

**19<sup>th</sup> October, 2008**

## **MUM's the word**

Midwives, doctors, nurses and paramedics who have helped to save the lives of premature babies are set to be honoured in a nationwide campaign to say thank you.

Leading UK children's charity Baby Lifeline has launched a search for the unsung heroes across the country who have helped to save the lives of special care babies.

Baby Lifeline has launched the second ever UK MUM (Maternity Unit Miracles) Awards, calling on mums and dads to nominate the medical staff who helped to save their little bundles of joy.

The charity wants to uncover the real-life stories of MUMs from across the country. Judy Ledger, who founded the charity more than 27 years ago after she lost three premature babies, said: "Having a baby can be a worrying time, and if there are problems all parents want to know they are in the best hands.

"When the odds of life or death are stacking up, the care and expertise on offer can make the world of difference. That's why charity Baby Lifeline wants to champion the work of dedicated professionals committed to helping those who don't always get the best start in life.

"So whether it's a midwife who went that extra mile, a surgeon whose skill saved a life, a nurse who nurtured a struggling little one, or a whole team effort, we want to hear about it and help mums and dads out there show how much they appreciate the great work of these healthcare professionals who don't seek any recognition for themselves," she added.

The charity's vice president and former Coronation Street star Kate Ford, who was a premature baby herself and weighed just four pounds when she was born, is backing the Baby Lifeline campaign. She said: "Giving birth is hard but it's just as hard for midwives who work round the clock to give the best care possible."

"You feel so vulnerable but a good midwife makes you feel safe. The people who work in these units are unsung heroes and if anyone has had a positive experience giving birth,

whether premature or not, this is their chance to say 'thank you' for all the fantastic work the staff do."

A team of judges will select the nine regional winners and a national winner who will be honoured at a awards ceremony during National Mother and Baby Week in March next year. Health professionals will be reunited with the families whose lives they have transformed at the star-studded event.

World famous actor Sir Ben Kingsley, Patron of Baby Lifeline, said: "The marvellous efforts, often above and beyond duty, in maternity units up and down the country should rightly be celebrated, and I am delighted that we at Baby Lifeline can showcase just some of the cases at the UK MUM Awards."

Parents who wish to nominate their unsung heroes should log on to [www.babylifeline.org.uk](http://www.babylifeline.org.uk) for a nomination form.

For further information about Baby Lifeline or to make a postal or online donation, please contact Baby Lifeline:

Email [info@babylifeline.org.uk](mailto:info@babylifeline.org.uk)

Log on to [www.babylifeline.org.uk](http://www.babylifeline.org.uk)

By post to Baby Lifeline, Empathy Enterprise Building, Bramston Crescent, Tile Hill, Coventry, CV4 9SW.

### **Ends**

For further information or to set up interviews, please contact Helen Barklam, tel: 07917 148900.

#### **Notes to editors**

Baby Lifeline is the UK's Mother and Baby Charity. Founded in 1981, the charity has raised more than £8m for an abundance of technology across the UK, and also provides cutting edge training to health professionals working in the Maternity Sector.

Nominations should be for babies who are at least 18 months old to two years and not over six-years-old.

Regional winners will be selected from: Scotland, The North, Northern Ireland, Merseyside, South West, South East, Wales, Midlands and East Anglia.