

Baby Eva well after life-saving op

Andrew Hamilton

A BELARUSSIAN infant who's life-saving operation was paid for by money raised by the Burren Chernobyl Project in Clare has finally returned home this week - safe and well after her year-long ordeal.

The parents of baby Eva Razenkova were told last November that their 17-month-old daughter would be dead before Christmas if more than €20,000 could not be found to fund a life-saving operation for their daughter.

After spending their life savings to get Eva the tests which diagnosed the condition, her parents, Yuri and Veronika Razenkova, came to the Burren Chernobyl Project for help. The couple had already raised more than €20,000, or the equivalent of 15 years' salary for the average worker in Belarus, to go towards the operation but had exhausted all their avenues of fundraising.

After an intensive fundraising effort the Burren Chernobyl Project were able to donate €20,000 to help save Eva's life - €10,000 from money raised in Clare in just two weeks and a further €10,000 from the group's own emergency response fund.

Baby Eva went under the knife in a Belgian hospital Wednesday, December 8, in an attempt to correct a cholestatic hepatitis along with

a number of cardiac abnormalities which, specialists say, would have killed the infant before Christmas if left untreated.

The operation, which was risky in its own right, was a success and after recuperating in Belgium for the last number of month, Eva, who has just turned 2 years old, was able to return with her family to Belarus last week.

Eva's parents, Yuri and Veronika, have expressed their thanks to the Burren Chernobyl Project and to the people of Clare for their support that they have received.

"It was such an incredible response. We knew that we could always rely on the people of Clare to come up with the goods in an emergency situation like this, but Eva's parents just

can't believe that so many strangers from Ireland have given so generously to help their daughter," said a spokesperson from the Burren Chernobyl Project.

Below: Eva Razenkova (dressed in the purple coat) in Belgium last week before returning home to Belarus. Inset: Eva at 17 months in November 2010.

