

Information Leaflet on Brain Injury

Brain Injury Support in Northern Ireland

This leaflet is part of the series:
Brain Injury Support in Northern Ireland

What is Brain Injury?

Each year, as many as 1 million people attend Accident and Emergency (A&E) departments in the United Kingdom following a head injury.

The brain is an amazing organ that determines what we think, do and who we are. Although protected by the skull, the brain can still be easily injured, even if there is no obvious external damage to the head.

It is estimated that approximately 2000 people a year in Northern Ireland sustain and are living with the long-term effects of a brain injury. There are two types of brain injury:

Acquired Brain Injury (ABI)

Refers to any form of brain injury that has occurred since birth. ABI can occur without any outward physical evidence of injury or trauma. This includes damage to the brain caused by:-

- Strokes
- Tumours
- Anoxia
- Hypoxia
- other conditions not necessarily caused by an external force

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

Results from damage to brain tissue caused by an external force. Leading causes of TBI are:-

- Motor vehicle accidents
- Acts of violence
- Falls
- Sports and recreational injuries
- Blows to the head

How Does a Brain Injury Affect a Person?

Brain injury affects each person differently. Some people may have varying degrees of physical disability, as well as the less visually obvious problems such as:-

- Memory loss
- Lack of concentration
- Problems with balance

- Speech difficulties
- Personality or behaviour deficits
- Difficulties with organisational and coping skills

These problems can have a life-changing effect on the person with the brain injury and on their families and will impact on how family members relate to each other, their financial situation, their social network and much more. Parenting skills may be affected and family roles may change. This can be very stressful and demanding and the importance of supporting the whole family must be recognised.

Support

There are several voluntary and community groups providing support to individuals living with a brain injury and their carers. They can offer information, advice and support focussed around the interests of the individual and the carer.

Please see below details of the voluntary and community groups and other agencies that may be able to provide further information and support as part of the rehabilitation process.

Health and Social Care Trust (HSCT)

Belfast HSCT	Tel: 028 9056 5656
Northern HSCT	Tel: 028 2563 3700
Southern HSCT	Tel: 028 3839 8350
South Eastern HSCT	Tel: 028 9055 3100
Western HSCT	Tel: 028 7134 5171

Brain Injury Units

Regional Acquired Brain Injury Unit Belfast HSCT

Tel: 028 9090 3086

Neurobehavioral Unit, Belfast HSCT

Tel: 028 9056 5312

Thompson House , South Eastern HSCT

Tel: 028 9266 5646

Spruce House, Western HSCT

Tel: 028 7134 5171

Royal Victoria Hospital, Paul Ward (Children's Neurological Ward)

Tel: 028 9063 2151

Brain Injury Support in Northern Ireland

Carers NI

Tel: 028 9043 9843
Web: www.carersni.org



Tel: 028 9081 7145
Web: www.cbituk.org



Tel: 028 9066 6188
Web: www.cedar-foundation.org



Tel: 078 2690 9110
Web: www.headway.org.uk



Tel: 028 9031 9054
Web: www.jigsawni.org.uk



Tel: 028 9023 4555
Web: www.praxisprovides.com



Tel: 028 9079 0551
Web: www.reconnect-abi.com



Tel: 028 9024 6247
Web: www.lcdisability.org

Carer's Allowance:
Disability Living Allowance:

Tel: 028 9026 1970
Tel: 028 9090 6178