



February 2007 Report from Mary Cubitt & West's Adopted Rainbow Trust Family Support Worker

It has been a busy start to the year for the Surrey Care Team. There are 6 of us in the team and the families we care for are mainly referred from two main hospitals, Royal Marden Sutton and Great Ormond Street.

Since Christmas I have been given 3 new families to support who have been referred to Rainbow. It is hard for all the family members when a child is very ill. The adults feel a sense of helplessness tinged with guilt, *'was it something we did to expose out child to this?'* and the siblings wonder if it will happen to them too.

At these early stages we try to get to know the family as soon as possible, speaking to them on the phone, allowing them to share their worries and accompanying them to the hospital appointments. We are also thereto pick up siblings from school and stay with them until their parents return.

One child I am working with at the moment has a rare incurable condition, but G.O.S knows there is hope if she has a bone marrow transplant. A donor has been found in the USA and all being well the transplant will take place at the end of March.

L is six years old with a one year old brother, her mum is a single parent and Grandma is staying at the moment to help with the baby.

Life for L's mum has been a constant round of hospital tests, chemotherapy and consultations with different doctors. During this time I have transported them to the hospital and stayed with mum during the tense consultations to give her support and be an extra pair of ears when the doctors are giving diagnosis and prognosis information, as it can often be too much to take in at once.

I have a good relationship with mum and I think this stems from the fact she knows she can trust me, not only with her children, but when she is talking about the future and feels very vulnerable. She knows she can call on Rainbow 24 hours a day and speak to someone.

Latest news as of 22nd February is that it looks like L's transplant will take place, the hospital has made contact with the US donor so I hope there will be more news to share with you next month.

I hope I have given an insight into what I do, but if you ever have any questions don't hesitate to ask.

Till the next time

Love Mary