

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Bradgate's fund-raising walkers step in to help save cyclist

A group of mental health ward staff who set out on a fund-raising walk for their patients stepped into a life-saving drama before they even reached the starting line.



The trio, Apexa Patel, Katie Abram and Kerry Barnacle from Ashby Ward at Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust's (LPT) Bradgate Mental Health Unit have been credited with helping to save the life of a cyclist who collapsed with a heart attack.

The 54-year-old rider, from Leicester, collapsed four miles in to a 40-mile social ride. He is now back at home recovering after being treated in Glenfield Hospital.

The Bradgate Unit friends were driving to Ashby Castle for the start of a 17-mile fund-raising walk with colleagues from the ward to help provide kit for extra activities for their patients.

Apexa, a therapeutic liaison worker, explained: "We were heading for Ashby Castle near Coalville, for the start of the walk and had reached a crossroads in Ashby when Katie noticed the man by the side of the road with his cycling companion.

"We stopped to help and found he was barely conscious. Within seconds he had stopped responding and gone into cardiac arrest. Kerry started CPR and I rushed back to the car to find out the nearest defibrillator machine - luckily it was outside a shop not too far away."

Katie, a staff nurse, added: "Apexa was back within a couple of minutes and I administered the shock."

By another unusual stroke of luck, two other nurses happened on the scene. One was a woman out walking her dog and the other was LPT's Andy Fawcett (right) a clinical nurse lead with the Intensive Community Support (ICS) service at Loughborough Hospital. He was en route for the DIY store, saw what was happening and rushed to help with the resuscitation .



Deputy ward sister Kerry said: "We took turns giving chest compressions. Andy – who we didn't know - approached with a pocket mask which helped with giving resuscitation breaths when needed. After the emergency services arrived, Katie spoke to the man's cycling companion and reassured him, as he was clearly in shock."

The man they rescued, a keen cyclist, has no memory of the drama on the day. He said “It happened about four miles into our ride and apparently I said I felt unwell. But I don’t remember anything between travelling to Coalville for the start of the ride and waking up the following day in hospital.

“I thought I had been in a car accident and I still feel a bit strange but I’m just so relieved and so grateful. I’m quite fit and healthy. I’ve been cycling for five years and regularly do 70-mile rides with my cycling buddy – I saw none of this coming.

“I can’t thank all of the NHS staff involved enough. I can’t believe how things came together to save my life – the chances of these people just being there on the day are unbelievable. And I had wonderful care in Glenfield afterwards.”

Said Kerry: "It was a real team effort from all involved everyone helped save the man’s life. It was clear what we needed to do as nurses to help him." Andy added: “This was really slick work, and a great outcome for the gentleman. I am really pleased to hear that he is recovering.”

And the colleagues’ challenge was only just starting – they went on to complete a 17.4 mile trek from Ashby Castle back to the Bradgate Unit along with nine of their ward colleagues, raising nearly £1,000 towards their £2,000 target to boost the range of therapeutic activities they can provide for acutely unwell patients on Ashby ward.

Katie said: “It was quite tough doing the walk as I was constantly wondering if the gentleman was going to be all right. However I was delighted to hear a couple of days later that he was recovering well.”

You can still support the Ashby ward team’s fund raising appeal. They have set up a [Just Giving page](#) for donations through LPT’s charity Raising Health which now has its own website at [www.raisinghealth.org.uk](http://www.raisinghealth.org.uk) featuring details of other fund-raising activities for patients across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.



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**Photo captions: Top:** (l to r) Apexa, Kerry and Katie during their fund-raising walk, just hours after the dramatic rescue and below, the team back at the Bradgate Unit at the end of their eventful day

### **NOTES TO EDITORS**

1. **Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (LPT)** provides community health, mental health and learning disabilities services for the one million people living in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. We have a budget in excess of £275 million and employ approximately 5,500 staff. For more information visit: [www.leicspart.nhs.uk](http://www.leicspart.nhs.uk)

2. **Raising Health** is our registered charity (number 1057361) which raises funds to support LPT's excellent care initiatives, equipment and innovations which go above and beyond core NHS provision, to enhance the experience of our patients, service users and staff.

[www.raisinghealth.org.uk](http://www.raisinghealth.org.uk)

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