

Parents fight hospital over ending baby's life support

Frances Gibb Legal Editor

A couple have begun a legal battle to keep their baby son alive after a hospital said that it had exhausted all options to treat his mystery brain condition.

In a case with echoes of the Charlie Gard case last summer, Alder Hey Children's Hospital in Liverpool has applied to switch off the 18-month-old boy's life support as they can do nothing more for him.

The parents of Alfie Evans, who is in a coma and suffers regular seizures, say that they have found a hospital in Italy that is willing to take their son.

But Alder Hey has told Thomas Evans and Kate James, both 20, in a letter seen by the *Liverpool Echo*, that they oppose the move as not in the child's best interests.

Alfie's parents have started a cam-

paign to raise £50,000 and thousands have signed up to join "Alfie's Army".

Mr Evans, from Bootle, who worked as a labourer before Alfie became ill, said: "It's devastating — we feel so disappointed. I feel Alfie is being ignored, let down and not given a chance."

The hospital has asked the High Court to rule that it is in Alfie's best interest for long-term ventilation and intensive care to be withdrawn.

Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation Trust said: "We understand that this is an incredibly difficult time for the family concerned and we continue to liaise directly with them."

Charlie Gard died in July aged 11 months after his parents, Chris Gard and Connie Yates, fought a legal battle to try to keep him alive, despite advice from doctors at Great Ormond Street Hospital.

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