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Mayor

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**San Francisco General Hospital and Trauma Center  
Update on Bryan Stow: Significant Improvements Shown in Long Road to Recovery**

SAN FRANCISCO – San Francisco General Hospital and Trauma Center (SFGH) today provided a progress report on patient Bryan Stow, who is being treated for a severe traumatic brain injury.

“There have been lots of ups and downs for Bryan, which is not uncommon for patients with severe brain injury,” said Dr. Geoff Manley, Chief of Neurosurgery, who is leading Mr. Stow’s care team. “We are pleased to announce that he is showing significant improvement and his neurological exams are much better. His ability to follow commands and interact with family has increased greatly.”

Though Mr. Stow remains in serious condition, there have been several recent developments in his case that are illustrative of the complicated course of recovery for traumatic brain injury (TBI) patients. SFGH, the only trauma center in the city, specializes in care for brain and spinal cord injured patients. The complexities of TBI patient care often exceed the expertise of hospitals that do not specialize in this area of injury.

Mr. Stow arrived at SFGH from LAC+USC Medical Center on Monday May 16, after being severely injured in an assault on March 31 in Los Angeles, where he suffered traumatic brain injury. He underwent a decompressive craniectomy in Los Angeles, a life-saving surgical procedure to remove a piece of the skull to relieve pressure caused by brain swelling resulting from the beating.

Dr. Manley replaced the missing skull fragment on Wednesday, August 10 with a custom prosthetic bone flap. After several days of close observation and oversight, Mr. Stow appears to be tolerating the procedure well. This is the second attempt to replace the bone. In mid-July, Dr. Manley replaced the skull fragment for the first time, but in that instance fluid quickly collected and was trapped underneath the fragment, resulting in a rapid decline in his neurological status. Within an hour, Mr. Stow was rushed to the operating room to remove the bone piece. That setback required several weeks of constant supervision and regular intervention to drain excess fluid, to prevent Mr. Stow from suffering further harm. We will continue to monitor him closely and will determine over the next week whether he will require a shunt to permanently divert this fluid.

“Bryan’s trajectory is his own, but it is not uncommon for TBI patients with this degree of severe brain injury to have significant ups and downs,” Dr. Manley said. “Though he still cannot speak, he is now able to move slightly upon command and to turn his body toward someone talking to him. We are buoyed by these developments, but we still do not know how far his recovery will take him.”

Mr. Stow is awake and breathing on his own. His anti-seizure medications have been reduced and he is now on a stable regiment to prevent further post-traumatic seizures. He is following simple commands and beginning to interact with his family. The goal now is to place him in a rehabilitation facility as soon as he no longer requires acute hospital care.

“For TBI patients, we must be vigilant,” Dr. Manley said. “Recovery is not a straight line, and each patient is incredibly complex. The ability to recognize, solve and treat these challenging problems is what our team brings to each of the 1,200 brain and spinal cord injured patients we care for each year. The public’s interest in Bryan allows us to explain more about this important health problem that affects so many and the importance of specialized care and centers of excellence in TBI.”

**SFGH will provide regular updates on Mr. Stow’s condition via a media hotline: 415 206-3376.** If there are additional developments or future press conferences, they will be announced on the hotline.

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#### San Francisco General Hospital and Trauma Center (SFGH)

San Francisco General Hospital and Trauma Center is the sole provider of trauma and psychiatric emergency services for the City and County of San Francisco. A comprehensive medical center, SFGH serves some 100,000 patients per year and provides 20 percent of the city’s inpatient care. As San Francisco’s public hospital, SFGH’s mission is to provide quality health care and trauma services with compassion and respect to patients that include the city’s most vulnerable. General Hospital is also one of the nation’s top tertiary academic medical centers, partnering with the University of California, San Francisco School of Medicine on clinical training and research.

SFGH specializes in traumatic brain injury (TBI) and spinal cord injury (SCI), for which it is internationally recognized. Each year, SFGH neurotrauma specialists see more than 1,200 patients with traumatic brain and spinal cord injuries and perform nearly 300 neurosurgical operations. With an average daily census of 30 patients, the neurosurgical service at SFGH also actively manages the critical care of these patients and provides advanced neurotrauma care, including brain tissue oxygen monitoring, cerebral blood flow monitoring, jugular venous saturation monitoring and continuous EEG.

#### Additional Resources:

- **SFGH Media Hotline: (415) 206-3376**
- Cards and letters for Bryan Stow and family: P.O. Box 884, Capitola, CA 95010
- Website for family updates and donations: <http://www.support4bryanstow.com>

- More information about Traumatic Brain Injury work at SFGH:  
<http://www.brainandspinalinjury.org/index.php>