

HRH The Princess Royal Opens Centre for Medical Engineering at St Thomas' Hospital



Thursday 14th December was the opening of the new Centre for Medical Engineering at St. Thomas' Hospital with Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal. ECHO was invited to this event together with the Carter Family who have been a member of ECHO for many years.

The Princess Royal was accompanied by King's College London President & Principal, Professor Edward Byrne AC, and Sir Hugh Taylor, Chairman, Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, as she officially opened a new Wellcome/Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) Centre for Medical Engineering yesterday.

The state-of-the-art Centre brings together world leading scientists from across King's College London's School of Biomedical Engineering & Imaging Sciences, and the Department of Neuroimaging, to create a centre of medical engineering excellence. Patients visiting the new facility will benefit from a concentration of expertise that will improve the understanding, diagnosis and treatment of neuropsychiatric, oncological and cardiovascular diseases.

During the visit Her Royal Highness was shown an array of cutting-edge scanning and imaging technology, including a Trans-Oesophageal Echo robot (TOE). The robot controls a specialised ultrasound probe that, once inserted in the oesophagus, provides higher resolution images of the heart

than those currently available. The enhanced images allow doctors to better identify and target issues without the need for invasive surgery.

Samantha Johnson, Chief Executive of ECHO: “ECHO was delighted to be invited to celebrate the occasion, alongside the Carter Family whose daughter Evie has a heart condition and has recently undergone similar tests to those which will be carried out at the newly established Centre. ECHO works in partnership with St Thomas’ and Evelina London Children’s Hospital and we are looking forward to more joint working on future projects at the Centre. The work carried out here is of vital importance for children and young people with heart conditions, and we are very positive about the potential future research which is planned.”

Evie Carter (11 years old) was born with Aortic Stenosis which was discovered when she was 2 days old. At present, she is waiting for the Ross procedure. In April of this year Evie had an MRI and TOG under general anaesthetic. Evie was very nervous beforehand. The next day when it was all over, Evie said: “I don’t know what I was worried about that wasn’t bad at all”. Her mother Melanie told us: “We know the big operation is still to come but these little procedures are helping her with her nerves, which will help in the future.”

Evie and her sister Poppy together with their parents were very excited for the event yesterday, especially to see the new facility opened by HRH The Princess Royal. **Her mother Melanie said:** “We are really excited to be invited to this event, we were absolutely shocked to get the invitation and to be able to meet HRH The Princess Royal. It’s an amazing opportunity to be able to come and be part of this, and of course we’re thrilled to do this for ECHO. When Evie was four months old we first became ECHO members following a ward visit and have really loved it. We’ve always tried to come to as many events as possible and ECHO feels very much like a family.”

[More information about the visit and the new Centre for Medical Engineering](#)

