



Press Release

Immediate Release

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31-year-old clinically “dead” for nearly an hour after heart attack

The fiancée of a 31-year-old has spoken of the “extraordinary” level of care he has received after a heart attack left him with brain damage when he was clinically ‘dead’ for 50 minutes.

Ben Wilson, 31, is receiving support from Cygnet Health Care Pindar House following a heart attack on 11 June last year. His heart stopped beating for almost an hour and he had to be shocked 17 times by paramedics before his heart started beating again.

He was transferred to Northern General Hospital in Sheffield where he was treated for brain swelling and severe kidney problems, as well as seizures. He was put into an induced coma to help his recovery.

The team of medics spent seven and a half weeks subsequently trying to wake him from the coma, but each time they tried, they were dealt setbacks. His lungs collapsed, he had repeated chest infections, required kidney dialysis and had recurrent heart attacks.

His partner, 27-year-old Becki Holmes, said she was told by medical staff to prepare for Ben to never recover given how long his brain was starved without oxygen.

“I was told to prepare for the worst,” she explained. “He drew strength and kept fighting. I was told on numerous occasions that he wouldn’t survive, but he kept proving everyone wrong.”

Ben spent four months in the Cardiology Ward at Barnsley Hospital before being transferred to Cygnet Health Care Pindar House in November, a 22 bed Neuropsychiatric care and treatment service for men affected by acquired brain injuries.

He is undergoing rehabilitation and has learnt how to walk and talk again.

Describing the standard of care he has received, Becki said: “He has made such significant progress, it is unbelievable really to look back to June last year and to see what he is like now. It's extraordinary.

“Right from the get go, they have always listened to me and been so patient answering all my questions. They can't do enough for both of us. They always take on board any suggestions I have for what might be good for Ben.

“It isn't just Ben they've helped, it's me too. Since Ben's initial heart attack, I've developed quite severe anxiety and panic attacks. I've been so much more relaxed since he has been at Pindar House, knowing he is getting the right help. The support is there for me too, no matter what I need.

“Every time I go to see him, the staff ask how I am. It might seem small but that's such a massive thing when you have been through something like this. The fact they take time out of their day to check on me.

“The way they have cared for Ben and myself, the staff have become part of the family. I've never experienced such warmth and compassion.”

Becki said the biggest marker of Ben's recovery has been his speech. When he arrived at Cygnet Pindar House, it was very slow and slurred, but it is difficult to tell there is even an issue now. Although he still experiences short term memory loss, this too is improving and Ben is expected to be discharged soon.

The pair got engaged before Christmas last year and Becki said they are excited to focus on wedding planning once he is back home.

“After everything we have been through, we deserve this happiness and something to look forward to.

“We want to make the most of this second chance we have been given.

“I honestly can't thank the staff at Pindar House enough, both Ben and myself will always be grateful.”

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Notes to Editors:

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