Triplets headline multiples boom at The Townsville Hospital

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Meet nine-day-old triplets Taron, Reid and Deon Hunter, the angelic faces of The Townsville Hospital’s multiple baby boom which has included 35 sets of twins this year with 11 sets born in July.

With no family history of multiples, parents Paul and Pam were surprised but delighted to hear they were expecting triplets to add to their family of one boy and two girls – Landon, four-and-a-half, Millie, almost three, and Lyla, one.

Townsville Hospital obstetrician and foetal maternal specialist Dr David Watson who delivered the babies said Paul and Pam had a one in 9000 chance of naturally conceiving fraternal triplets.

“It’s certainly not something you see every day,” he said.

Dr Watson said triplet pregnancies had to be carefully monitored.

“We need to carefully watch the babies’ growth and there is an increased risk of an early labour,” he said.

“Pam had to have very complex scans to monitor the babies’ growth and full credit to our sonographer Sonja Brennan who had her work cut out for her,” he said.

At Dr Watson’s recommendation Pam moved to Townsville 10 weeks ago leaving the children at home with Paul, her mother and mother-in-law.

“I had contractions at around 26 weeks and Dr Watson wanted me close to The Townsville Hospital,” she said.

“Paul has been up and back and the children are with us now at Ronald McDonald House.”

Dr Watson said where possible clinicians liked to get triplets to at least 34 weeks before delivery.

“We were able to get Pam to 34 weeks and then we delivered the babies by planned caesarean section,” he said.

The Hunters wanted to keep the babies’ sex a surprise and were ‘overwhelmed’ when their three new sons were delivered - Taron was first weighing in at 2.27kg followed by Reid at 2.65kg and Deon at 2.36kg.
“They were fabulous weights,” Dr Watson said.

“We were very pleased.”

Also attending the triplets’ birth was neonatologist Dr Sue Ireland.

“We transferred the babies straight to special care from theatre,” Dr Ireland said.

“They are doing exceptionally well,” she said.

Paul and Pam said they were slowly getting their heads around being parents to six children under five.

“We are looking at a quad pram at the moment because Lyla is still a baby herself,” Pam said.

“We are very lucky; they are all such a blessing.”

Paul, Pam and family said they wanted to take opportunity to thank Ronald McDonald House and The Townsville Hospital.

“We want to thank all the staff at Ronald McDonald House Charity and all the staff at Ronald McDonald House Townsville for their wonderful support and care throughout the past few months,” Pam said.

“We really appreciate everything they have done for us.

“Also thanks to all the wonderful staff that have looked after us at The Townsville Hospital.

“We appreciate it very much.”

There have been 1629 babies born at The Townsville Hospital so far this year.

Maternity nurse unit manager Sonya Verburgt said the staff had had a busy year and an especially busy July.

“It’s always a privilege and a joy to welcome new life into the world and we have been delighted to care for so many babies this year,” she said.

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