

# Navigator Update Fall 2014

Providing a Point of Entry for ABI Services  
Throughout Southeastern Ontario



## Looking at Caregiver Support Needs

This fall, a survey was circulated to investigate interest and attitudes towards various methods of providing support to family members of brain injury survivors. One need which was identified was the lack of a forum for family members in the Kingston area. In response to this need, we're excited to announce the Kingston Area Caregivers' Support Group, which will be held on the first Thursday each month from 3–4:30 pm.

Caregivers are invited to join us for the first meeting, held December 4 from 3–4:30 pm. Please note due to the New Year's Holiday, the next meeting will be held on January 8, 2015.

This is the first step in enhancing caregiver supports in Southeastern Ontario. If you didn't already have a chance to complete the survey and want to share your opinion, please visit [braininjuryhelp.ca/fs](http://braininjuryhelp.ca/fs)

## Local Update

The work of System Navigation has proceeded at a steady pace since our last update. Our new one-day-a-week Neuropsychiatrist, Dr. Al-Mousawi, has been witnessing a steady and ongoing increase in referrals for his service. System Navigation has followed the phasing in of this service closely, collecting information about what level of demand there is for this service, how our current infrastructure can support the process, and where further resources are required to see the program move forward. System Navigation and Community Brain Injury Services (CBIS) continue to be in conversation with the LHIN about how this might be funded on a permanent basis in Southeastern Ontario.

Several initiatives have taken place recently to address the need for follow up for individuals following concussion. This summer, System Navigation offered the first series of the four-week group to individuals who are experiencing persistent concussion symptoms. The group was run by Dr. Martin Logan, CBIS Neuropsychologist, Heather Simister, Psychology Intern, and Rachael Henry, ABI System Navigator. Group participants were taught how to deal with common issues such as fatigue, stress management, dealing with physical symptoms, and finding balance through the rehabilitation journey. Feedback from the group members was positive, and the opportunity to meet others dealing with similar challenges was a highlight. The group will be offered again in the fall of 2014, and the winter of 2015. Referrals can be initiated by contacting CBIS. The group is available to all residents of Southeastern Ontario through the use of the Ontario Telemedicine Network video link.

In addition, we have been working with Kingston General Hospital to ensure patients seen for concussion in the Emergency Department are provided with information and made aware of local community resources should they require further help. We hope to see this roll out across Southeastern Ontario over time.

There were several local brain injury events planned for the fall, including the annual CBIS Conference (Oct. 6), as well as "After and Beyond Neurotrauma" (Oct. 14), a medical-legal conference by the Ontario Neurotrauma Foundation. On **November 26th**, the Centre for Rational and

Cognitive Therapies will be hosting a free [Concussion Awareness Workshop](#) in **Brockville** with Dr. Lucie Pelland with the Queen's School of Rehabilitation and myself. Next spring will feature two unique opportunities for education including the Ontario Brain Injury Association Brain Basics Course, and "Advancing the Fundamentals" workshop for community professionals. Requests for in-service education continue to be received from various community services as well as long-term care. Thanks to those who have made understanding ABI a priority, and for those who would benefit from enhanced knowledge in the area, please get in touch to discuss how this could be arranged.

We are continually working to improve the system for people with brain injuries. If there are ways that System Navigation can support you in your work, please let us know! We're always open to providing support, consultation, or working to address unmet needs. -Rachael

## Virtual Workshops Available Online

New this fall, we will be offering "Virtual" workshops via OTN. Tune in for an hour of interactive brain injury education, through the convenience of your own computer. You can view from any computer or OTN site. Sessions will be archived and available for viewing after the fact on the OTN website. Two have already been held this fall, including **Engaging Long Term Care Residents with ABI in Activity** and **Top 5 Challenges to Meeting Brain Injury Survivor's Needs**. Both sessions were archived and can be viewed at the link [braininjuryhelp.ca/presentations/](http://braininjuryhelp.ca/presentations/). Another event is scheduled for November:

### **After a Concussion; What Everyone Needs to Know about Returning to Activity**

Monday November 24, from 12–1 pm

The days and weeks following a concussion are a critical time for recovery and careful consideration of factors is essential while returning to activity. The presentation will review current best practices in supporting individuals after a concussion, and introduce a variety of evidence-based resources. This presentation is targeted to anyone in a helping profession looking to better support individuals post-concussion. Speakers will include Developmental Pediatrician Dr. Garth Smith and Neuropsychologist Dr. Martin Logan.

## Upcoming Learning Opportunities

### **Brain Basics 2-Day Course for Frontline Healthcare Workers**

On **March 9 & 10th, 2015** The Ontario Brain Injury Association Brain Basics Course will be offered in **Kingston**. This provincial training program is designed to provide attendees with a readily understandable introduction to the world of Brain Injury. Attendees of the two-day training will receive a certificate of completion issued by the Ontario Brain Injury Association.

This is an **introductory level course** for frontline staff with little previous education in the field of brain injury.

#### **Goals include:**

- Understand the structure and function of the brain,
- Appreciate the consequences of a Acquired Brain Injury.
- Acquire practical strategies to work effectively with people living with the effects of ABI
- Understand the roles of the various people who form the care team

### **Advancing the Fundamentals Day for Allied Health Professionals**

**Also next March 2015** will feature "Advancing the Fundamentals" in Kingston. This workshop has been organized by ABI System Navigation to provide a local opportunity to enhance current knowledge of various challenges associated with brain injury. This workshop will be **suitable for professionals with a fundamental understanding of brain injury who wish to add new skills and approaches** to their repertoire. The day long workshop will include experts in the field addressing the topics of Common Cognitive Impairments, Communication, Fatigue, Mental Health, and Behaviour.

The target audience focuses on those providing rehabilitation and support within the community or long term care sectors, including **Allied Health professionals, Care Coordinators, and Case Managers**.

#### **Goals include:**

- Greater ease in identifying the effects of ABI and addressing challenges
- Integration of the use of best practices in your work
- Enhanced confidence and competence working with individuals with ABI

We'll share the registration details once available with our email distribution list. Stay tuned!

We want to do everything within our power to help interested professionals attend these opportunities. Please let us know of any barriers which might be preventing you from joining us and we'll try our best to help.

## Contact us:

**System Navigator: Rachael Henry**  
Phone: (613) 547-6969 ext. 165  
Email: [henryr1@providencecare.ca](mailto:henryr1@providencecare.ca)  
**Community Brain Injury Services**  
303 Bagot Street, LaSalle Mews, Suite  
401, Kingston, Ontario K7K 5W7



[braininjuryhelp.ca](http://braininjuryhelp.ca)

Acquired Brain Injury System Navigation  
of Southeastern Ontario

