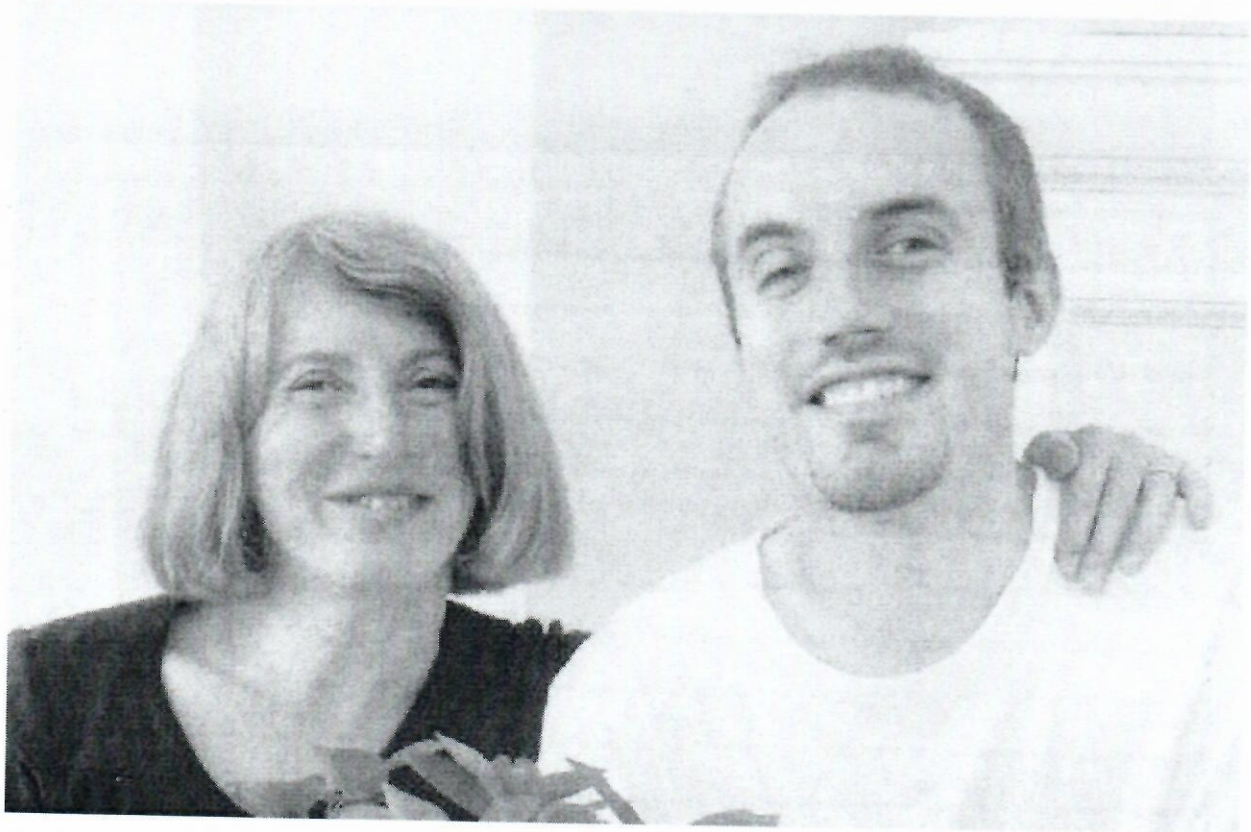


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'I could have saved him': Coulsdon mother renews calls for better education of head injuries after son's tragic suicide



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2 Nov 2016 / Jonathan Mitchell, Reporter - New Malden / @jmittchelljourn

