

Hospital defends its treatment of Charlie

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beautiful little Charlie go." The parents, from Bedfont, west London, had been told by Prof Michio Hirano, a New York neurologist who has pioneered an experimental therapy for children with a similar condition to Charlie's, that there had been a chance of helping their son.

Miss Yates said it was "unfortunate" that Prof Hirano had not been given access to GOSH's "raw data" in April - at the time of a previous High Court hearing - that showed "no actual evidence of irreversible brain damage".

Two doctors said further scans carried out last weekend had not shown "irreversible" brain damage, as the hospital had claimed earlier this year, but a new MRI scan on Friday had revealed "irreversible" deterioration of his muscles that meant he was untreatable.

Miss Yates said: "They [the doctors] both agreed that treatment should have been started sooner.

"There is one simple reason for Charlie's muscles deteriorating to the extent they are in now - time. A whole lot of wasted time.

"Charlie had a real chance of getting better.

"It's now unfortunately too late for



Charlie Gard, left, and right, his parents Connie Yates and Chris Gard

him." Miss Yates said her son remained an "absolute warrior", adding: "We could not have more love and pride for our beautiful boy.

"His body, heart and soul may soon be gone, but his spirit will live on for eternity and he will make a difference to people's lives for years to come."

She said comfort came from knowing "Charlie may have been too special for this cruel world", and that she and her partner now wanted to spend as much time with him as possible before his ventilator was removed.

"We are now going to spend our last precious moments with our son, Charlie, who unfortunately won't make his first birthday in just under two weeks' time," she said.

"Sweet dreams baby. Sleep tight our beautiful little boy. Charlie Matthew William Gard. Our little hero."

Great Ormond Street defended its treatment of Charlie, insisting it had begun the process of seeking experimental therapy before the boy began having seizures in December last year, which continued into the following month.

In a statement released to the court, Katie Gollop QC, the hospital's barrister, said it disputed the claims that Charlie had not suffered brain damage and that there had been "no real change in Charlie's responsiveness since January".

The hospital said it had invited Prof Hirano to examine Charlie in January.

"That invitation remained open at all times but was not taken up until July 18 after being extended, once again, this time by the court," said Ms Gollop.

The hospital also claimed Prof Hirano had given the parents false hope by claiming he had new "laboratory findings" to suggest his treatment would be more beneficial than he previously realised.

Ms Gollop added: "All of GOSH's thoughts go with Charlie and his mother and father - the hospital wishes each of them peace in their hearts at the end of this day and each day to come."

Court battle How Charlie's parents fought for his life

Aug 4 2016

Charlie Gard is born a "perfectly healthy" baby at full term and at a "healthy weight"

Sep 2016 Charlie is diagnosed with the rare genetic condition mitochondrial DNA depletion syndrome and taken to Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH)

Mar 3 2017 GOSH goes to the High Court to ask that life support treatment be withdrawn

Apr 11 Mr Justice Francis rules that Charlie be allowed to "die with dignity"

May 23 Parents

Chris Gard and Connie Yates lose case in Court of Appeal
Jun 8 Supreme Court also rules in favour of GOSH and against parents
Jul 2 Pope Francis sends a message of support to Charlie's parents and a day later Donald Trump adds his backing
Jul 10 Parents return to the High Court after US doctor promises fresh evidence that experimental treatment can work

Jul 24 Charlie's parents end their legal fight

Times 25/7/17