



## **ABI Ireland launches annual fundraising campaign 'Bake for Brain Injury'**

### **Dublin Football Players Michael Darragh Macauley and Rory O' Carroll Launch Annual Brain Injury Campaign**

**Dublin 9<sup>th</sup> February 2012:** Dublin football players, and Acquired Brain Injury Ireland Ambassadors Michael Darragh Macauley and Rory O' Carroll swapped their Dublin jerseys today, for an Acquired Brain Injury Ireland apron, to launch the organisations national fundraising campaign 'Bake for Brain Injury'.

The 'Bake for Brain Injury' campaign is an annual fundraiser developed by ABI Ireland in an effort to raise much needed funds, for those living with an Acquired Brain Injury. The 'Bake for Brain Injury' will take place during Brain Awareness Week from March 5<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> 2012; encouraging people to bake and donate much needed funds online at [www.abiireland.ie](http://www.abiireland.ie)

It has been estimated that over 13,000 people are affected by an ABI each year in Ireland. Men are three times more likely than women to acquire a brain injury, and young men in particular between the ages of 16 - 25 are at high risk. To raise awareness of such a statistic, recognisable Dublin football players Michael Darragh Macauley and Rory O' Carroll were on hand to lend their support to this campaign; targeting a peer group of their own age.

Speaking at the launch in Croke Park Karen O' Boyle, Communications Executive of Acquired Brain Injury Ireland said, "We are calling on all those who can, to get involved in *Bake for Brain Injury* by hosting a bake sale coffee morning in aid of ABI Ireland at home, school, work or in your local community. Funding for voluntary disability organisations has been significantly affected by the economic downturn, and so fundraising, now more than ever, has become a crucial factor to the survival and development for us as an organisation; caring for those with an Acquired Brain Injury".

ABI Ireland provides vital support services to enable people with ABI maximise their abilities. We also work to reduce the number of people affected, by raising awareness of the causes of ABI. Our education and prevention campaign 'Mind Your Head' is successfully focusing on shining a light on the growing 'silent epidemic' that is brain injury; while also educating society about more subtle mild brain injuries that occur, such as Concussion in Sport", she said.

Speaking at the launch, ahead of their next league game against Mayo on Saturday, Dublin football player, and ABI Ireland Ambassador Michael Darragh Macauley spoke about his involvement in the campaign, he said "I started working with ABI Ireland to raise awareness of their Educational Concussion Campaign, and so it was through that that I learned about

the services provided and the impact a brain injury can have. If anything it has taught me how it only takes seconds for your life to change drastically; and so I think that is definitely something we need to be aware of, and try to remember”.

Fellow Dublin player Rory O’ Carroll also spoke at the launch, agreeing with Macauley he said “For me working on the Concussion campaign has definitely made me think about it more. Before this I never would have thought about injuring your brain, it’s almost that grey area you just forget about! More awareness surrounding this issue is really important to bring it to our attention, making lads especially, stop and think. That’s why I’ve swapped my jersey for an apron; ensuring the funds will be available to continue this valuable service and necessary campaign”.

The Concussion Campaign is reaching out to all sporting bodies to educate their players and coaches alike about the importance of concussion management for their specified sport.

ABI Ireland’s *Bake for Brain Injury* campaign hopes to raise much needed funds for the improvement and development of Acquired Brain Injury Ireland’s Community based Neuro-Rehabilitation services throughout Ireland; making a difference in the lives of those living with an Acquired Brain Injury; ensuring a life of maximum ability, not life-long disability.

For more information, and to register for a bake, see [www.abiireland.ie](http://www.abiireland.ie)

**-ENDS-**

#### **For Further Information**

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#### **About Acquired Brain Injury Ireland**

Established in 2000, Acquired Brain Injury Ireland (formerly the Peter Bradley Foundation) was set up to provide a range of pioneering, flexible and tailor-made services to people with Acquired Brain Injury (ABI). The Community based Neuro-Rehabilitation services provided by the organisation place a critical emphasis on client-centeredness, quality, effectiveness and value for money. Rehabilitation and clinical support are key aspects to the service.

Approximately 13,000 people suffer from a head injury in Ireland each year and face a dramatically altered life thereafter. People with ABI progress at different rates, and may need to access services at different points in time as their needs change. Within each stage of rehabilitation a range of different service providers is involved, which must be coordinated. Once back in the community the emphasis is on more extended activities of daily living, integration, and return to work or education. Interventions focus on enhanced participation, improved quality of life, psychological adjustment and carer stress. Acquired Brain Injury Ireland is filling a vital service gap, in collaboration with statutory bodies.