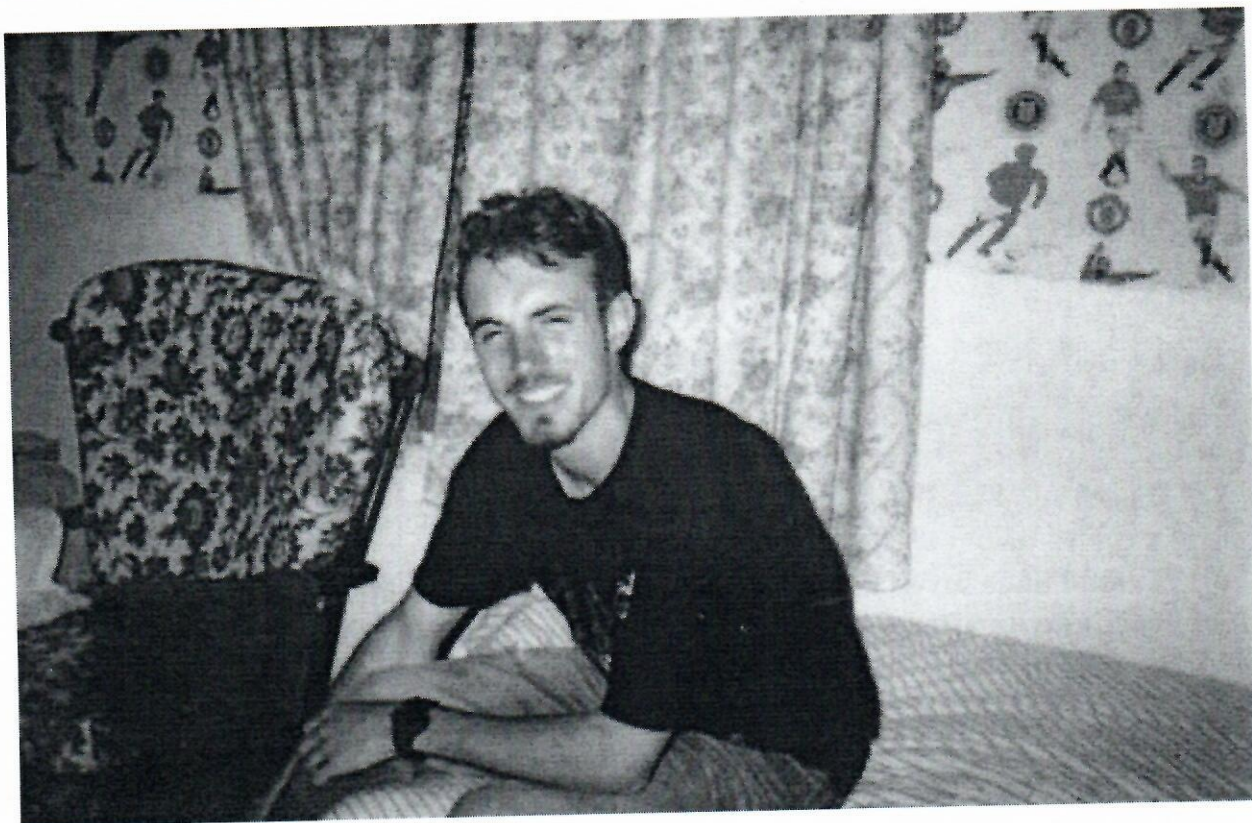
0 comments A grieving Coulsdon mother has renewed her calls for better education of the effects of head injuries, saying such information could have saved her son from suicide.

Christopher Lane took his own life aged 31 eight years ago having struggled with depression and impotency for much of his adulthood.

His mother Joanna, 68, believes it was the condition hypopituitarism – with which the pituitary gland in the brain stops producing certain hormones – that led to her son's depression.

She says it was a fall her son had from a tree when he was seven years old that led to him developing the condition, and has been campaigning to raise awareness for the past eight years.

Mr Lane was in a coma for a week following the fall.



Christopher Lane suffered from depression and impotency

Mrs Lane, of Southwood Avenue, said: "I could have saved him if I'd have been wider awake, but I was so ignorant. It's quite hard.

"We only found out from his medical notes after that he went the clinic about his low moods. Nobody thought to connect it with his head injury.

"There are a lot people suffering from this."

Both depression and impotency, which Mrs Lane discovered her son was suffering after seeing letters between him and his ex-girlfriend, are possible signs of hypopituitarism.

She made the link to the condition after her sister researched the illness, discovering that 20 to 30 per cent of brain injury survivors suffer from hypopituitarism.

Her son was never warned of the condition, which can develop years after the injury.

She added: "The first real sign of depression was when his girlfriend left him which was five years before he died. He seemed to have a busy life.

"My sister looked up the links to head injuries and found 30 per cent of people have this type of problem.

"That was like a godsend to me. It has helped me grieve, there are times when you fell very low, it makes you pull yourself together a bit."

Mrs Lane, a retired English teacher, has now written a book called *Mother of A Suicide: Fighting for the Truth*, in which she documents her campaign to raise awareness.

She has so far spoken on Woman's Hour, inspired an episode in Holby City and won the support of Labour MP Valerie Vaz, who sponsored an Early Day Motion in Parliament.

Mrs Lane added: "What I hope to achieve is that it if possible it became general knowledge. Then I will feel that I've done my part."

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Mother of a Suicide is now available to buy on Amazon.