**Case Study 1D: Fictional interview with Helpline CEO (Audio version is available)**

**Helpline CEO Toby Simpson has agreed to an interview with a local news reporter. Football star Matt Devine was a Helpline Ambassador and the CEO explains that Matt regularly spoke on the merits of the Helpline services, and how it has helped so many people. Helpline staff are still reeling from the tragedy and Mr Simpson believes it’s important that he speaks to community who are affected by the loss.**

**Q: Toby Simpson, thank you for meeting with us today. Can I start by asking, how did you hear about the death of Matt Devine and what were your initial feelings?**

A: Yeah thanks. Earlier this week we learnt about the death of Matt through our Ambassador lead. As you may be aware, Matt was a Helpline Ambassador and our lead had become a good personal friend to Matt, as she had spent many hours with him, alongside our other ambassadors, promoting the Helpline services. There are many Helpline staff who have been deeply impacted by his death, myself included. Matt was an impressive sportsman but even more importantly, he was a strong and inspiring human. He will be greatly missed.

**Q: When you think back to all the work that Matt did with Helpline over the years, what piece of work do you think made the biggest impact on Australians?**

**A:** Matt was involved in many aspects. I’d say some of the work he enjoyed the most was leading our children-focused activities in schools. But we were also always so grateful for the work he did leading many of our charity fundraising walks. He’d let himself drop back towards the tail of the walking group and spent his time encouraging those having a bit more trouble getting through the walk. We would often have people calling up afterwards to let us know that they wanted to thank Matt for this.

**Q: That’s so beautiful, especially as he was very vocal on sharing his own experiences with struggles, in particular his battles with mental illness over the years.**

**A:** Yes, Matt had experienced both depression and anxiety over the years. He was always happy to share his story, and we were always very careful to make sure he was supported when he did this. Matt would include information on our services in almost any interview he was doing, even if it was one about sport in general, as he believed that support services were needed everywhere. He wanted to remove the stigma around mental illness and thought showing people his own experience, that no-one is immune from mental illness, would help. It can affect anyone: a sportsperson, a celebrity, rich, poor.

**Q: What about CTE? Can you comment on the media attention that Matt’s death has brought to this issue?**

**A:** Look, yes, I have heard that there have been some calls to look into CTE. Unfortunately for Matt, he had a range of issues that he couldn’t shake, and whether his mental illness was caused by CTE or not, we know that suicide is complex. Until more is known, Helpline really wants to focus on reminding the community of the amazing contributions Matt made. He would want us to continue the work we’re doing, promoting support services available for everyone in the community.

**Thank you for sharing your time with us.**

Thank you.

**[ENDS]**