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In Memory of Tom Isaacs: The Epitomical Mover and Shaker

This Special Issue of the European Journal of Neuroscience has been put together by NECTAR (the Network for European CNS Transplantation & Restoration) in collaboration with the Cure Parkinson's Trust in memory of the late Tom Isaacs who sadly passed away suddenly last year. Tom was a whirlwind of wit and energy who used his young onset Parkinson's to try and change our thinking and approach to this condition, and who succeeded in changing the landscape on how we treat this condition, forever and for the better.

Tom developed the condition aged just 27 and first came to prominence through his extraordinary fundraising exploits that began by walking the coast of Britain. During the walk, he met three other dynamic individuals with Parkinson's, and together, they used their great feet (a pun that Tom would have wanted to make) to establish the Cure Parkinson's Trust, a charity which is now a household name to anyone working in the field of Parkinson's.

This charity was a typical Tom invention - a curiously eccentric collection of ideas and people that has become a leading light in patient-directed research and the funding of trials, especially around repurposed drugs, which are designed to slow down or even halt this condition. This charity has not only funded ground-breaking research and trials, but has fundamentally changed how we think about trying to better translate therapies to patients with Parkinson's.

This capacity to change the thinking of those involved in translational therapeutics owes everything to Tom who never failed to take on challenges, and who delivered insightful and incisive views on how the challenge should, and could, be met. He did this through his own unique style of lecturing, and his capacity to enthuse and come alongside others to help him in his ambition. Tom established the importance of the voice of people with Parkinson's and their families in research. His vision was that neurologists and scientists, together with patients and their carers, could come together to form a new force to change the approach to therapeutic trials in PD, with the ultimate aim of providing a cure for all living with Parkinson's.

Tom's incredible optimism and humour in the face of extreme physical adversity was contagious, and he was a beacon of hope and inspiration to so many. He was a unique force of nature that enthused and galvanised both patients and the Parkinson's research community. Through his wit charm, and

the sheer force of his determination, Tom has changed the therapeutic landscape of Parkinson's forever.

[Insert figure here]

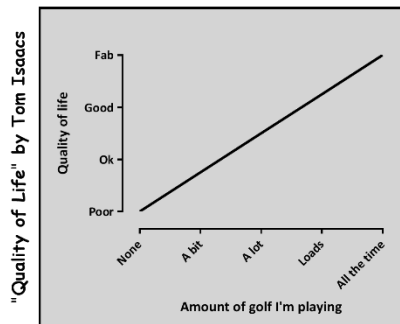
Tom's legacy now lives on in the transformed therapeutic landscape that he created for Parkinson's, which is captured in part in this special issue of the EJN, and with the work of the Cure Parkinson's Trust. He left the world of Parkinson's, as he would say "in an exciting place" where science and people with Parkinson's are combining their knowledge and experience, moving forward together, and spurring on research that one day soon will slow, stop or reverse Parkinson's.

Mrs Lindsey Isaacs, The Cure Parkinson's Trust

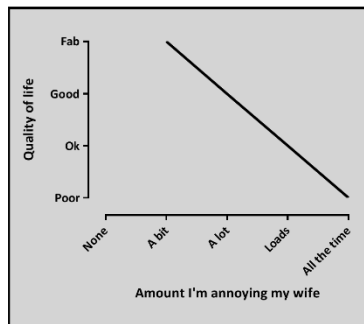
Prof Roger Barker, University of Cambridge

Dr Eilís Dowd, The Network for European CNS Transplantation & Restoration (NECTAR)

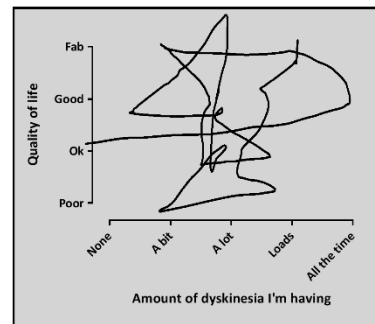
"So I drew some graphs to indicate what quality of life means to me ... "



"As you can see, the more golf I'm playing, the better my quality of life."



"As the amount I'm annoying my wife goes up, the quality of my life decreases ... and you'll notice there's never a time when I'm not annoying my wife."



"My quality of life depends on how much dyskinesia I'm having ... except, of course, I had dyskinesia while drawing the graph."