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## Media Release

### Neuro rehabilitation patients interview Bath Rugby players

Bath Rugby players Danny Grewcock and Olly Barkley faced an interview with a difference when they paid a visit to the specialist neuro rehabilitation unit at the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases NHS FT, also known as the Min.

Chloe Darrah, aged 20, Chris West, 17, and Bret Bassett, 16, all patients in the hospital's Young People's Neuro Rehabilitation Unit, used the visit as a chance to show off the progress they have made in their speech and language therapy.

The Young People's Neuro Rehabilitation unit at the RNHRD is one of the few in the country dedicated to the rehabilitation of 16-25yr olds who have suffered a brain injury, and speech and language therapy is just one of several crucial components in the multidisciplinary approach to rehabilitation offered at this hospital.

Chloe, Chris and Bret prepared and practised a range of questions so they would be ready to grill the players when the time came. The trio beat their nerves and quizzed Danny and Olly on topics ranging from injuries and training schedules to shopping, and they didn't let them get away with 'no comment'.

The visit and interview session provided an ideal opportunity to put into action the communication skills that Chloe, Chris and Bret have been learning. Often when people have suffered a brain injury their ability to communicate is impaired and needs specialist input to help them to improve their speech and their ability to communicate effectively.

Lisa Maendl, Clinical Specialist Speech and Language Therapist at the Min, said,

"Chloe, Chris and Bret have worked incredibly hard to research, prepare and practise the questions they put to the players. This visit has been fantastic for their therapy. It helps them to understand why they are working to overcome their communication difficulties, and see the point in what they are doing in their therapy sessions.

"The chance to meet sporting heroes has been a real motivation for them and provided an opportunity to put the communication skills they work incredibly hard to develop into practice in a fun and practical setting."

Chris said "The visit was fantastic. I got to meet Danny and Olly from the Bath Rugby team."

Following the interview the trio showed Danny and Olly around the gym, where Chris demonstrated to them the kinds of exercises he does in his physiotherapy sessions. He then gave them a tour of the Young People's Unit and showed Danny and Olly around his room.

"It has been a humbling experience to meet the patients at the Min, particularly the younger ones. It's clear to see that they have come a long way in their rehabilitation." said Danny.

"Chloe, Chris and Bret's interview was fantastic, you could see that they had spent a lot of time putting together and practicing the questions. It was great fun and fantastic to meet them." added Olly.

Clinical Services Manager, Mary-Anne Darlow said "I would like to thank Danny, Olly and Bath Rugby for providing a wonderful opportunity for our patients to demonstrate how far they have come in their rehabilitation journey."

ENDS

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**Notes for Editors:**

- The RNHRD NHS FT is a national specialist rehabilitation and rheumatology hospital based in bath. Offering services to adults, children and young peoples the Trust has expertise in general and complex:
  - Rheumatological and musculoskeletal conditions
  - Neurological Rehabilitation
  - Chronic Pain Management
  - Chronic Fatigue Syndrome/ME
  - [www.rnhrd.nhs.uk](http://www.rnhrd.nhs.uk)