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Arsenal player and TV's Ainsley Harriott bring football, food and fun to the Evelina Children's Hospital

Arsenal FC player Philippe Senderos brought smiles to patients' faces in the Evelina Children's Hospital, part of Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, on Thursday 4th October when he visited to promote the work of The Evelina Children's Hospital Appeal.

Amongst his admirers, seven year old Oliver Faulkner, an avid Arsenal fan, was overjoyed to meet Philippe and receive a signed Arsenal T-Shirt.

He said: "Philippe asked me what position I played and I said attack. 'So,' he said, 'you score goals?' I said yes, and that I could beat him too, that it would be a piece of cake."

Following a whistle-stop tour of the hospital wards, Philippe joined TV chef Ainsley Harriott in the hospital's atrium to cook up some quick and healthy snacks in front of an excited audience of patients, family and staff.

The 22 year old Gunner helped Ainsley whip up fruit-packed smoothies, a selection of quick and healthy salads and wraps, and some guilt-free desserts.

Philippe spoke with Ainsley about his food likes and dislikes and helped prepare the tasty snacks for the children.

"It was great to visit the Evelina today and meet lots of the patients and staff. It's a really special hospital and I thoroughly enjoyed taking part in the cooking challenge! I hope that as well as having lots of fun the children may have also been able to learn more about healthy eating and how important it is," he said.

He then showed off his dazzling footwork and gave some tips to children taking part in the goal shoot-out competition. The action packed event also included beanbag, basketball and skittle games.

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The visit was part of the Premier League's *Creating Chances* campaign provides charities with a few hours of a footballer's time to help promote their cause.

As part of the Appeal's successful bid to *Creating Chances* they were awarded a gift of £2,000 in addition to a player visiting the hospital.

Grenville Fox, Director of Children's Services at Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, said: "We're very grateful to the Premier League's *Creating Chances* scheme for their donation to the Evelina Appeal. It will kick off our new campaign to expand the Evelina's neonatal unit so that we can provide expert care to even more new-born babies."

Ainsley has visited Guy's and St Thomas' on a number of occasions through his presenting role on BBC1's *City Hospital*, which came live from the two hospitals, but his latest visit combined his main two passions in life – food and football.

"Healthy eating should be fun and accessible to everybody. It's about giving children choices and involving them in food preparation while they're still young."

"I'm passionate about food, but our visit was about more than that – it also gave the children a chance to forget they're in hospital and have some fun. When you meet Evelina patients and see the great care they receive, it really brings home how important the work of the Evelina Appeal is. It was an honour to be involved."

"It's also been a privilege to meet Philippe – I'm usually cheering him on from the sidelines," Arsenal fan Ainsley added.

Grenville added: "We were delighted to welcome Ainsley and Philippe to the Evelina Children's Hospital. Being in hospital isn't much fun for children – having the two of them in will really brighten up the patients' day and take their minds off their treatment."

Further information about The Evelina Children's Hospital Appeal can be found on the website at www.evelinaappeal.org or by contacting the fundraising team on 020 7188

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Notes to News Editors

1. More information and images are available from Laura Mason, Communications Assistant, Guy's and St Thomas' Charity on Tel: 020 7188 9083 or mob: 07722 119157 or email: laura.mason@gsttcharity.org.uk
2. The Evelina Children's Hospital Appeal was established in 1984 to help meet the needs of Children's Services at Guy's Hospital. In 2006 the Appeal completed a major campaign to raise £10 million to provide the very best in equipment, furnishings and facilities for the new Evelina.

The Evelina Children's Hospital Appeal continues to support the ongoing needs of the Evelina Children's Hospital and is grateful for the continued support of staff, relatives and local businesses in their fundraising efforts.

Recent campaigns have focussed on refurbishing and equipping a dedicated children's eye clinic and a dedicated clinic for the treatment of allergies.

The Evelina Appeal is now focussing its efforts on supporting the hospital to maintain its world-class standard, by funding new innovations and replacing out-dated equipment and facilities. Development work is also underway on a significant campaign to expand the capacity of the neonatal unit, in response to an anticipated increase in births at the hospital. This will focus on equipping a new room, and providing new, updated equipment.

For further information visit www.evelinaappeal.org or contact Laura Mason, as above.

3. For further information about Arsenal Football Club please contact Kerry Milton, PR Officer, Arsenal Football Club on Tel: 0207704 4019
4. Creating Chances takes place between Saturday 15 September and Saturday 6 October providing hundreds of charities with the support of a high profile player to help promote their work. For further information visit www.premierleague.com.
5. Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust provides $\frac{3}{4}$ million patient contacts in acute and specialist hospital services every year. As one of the biggest NHS Trusts in the UK, it employs over 9,000 staff. The Trust also works in partnership with the Schools of Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing and Biomedical Sciences of King's College London and other Higher Education Institutes to deliver high quality education and research. Website: www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk

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