

Northern Acquired Brain Injury Forum (NABIF)
Minutes of the Meeting held at Walkergate Park
Friday 14th December 2007

In Attendance

Des O'Meara (Acting Chairman), Paul Saxon, Boda Gallon, Julie Roberts, Helen McConville, Helen Hastie, John Llewellyn, Alistair McDonald, Simon Garlick, Paul Brown, Nick Doherty, Kirstie Petley, Dee Moore, Warren Maxwell, Heather Beatey, Helen Atkin, Catherine Symington, Andrew Bradford, Anne Hunter, Ella Cornforth, Simon Easton, Nick Gutteridge, Helen Brunton, Katy Collinson, Janet Grace, Joanne Hunter, Julie Rafferty, Julia Atherton, Kelly Mowbray, Anne Hunter, Vicki Gilman, Stephen McAleese, Viv Watson.

Many thanks to John Llewellyn and Janet Grace for their presentations, and apologies to them for the inadequate summaries below.

John Llewellyn, Occupational Psychologist

John Llewellyn from the Department of Employment provided an introduction to the role of the Occupational Psychology team.

Approximately 10% of referrals to DEAs relate to people with brain injury. The majority are from people with mental health, behavioural and social and emotional issues, and learning disabilities.

All referrals to the Occupational Psychology team are from DEAs. Referrals can be from age 16 years.

An assessment is carried out, which may include psychometric and clinical tests, and a report is prepared for the DEA, which will include recommendations intended to help the client find or return to work.

Recommendations may include a course of personal development through an agency such as Rehab UK or Neuro Partners, funded through Jobcentre Plus or Social Services.

John estimated that in the case of brain injury the average referral time to the Occupational Psychology team is 3-4 years post-injury.

John is happy to be contacted to provide further information and can be contacted on 0191 4513279 or 07909883135.

Janet Grace

Dr Janet Grace is Consultant Neuropsychiatrist on Ward 1, Walkergate Park (formerly the Janie Hepple Unit).

Ward 1 is an inpatient unit. The passport to admission is behavioural problems amenable to manipulation (pharmacology is avoided where possible) and a rehabilitation need.

Currently occupancy on Ward 1 is running at 9-10 out of 11 beds. If a bed is not available, emergency admissions may be accepted onto Ward 2 (formerly the Hartside Unit).

Patients are treated by a team of nurses, therapists and psychologists. The Ward Manager is Julie Natrass and Clinical Lead Sandra Stark.

Key issues at the moment are:

1. To establish a reactive and timely service, as patients admitted to Ward 1 are often very disruptive to other services.
2. To establish an agreed referral pathway within Walkergate Park.
3. To provide a "flow" of patients between the neuropsychiatric and neurorehabilitation wards at Walkergate Park, as appropriate to the patients' changing needs.
4. The lack of outpatient services and support for families after patients are discharged from Ward 1. This is primarily a funding issue.

Business Meeting

1. Apologies for Absence

Mike Barnes, Barbara Chandler, Alister Berry, Ben Townsend, Mark Tempest, Alastair White, Deborah Jackson, Ron Payne, John Davis, Fran Mayes, Helen Seabury, Andrew McDonald, Andrew Waterworth, Helen Spelman, John Walker.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

Minutes approved.

3. Matters arising

None.

4. Executive Committee

Nick Gutteridge and Julia Atherton were elected to the Executive Committee.

It was agreed that none of the existing members of the committee should stand down.

5. Service mapping

Simon Easton provided an update.

An excel database of contact names and numbers has been prepared. The next step is to contact those on the database. This task is being divided between half a dozen volunteers and it is hoped should be completed within 3 months.

Services are classified as:

Acute
Post-Acute Rehab
Non-residential
Residential

The aim is to make the database, once completed, available on or through the NABIF website. Advice is needed, but if possible the database will be searched geographically.

We need to upgrade the website and obtain a cost-estimate for setting up and maintaining the database, paying particular attention to issues of accessibility for people with ABI.

A questionnaire is in preparation for distribution to service users, to obtain their input into the database. The aim is to obtain feedback through public meetings.

We are still very short of information about children's services. Anyone who can provide information should please contact Simon.

6. Training Day

Helen Hastie provided an update.

The current plan is to provide a half-day conference in March at Walkergate Park, with the possibility of a Conference in October focusing on issues

relating to the Mental Capacity Act and protection of vulnerable adults, hopefully with Judge Denzil Lush as speaker.

Information about the March meeting will be circulated as soon as possible.

7. NSF and Regional Neurological Services Review

It was agreed we need to keep the NSF on the agenda.

Disappointingly, efforts to contact Debbie Edwards at the SHA have failed and she has not been able to attend today's meeting.

As far as we are aware she is still the person at the SHA responsible for the regional review of services, which is linked with implementation of the NSF.

It was agreed that concerted efforts need to be made to raise this issue and press the SHA for an explanation of the present position and its proposals.

The Teeside Neurological Alliance has had some success in raising this issue through the Health and Scrutiny Committees.

The Executive Committee will discuss possible approaches to advance this issue.

8. UKABIF/All Party Parliamentary Group

Stephen McAleese attended the APPG meeting in December, which unfortunately was postponed as Parliament was in recess. The opportunity was taken for Lisa Turrin of CBIT to rehearse her presentation.

Mike Barnes has joined the Executive Committee of UKABIF, joining Des O'Meara and Alister Berry. Stephen McAleese has been co-opted onto the Executive Committee.

One of the main aims this year for UKABIF is to support the setting up of new ABIFs and improve communication between the ABIFs and UKABIF.

Paul Saxon and Des O'Meara reported on the success of the UKABIF conference in November and the issues raised. There was particular interest in the paper by Mike Hope, ABI Co-ordinator for East Sussex, proposing a "Gold Standard Pathway" for the treatment, rehabilitation and care of patients with ABI. Copies of his paper are available from Paul Saxon upon request (pauls@b-h-p.com).

9. Any other business

- i). Helen McConville provided an update on the ABI team in Cumbria. A neuropsychologist, physiotherapist and case manager have been recruited. Interviews are taking place for a rehabilitation assistant. At

the moment the team has no accommodation and is not asking for referrals, but is trying to accommodate those referrals it receives. Priority will be given to clients from Cumbria with large care packages out of the area.

- ii). Kirstie Petley introduced Shy Blue Therapies. They are based in Middlesborough and Stockton, providing therapies to clients with ABI in their own homes. They are planning to expand into the north of the region and are looking for premises to provide a clinic-based service. For further information see www.skybluetherapy.co.uk or telephone 01388 529383.

10. Dates of next meetings

Meetings in 2008 will take place as follows:

Friday 4th April, 12 noon – 2pm at Walkergate Park, Newcastle Upon Tyne.

Friday 27th June, 12 noon – 2pm, venue TBA

Friday 3rd October, Carlisle – venue TBA

Friday 12th December, 12 noon – 2pm at Walkergate Park, Newcastle Upon Tyne