

Upcoming Community Events

ABI Coffee Talk

- Mondays (except statutory holidays)
- 10:30 AM – Noon
- Community Room @ the South Hill Mall
- Free of charge
- Refreshments served

ABI Drop-In Program

- Wednesdays (except statutory holidays)
- 1:30 – 3:30 PM
- Minto Bowl (201 – 13th St. West)
- Free of charge
- Refreshments served

Saskatchewan Brain Injury Association (SBIA) Support Group – Prince Albert

- Contact Glenda James @ 1-888-373-1555 for details

Introduction to ABI Online Series

- Available online at www.abipartnership.sk.ca
- Provides basic level knowledge about the effects of brain injury and strategies to help recovery
- Other resources also available on this website

Sask North Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) Services

1521 – 6th Ave West
Prince Albert, SK. S6V 5K1
Phone: 306-765-6630
Toll Free: 1-866-899-9951
Fax #: 306-765-6657

Caregiver's Corner

ABI Newsletter

-- by Sask North Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) Services

Emotions Experienced by Families after Brain Injury

Many families put the welfare of their loved one with a brain injury above everything else. At first, this stance is necessary. However, as time goes on, family members need to recognize that they are also changing and probably experiencing emotions and behaviours that are not consistent with their former personalities.

Anxiety

Anytime a trauma is experienced by families, anxiety and tension levels rise. Family members that tend to be excessively anxious, even under normal circumstances, may completely fall apart when an anxiety-provoking event occurs. Even more disconcerting is the situation in which the strongest and calmest family member completely breaks down.

Irritability

When family members are feeling anxious for a long period of time, they may begin to experience mood swings as a result. At times, they may react defensively or impatiently. They may develop a short fuse. This roller coaster of emotions can interfere with their enjoyment of life and keep them from seeing the positive side of things. Being on edge is understandable, but remaining on edge for the remainder of your life is not.

Denial

Denial is a double-edged sword for families. On one hand, it provides them with a needed hope that helps them get through many difficult days. However, if they hold on to the position that there is a perfect program somewhere that will allow their loved one to reach his potential, they could eventually interfere with any realistic efforts that are taking place.

Guilt & Ambivalence

Family members may feel guilty about either contributing to or not preventing what's occurred. Or others may suggest that they are to blame. These types of thoughts and words can seriously affect family interactions. As well, family members may think at times that all is going well and moving in a positive direction. At other times, they may be less encouraged and feel that everything that's being done is for nothing.

Frustration

The lifelong battle after brain injury seems to be with frustration. Even after family members have worked through other emotions, they still continue to face frustrating experiences. For example, you hear about new services that you think may be helpful, but your loved one doesn't meet the criteria.

.....Continued

Loss of Love

For those who are fortunate, their loved one's brain injury may be mild and the return of their original personality may just be a matter of time. However, others are faced with the realization that their loved one is a very different person than the one that existed prior to the brain injury. As a result, family members may go through a grieving process, just as if they actually lost this person.

Tips for coping with emotions....

- ✓ Remember that your worries should not control your life – you should control your worries.
- ✓ Participate in a local support group.
- ✓ One day at a time – use this as your motto.
- ✓ Seek counselling.
- ✓ Use relaxation techniques.
- ✓ Put off until tomorrow anything that is not absolutely necessary.
- ✓ Delegate responsibilities.
- ✓ Don't quit your job unless absolutely necessary.

- ✓ Don't feel that you have to constantly be by your loved one's side.
- ✓ Don't let yourself obsess on negative thoughts.
- ✓ Enjoy other activities such as gardening, exercising or biking.
- ✓ Go out with friends and have some fun.
- ✓ Get sleep and eat regularly.
- ✓ Recognize your limits and realize you cannot fix everything.
- ✓ Ask for help! Let friends know how they can help you. Contact people of your faith or religion. Talk to your physician or other outside sources of support about what you're experiencing.

References:

DeBoskey, D., Hecht, J., Calub, C. (1991). Educating Families of the Head Injured: A Guide to Medical, Cognitive, and Social issues. Gaithersburg, Maryland: Aspen Publishers, Inc.

Rocchio, C. & Lash, M. (2008). Life after Brain Injury: A guide for families. Lash & Associates Publishing/Training Inc.

Sask North Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) Services

Sask North Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) Services is a group of programs that offer a variety of services to residents in the Prince Albert Parkland, Kelsey Trail, Athabasca, Mamawetan Churchill River and Keewatin Yatthé Health Regions including...

Case Management: helping develop client-driven goals, coordinating health services, providing referrals, etc.

Consultation: providing information to others in regards to specific client care

Education: providing general ABI education and offering a variety of prevention activities

Independent Living Services: assisting clients to find housing, providing recreation opportunities and helping with short-term interventions to increase independence

Program Admission Criteria

- Must have a diagnosis of a **moderate to severe** brain injury supported by medical records
- Be a resident of Saskatchewan or eligible for Saskatchewan Health coverage
- Are open to working cooperatively on goal-directed rehabilitation with ABI and other service providers
- Community agencies, employers, families and schools who require resources & support are eligible as well
 - ** Priority will be given to applicants whose brain injury occurred within the past three (3) years
 - ** Congenital brain injury or one that is a result of a progressive condition will not be considered

How to Access Services

- Participation in our program is **voluntary**
- Contact us @ 306-765-6630 or toll free @ 1-866-899-9951

