

## **Letter from a relative**

In the early hours of May 30<sup>th</sup> 2018 our only child, 25 year old Jack Dodd, was involved in a single car accident. Jack was a successful international showjumping athlete who grew up with a loving extended family in Ireland and had a close group of friends who may as well have been his family.

Jack was taken to Maastricht University Hospital and we arrived that evening. From the moment we arrived the care and consideration shown both to Jack and to us by the staff was exceptional. Dr Marcel Aries met us with the nurses who took us straight to see him, explained his injuries and the treatment he had received so far. Now, almost a year later, we wonder how we made sense of all this information at such a time. Our ability to comprehend what was happening is a testament to how professional the staff in the Intensive Care Unit are. Communication being key.

The staff at UMC+ exceeded their duty of care showing genuine compassion throughout. Dr. Marcel took the time to explain how they planned to treat Jack's injuries and informed us of the research the University is doing. We were in contact with him on all but one of the days — everyone needs a day off. Upon receiving our daily update, we would bring everyone in the waiting room to update them. It was difficult to see the hope in their faces fade every passing day, knowing the chance of receiving good news was growing slimmer.

We do not know how many of Jack's friends stayed with us in the hospital, it was their presence that allowed us to take moments of privacy in the family accommodation thoughtfully provided to us by UMC+. Jack's condition deteriorated over the weekend and by the fifth day, we knew we were facing a future that would change our lives forever. The staff in the Intensive Care Unit allowed us as much time as we needed to stay with Jack, we developed a rota which ensured we each had time on our own to sit with him.

On the 6<sup>th</sup> of June 2018, the decision to stop treatment was made. At this stage that we were asked about and agreed to Jack being an organ donor. We have since been informed that three people successfully received Jack's organs with two stints still available, viable for another four years.

In the months following we founded the *Jack Dodd Foundation*. The foundation seeks to ensure that all riders have somewhere to turn to in moments of need, we embody what Jack always was to his friends and family — a comforting voice at the end of the phone. Further, we maintain a fund to support riders and their families in the event of unforeseen injury, and support three organisations that helped us through that terrible time. Maastricht University's Brain Battle Fund is one of the organisations.

Jack passed away at 1:42am on the 7<sup>th</sup> of June 2018