



Occasionally, we hear or witness accounts of people's extraordinary lives where we feel compelled to help. When I met Debra and was introduced to 'Young at Heart', this was one such occasion.

As a Student Paediatric Nurse, I was fortunate enough to spend some months working on the International Cardiac Unit at Birmingham Childrens Hospital. The unit is one of the busiest centres in the U.K and is headed up by a world-renowned team of cardiac surgeons with patients arriving from Europe and beyond. During my time there, I was able to witness a number of procedures in theatre following my own patients through invasive procedures as cardiac catheterisation, hypoplastic left heart syndrome and ventricular septal defects.

The ward itself was an extremely busy one with a wide variety of complex and high dependency (H.D) patients needing round the clock care and monitoring.

Towards the end of my time at University, we were introduced to a speaker, a parent in fact, who would come to talk to student nurses about their experience and their child's time in hospital. This is where I was introduced to Debra. She had bravely come to face a bunch of students and talk about her beloved son and her time on the Cardiac Unit at Birmingham Children's Hospital.

The Paediatric students on my course are a small bunch....five in fact and as such it was a very informal setting and we had lots and lots of questions and just freely chatted with Debra.

As students we had become accustomed to outside speakers, some good and some bad but for me, Debra was different. She was an eloquent, interesting and very genuine person who was completely open about her son's health, progress, the good times and the bad and I was really touched by her and

her family's story. I was able to relate to a great deal of the scenarios she related having worked on Ward 12 (cardiac) and this made the experience so much more real to me. I remember feeling so touched and fortunate that we had been introduced to her and the inner privacy of her family. I admired her honesty and her shared experiences of hospital life.

All my coursemates and I have been finishing clinical placements in the last few months in the run up to qualifying in April this year. As such I have not been able to be as 'physically' active in fundraising for 'Young at Heart' so I decided to start my own personal 'deskbound' fundraising journey starting on my wedding day on 7 August 2009.

I would ask you to look at the following website [www.theshacklesareon.com](http://www.theshacklesareon.com) and read about 'Young at Heart' and consider donating to this fabulous charity to help their already fantastic fundraising efforts. It would be a fantastic wedding present for me if we could raise a huge amount for a charity so close to my heart. We appreciate anything you feel you can give.

Many thanks

Hannah XX



*"On behalf of Young at Heart I would like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to Hannah and Richard for suggesting that they would like to offer their guests the opportunity to make donations to our charity", - Deb Bailey Vice Chair*