking the significant halfway point in the fundraising as The Sick Children's Trust has raised over £895,000 to build the new house on the new site.

"I've been a supporter of The Sick Children's Trust for more than 20 years and I'm still touched by the stories of the families that use a 'Home from Home.' The Sick Children's Trust ensures that the very basic of all medicines has a chance to work; family love and support. We provide a home where mum has a private room to gather her thoughts, dad can get some much needed sleep, and siblings are nearby to lighten the mood. But most importantly, we help families to stay close by to their sick child at all times making a real difference to their recovery.

"Eckersley House needs public support now more than ever, we've reached the halfway point, but much more money is needed to complete the new house, and I'm here to lend my support," says Timothy.

For 16 years Eckersley House has supported the recovery of seriously ill children across Yorkshire by providing high quality accommodation and caring staff for families, just minutes away from the hospital wards.

St James's Hospital is moving its children's wards to the LGI to create a paediatric Centre of Excellence. By April 2010 the majority of children's wards will be moved to the new centre. This development means that Eckersley House will no longer be needed in its present location at St James's Hospital, but will be in great demand at the LGI.

The move of Eckersley House to the LGI will also mean more bedrooms - from 16 to 22 - to help more families in their time of need.

Jane McHale, House Manager at Eckersley House comments: "As The Sick Children's Trust is the sole provider of family accommodation at the LGI we often have waiting lists of families with very sick children desperate to find somewhere to stay. If Eckersley House isn't moved, every year hundreds of sick children from across Yorkshire would have to undergo prolonged medical treatment without their families being close by. 'The Big Move' is essential to allow us to support them.

"Moving to our new site at the LGI will cost £1.72million and work is scheduled to finish in May 2010. £895,000 has already been pledged, but we have a long way to go – and we really need your help to raise those vital funds."

There are many ways people can get involved in the fundraising, one is to help Eckersley House reach its new location...step-by-step... it will take approximately 6,300 footsteps to get from St James's to the new location at the LGI, why not buy your step and help us get closer.

- £25 buys a Baby Step – and a personalised certificate
- £100 buys a Nursery Step - receive certificate and entry on online donor register
- £500 buys a Big Step - certificate, online donor register and feature in special register book at the house
- £1000 buys a Giant Step - certificate, online donor register, feature in special register book and invite to special opening event
- £5000 buys a Whopping Step - certificate, online donor register, feature in special register book, invite to special opening event and name featured on plaque permanently on display in house

People can also donate or buy a step via The Sick Children's Trust website at [www.sickchildrenstrust.org](http://www.sickchildrenstrust.org) If you would like to get involved in 'The Big Move' fundraising campaign – perhaps by making a donation or organising a fundraising event - or would like further information about the campaign please contact Vicki Smith, Regional Fundraiser, based at Eckersley to be the contact for the appeal now. Her number is 0752 5424406 or email is [vicki@sickchildrenstrust.org](mailto:vicki@sickchildrenstrust.org)

The Sick Children's Trust will be holding several fundraising events throughout the year, such as The Great Yorkshire Dinner Party which will be launched across Yorkshire this autumn. If you would like to get involved in The Great Yorkshire Dinner Party or would like further information about the event, please contact Jennifer Middleton on 01757 268283 or email [jennifer@lemonzestpr.co.uk](mailto:jennifer@lemonzestpr.co.uk)

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### **Notes to Editors:**

**The Sick Children's Trust** was founded in 1982 by two paediatric specialists Dr Jon Pritchard and Professor James Malpas. They believed that having parents on hand during hospital treatment benefited a child's recovery.

Today we have seven 'Homes from Home' at major hospitals around the country where families can stay free of charge, for as long as they need whilst their child is undergoing treatment – Eckersley House being one of them. There is a growing demand for our 'Homes from Home' as children must increasingly travel long distances to get the specialist treatment they need. To date we have helped more than 30,000 families.