

23 September 2011

Press Release

YOUNG PEOPLE IN 'COAST TO COAST' FUNDRAISING WALK PRESENT MONEY RAISED TO HOSPITAL

Bath's Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases NHS Foundation Trust, locally known as 'the Min' has been presented (Sept 19th) with over £11,000 by the family and friends of a patient, Christopher Parker, who is being treated in the hospital's neuro-rehabilitation unit following a serious car accident.

The money has been given to 'the Min' from a total of over £22,000 which was raised by brother and sister, Rebecca and Andrew Pitt, who completed the gruelling 192 mile 'Coast to Coast' walk from St Bees Head in Cumbria to Robin Hood's Bay in Yorkshire this August. Close friends of Christopher, the pair, Rebecca, 20 and Andrew, 17 wanted to raise money to support 'the Min' where Christopher has spent the past nine months. The Wessex Neurological Centre in Southampton, where Christopher was treated initially before transferring to 'the Min' is also benefitting with the total sum raised being divided between the two hospitals.

Commenting on his friends' achievement, Christopher said: "They're absolutely fabulous to have raised so much money. Both the hospitals that have treated me are amazing."

His father, Michael added: "Rebecca and Andrew showed such determination to complete such an arduous walk. We followed their progress throughout and knew how tough it was."

Rebecca and Andrew kept their supporters in touch with regular blog updates and were encouraged by messages of support they received as they went along. Their original target had been to raise £2000, so they were delighted that the final figure was eleven times that.

Andrew said: "The walk was tough at times especially when the weather was bad, but the thought that every extra step raised more money, kept us going."

Rebecca said: "It's amazing how much was raised, we need to pinch ourselves to believe it! All the donations we received, large and small, were encouraging and a huge help."

Mary Anne Darlow, clinical patient pathways manager in the neuro-rehab unit at 'the Min' said: "We're tremendously grateful to Rebecca and Andrew for raising this incredible sum of money, which will be used to benefit the unit and many future patients in our care."

During his time in the unit, Christopher has progressed from only being able to move a thumb to sitting up, standing with assistance and talking. Christopher's mum, Alison said: "It's thanks to the Min that we've got our son back."

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 people 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