



Family rallies round to get Keira walking

by Ian Proctor
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RELATIVES of a little girl who cannot walk properly are trying to raise £50,000 for an operation in America.

Keira Power's aunt, Elaine Power, and her paternal grandparents Joan and Denis Power, of Coles Crescent, South Harrow, as well as her other aunt, Denise Power, of Walton Close, North Harrow, and her uncle Barry Power, who lives in Ruislip, have been organising fundraising events locally to boost the coffers.

Keira was born 12-weeks premature in February 2005 and less than a year later was diagnosed with spastic quadriplegia, a form of cerebral palsy that causes stiffness in all four limbs.

The five-year-old, who lives with her parents in Portsmouth, Hampshire, was told she may never walk unaided, but in September the family discovered spinal nerve surgery known as selective dorsal rhizotomy (SDR) could give Keira more movement.

Keira does not meet the criteria to have the operation on the NHS. The cost of the procedure in the US

is \$52,000 and involves a month-long outpatient stay.

The appeal needs to raise between £45,000 and £50,000 to cover all the costs.

Elaine Power, 31, said: "The fundraising has only come into effect since March, when we found out Keira was eligible for surgery and the hospital gave us a date for the procedure.

"The people of Harrow have been fantastic.

"The amount of support we have got is amazing.

"We have raised £20,000 at the moment and we're hoping to raise the rest by the end of September. We've got so many events planned we should do that."

Ms Power added: "Generally Keira's very happy but she does get tired quickly because it takes a lot of energy to use a walking frame.

"She goes to mainstream school and has a full-time carer there, and she has to have medication several times a day.

"She does get upset when she sees her two-year-old brother running around and she can't do that, and because she's so young I don't think she realises how big a deal the surgery is.

"All she wants to do is walk."



■ **SOLIDARITY:** Her family, including aunts Denise and Elaine Power (right) are raising funds to send little Keira Power to the US for an operation that could help her walk

Photos contributed



■ **BUCKETS FULL:** Elaine, Denise and friends

KEIRA FUNDRAISER CALENDAR

■ **Saturday, May 29:** Race night at The Life of Reilly pub, in Warwick Parade, Kenton Lane, Harrow

■ **Friday, June 4:** Bandfest at Tir Chonail Gaels GAA Club, Berkeley Avenue, Greenford

■ **Saturday, June 12:** MP Moran

24km Run between Greenford and Paddington

■ **Saturday, June 26:** Family and Friends 10km Run in Richmond Park, Richmond, south-west London

■ **Friday, July 30:** The Life of Reilly Golf Day, at Ealing

Golf Club, in Perivale Lane, Perivale

■ **Monday, August 30:** Family funday at Ruislip GAA Club, in West End Lane, Ruislip

■ **Friday, September 3:** Benefit dance at The Man of Aran pub, Alexandra Avenue, South Harrow

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Keira funds success

A FAMILY striving to raise funds to secure a \$52,000 operation which would allow their five-year-old to walk independently have passed the £10,000 fundraising mark.

The Irish community across the country have been digging deep in their bid to support the Powers, whose daughter Keira was diagnosed with cerebral palsy at 11 months and is unable to walk unassisted.

Parents Jason and Sally Power are determined to raise the cash which would take them to America for a specialist operation that

could allow Keira to run and walk like any other youngster.

Jason, who is determined that she will have the life-changing operation, told *The Irish Post*: "Donations to date have now exceeded the £10,000 barrier."

"We had a very successful Spinathon at ROKO gym in Portsmouth last month, which raised over £3,000, and a second one last weekend. Both my sisters and their friends were collecting in a number of pubs in North London at the same time".

Donations can be made at www.kieraswish.org