

'Watch out for a knock-out' warns Brain Injury group

'Watch out for a knock-out' says Acquired Brain Injury Ireland as they urge all involved in sport to **'Mind Your Head'**.

Acquired Brain Injury Ireland this week launched a campaign to raise awareness of concussion, reminding players to wear the recommended head gear for their participating sport. Irish and Leinster rugby player Isaac Boss was present at the launch sporting scrum hat for the event.

The 'Mind Your Head' campaign seeks to raise awareness of the serious consequences that players will endure if they insist on continued play following a concussion or 'blow to the head'. Barbara O' Connell expressed her belief in the campaign saying "I don't know how many times I have heard a player say 'I'm grand, it was just a knock'. These 'knocks' are in fact mild traumatic brain injuries induced by mechanical forces, that immediately disrupt the normal functioning of the brain. Yes, a lot more serious than 'just a knock'".

Acquired Brain Injury Ireland are urging sporting players of all ages and standards, coaches, and parents of young children to remember the importance of wearing protective headgear from this day forward. It is also a necessity that the issue of concussion is highlighted further, becoming noted as a mild brain injury, requiring both assessment and medical treatment.

As our sporting bodies develop and expand it is extremely important that we begin to highlight the issue of concussion; educating our players on the signs, symptoms and consequences.

"Protective headgear is recommended for certain sports as a defence mechanism for players against head injuries. Headgear is not only a preventative measure in terms of an acquired brain injury, it can also reduce time spent recovering in hospital, and the duration spent in rehabilitation", said O' Connell.

The warrior ethos of 'It's grand, it was just a knock' may appear admirable amongst your team. However games will come and go with a new season renewed each year; it is your brain that will remain the same. One brain, one chance – so remember 'if in doubt sit it out' as every knock counts!

-ENDS-

For further information please contact:

Karen O' Boyle, Communications Executive ABI Ireland, 01 2804164 Extn. 222

Editors Notes

About Acquired Brian 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 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 10,000 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.