

## Media Release

### **We believe that people affected by brain tumours should never walk alone. This June in Ottawa, they won't!**

In 2010, Pablo found himself in the ER eight times within six weeks. Intense headaches, drastic weight loss, jaundice, dizziness, and lapses in time were repeatedly dismissed by doctors, but Pablo knew that something was very wrong. Choosing to advocate for his health when others might have given up, Pablo sought out the opinion of his family practitioner and his persistence may have, in fact, saved his life. An MRI revealed a grade IV atypical meningioma on Pablo's brain.

Pablo underwent surgery to remove the mass, but a stroke in the days that followed complicated recovery. In addition to healing after surgery, Pablo now needed physical therapy, speech therapy, and a pacemaker on his bladder, and yet he refused to let this "new norm" get him down:

**"My body might not be in good place, but my head and my heart certainly are. Being at home with my wife and kids for this past six years... Watching my children grow up... That's the real blessing in all of this."**

Pablo first became involved with Brain Tumour Foundation in 2015, finding the local support group through the chronic pain clinic, and later coordinating Ottawa's Brain Tumour Walk.

"It was nice to have some people to reach out to who are walking the same path," he said in an interview. "2016 was the first year that I was able to attend the Brain Tumour Walk and it was an eye-opener. When you stick hundreds of people together who are traveling down the same path in life, it opens up conversations that aren't available day to day."

Now, volunteering within the brain tumour community has become a family affair. Pablo's eldest child, Isabella, 10, will be speaking at Ottawa's 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Brain Tumour Walk this Sunday.

"Isabella talks about what it's like to be a child at home who watches a parent go through a brain tumour diagnosis. Watching my child speak on behalf of not only our family, but on behalf of all the families who are going through this, that is the best therapy for me."

Celebrating its 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada will be returning to Ottawa for the 23<sup>rd</sup> annual Brain Tumour Walk, a unique opportunity to celebrate survivors, honour those who have passed away, and raise awareness about this devastating disease. Run by Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada and local volunteers, this event will raise money for programs, services, and life-changing research.

"Patients and families are the heart of Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada. The Brain Tumour Walk will support the hundreds of people in Ottawa affected by a brain tumour diagnosis and we're so thrilled to see the excitement and support ramp up for this event," says CEO, Susan Marshall. "Together we make a real difference in the lives of those affected by brain tumours."

**"One of the biggest things that I hope people take away from the Brain Tumour Walk is that it's not just about one Sunday of the year," says Pablo. "There is guidance, there are resources, there is support, and it's available more than one day a year."**

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Join Pablo on Sunday, June 11, 2017 for Ottawa's 23rd annual Brain Tumour Walk. We believe that no person affected by a brain tumour should walk alone, and on June 10<sup>th</sup> they won't!

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Media Availability/Photo Opportunity:

- **What:** A celebration of hope, perseverance, and the beauty of community that has been 35 years in the making!
- **Availability:** Pablo Coffey, survivor and Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada Ambassador
- **Where:** Andrew Haydon Park, 3169 Carling Ave, Ottawa ON
- **When:** Sunday, June 11, 2017: 8:30 am - 12:00 pm
- **Survivor Photo:** 9:45 am
- **Opening Ceremonies begin:** 9:50 am
- **Walk begins:** 10:00 am

To schedule an interview with Pablo Coffey or for further information about the 2017 Brain Tumour Walk events, please contact:

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