



Helmet wearing will reduce Head Injuries among Hurlers – ABI Ireland

22nd December 2009: Acquired Brain Injury Ireland (ABI Ireland) has welcomed the GAA's decision to introduce compulsory helmet wearing for hurlers of all ages. From 1st January 2010, senior players will follow the regulations already in place at minor and under 21 level which will see hurlers of all ages wearing helmets with faceguards both in training and at matches.

Welcoming the GAA's decision Barbara O'Connell, CEO of ABI Ireland, said, "Hurling is a fantastic sport but its fast pace can make it extremely dangerous for players not wearing protective headgear. While training or playing competitively, hurlers playing without a helmet are at danger of suffering head trauma, concussion as well as fractures or injuries to the face."

She added, "At ABI Ireland, we see first hand that wearing a helmet in various situations not only reduces the risk of head injury, it can also reduce the severity of the injury. As the GAA states, the hurling helmet is an essential piece of safety equipment and we hope that by wearing helmets, the amount of injuries suffered by those playing our national sport will be significantly reduced."

Barbara O'Connell also cites the wisdom of the GAA in streamlining helmet wearing across hurlers of all ages. "Unfortunately, some children and young adults think it's uncool to wear helmets so it is particularly important for the GAA to enforce this regulation to protect our young people. It doesn't make sense that people put their heads at risk - we only have one brain and we need to mind our heads and protect it."

Founded in 2000, Acquired Brain Injury Ireland is the Irish national charity which provides support and rehabilitation services for people with an acquired brain injury (ABI). It is estimated that more than 10,000 people are impacted by Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) in Ireland every year. ABI Ireland runs the 'Mind Your Head' campaign which seeks to raise awareness of the serious consequences of not wearing protective headgear in various every day situations such as cycling, working or playing sports.