



Neurological rehabilitation in a bag

Inspiring an unrelenting pursuit of recovery

Mark Bowra was an officer in the Royal Marines. Mark had a **stroke** in 2014.

Mark worked very hard to **get better**.

Mark found **items** that helped him with

- use his **muscles**
- **mental** recovery
- daily **tasks**

Mark put the items in a rucksack and took them with him everywhere.

Mark created the **Bowra Bag**.

Mark started a **charity** called Bowra Foundation to raise funds to give Bowra Bags to people who had a **stroke** or other **brain injuries**.

Bowra Foundation has given a Bowra Bag to over **125 people**.

Bowra Foundation **helps** people with their **rehab** so that they can show:

“What’s inside matters”



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The rucksack

The Bowra Bag is a **rucksack** containing items to help people **get better** after stroke or other brain injuries.

The rucksack is **easy to transport**, so you can keep the **helpful items** with you wherever you go.

If your stroke has affected you more **on one side**, you can hold the bag over **either shoulder** or by the **carrying handle**.

Using the **zips** and **mesh pockets** helps build **confidence and independence** of movement - getting your fingers and arms **more mobile**.

Putting the Bowra Bag over your head onto your shoulder will help **improve your coordination** and **spatial awareness**.





A6 Notebook

This small notebook and pencil are **Mark's lifeline**.

Mark never goes anywhere without them.

The notebook helps Mark to:

- **communicate** using writing and pictures
- keep **reminders**
- note down **thoughts and ideas**
- write down the **first letter of a word** to help communicate it

Fast Talk booklet



Fast Talk is a booklet featuring **words and pictures** to help people with aphasia find the words they need in **everyday situations**.

Fast Talk is ring bound at the top and can easily be **used with one hand**. The booklet has **Alphabet** and **number** pages.

The **Stroke Association** makes the Fast Talk booklets.

www.stroke.org.uk



Photograph album

Mark's stroke affected his **memory**.

Mark could **not recognise** members of his family.

Mark was very frustrated.

A photo album with **images of Mark's family** helped him to remember.

The photos helped Mark to start **conversations** with his family.

You can change the photos regularly to **help your memory get better**.

Founder, Mark Bowra MBE, with the Bowra Bag



Whiteboard



The small whiteboard helps with **communication**.

Mark could not say many words after his stroke. Mark's family used the whiteboard to communicate using **words and pictures**.

Mark's family showed him what day of the week it was. Mark could **tell his family** how he was feeling or **if he needed something**.

Mark's family helped him by **drawing pictures** of the family members so **Mark could point** to the person he was thinking about.

The whiteboard board helped Mark to **make himself understood**.

The **alphabet** is printed on the top, Mark traced the letters to **improve his handwriting**.

Before Mark's stroke he wrote with his **right hand**. Mark wanted to **practise writing with his left hand**.

The whiteboard board has **helped Mark through the years** in many different situations.

Weekly Planner



Mark's stroke affected **short term memory**.

Forgetting simple things can be difficult for you and your family.

You can use the Weekly Planner Pad to:

- remember the **plan for the day**
- remember **appointment times**
- stimulate memory
- make a note of things that have happened
- give important information to your **family**
- give important information to your **doctor**

The Weekly Planner Pad has a **magnet** on it. You can stick the Weekly Planner Pad to the fridge.



700ml water bottle

Everyone needs to **drink enough water**.

The water bottle has a **non-drip spout**.

The water bottle is **clear** so you can see how much water is inside.

Using the water bottle helps with **independence**.

Filling the water bottle helps **hand-eye coordination**.

BUT Some people who have had a stroke cannot swallow.

If you cannot swallow please check with your doctor whether you can use this bottle.

Resistance band, and loop

Exercising helps people get better.

Your **physiotherapist, doctor or nurse** can help you to use the **exercise band and loop**.

More information, including demonstration videos, are available online for both products:

www.physioroom.com





Easy-tie shoelaces

Stroke makes **one side** of the body **weak**.

Your **arm** may be weak.

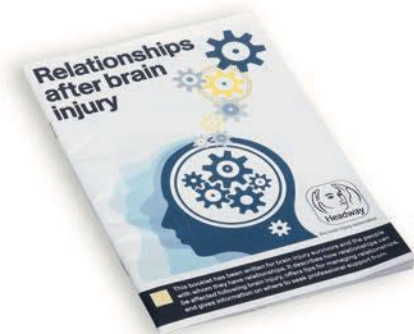
Your **hand** may be weak.

Easy-tie shoelaces help you to **fasten** your shoes with **one hand**.

Stretch the elastic and **push down** the clasp.

You may need **help fitting** the easy-tie laces to your shoes. Once the easy-tie laces are fitted you can practice **putting on your shoes yourself**.

This can help you to **build independence**.



Headway/ARNI information books

Many charities helped Mark and his family. Headway and ARNI are two charities that helped.

The Bowra Bag contains information from the charities.

The information helped Mark's family.

www.headway.org.uk

www.arni.uk.com



A4 Sketch pad & pencil case

High quality **sketch pad** and full set of **colouring pencils**.

In an **easy access** case.

Sketching and drawing is highly **therapeutic**.

It helps develop an eye for **detail**, improves **hand-eye coordination** and relieves **boredom**.

Knork & non-slip mat



The Knork is a **fork** with a sharp edge like a **knife**.

Using a Knork means you can **cut your own food**.

Using a Knork helps you **eat with one hand**.

The **non-slip mat** helps **keep your plate still** while you eat.

Using the Knork and non-slip mat can help you to **eat without having to ask for help**.

This helps build **independence**.

Playing cards & cardholder



After his stroke, Mark felt **lonely**.

Mark enjoyed playing simple **card games with his children**.

Games like snap can help with **coordination**.

Games like pairs can help with **memory**.

All card games help with **numbers**.

The **card holder** means you can play cards with **one hand**.

You can use the **cardholder** to hold a **menu** or **information cards**.



Colouring book

Mark felt **stressed** after having a stroke.

Colouring in helped him to feel **calm**.

Colouring in helped Mark **practise using his left hand**.

Mark sporting the V1 Bowra Bag whilst out on the recumbent bike





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