



Navigator Update Spring 2015

*Providing a Point of Entry for ABI Services Across
Southeastern Ontario*

Coming Events

Monthly Caregiver Support Groups Available

Launched in December 2014, a caregiver support group is now available in Kingston region. The group is held the first Thursday of the month from 3—4:30 pm at the Community Brain Injury Services Office. Groups are also ongoing in Belleville, Brockville and Smiths Falls. For more information please contact the System Navigator.

Parkwoods Institute Survivor & Family Education Nights

This spring featured a weekly live broadcast from Parkwoods Institute. This educational opportunity was hosted at Pathways to Independence (Belleville), St. Mary's of the Lake Hospital (Kingston), and Community Brain Injury Services (Brockville).

An encore presentation is planned for Smiths Falls:

- June 2: Brain Injury 101 part 1
- June 9: Brain Injury 101 part 2
- June 16: Practical Strategies
- June 23: Communication & Hearing
- June 30: Nutrition, Physical Activity & Sleep
- July 7: Managing Fatigue
- July 14: Emotional Difficulties
- July 21: Survivor Stories

Local Update

The past 6 months have been busy within System Navigation, with both challenges and successes. Unfortunately the mobile neuropsychiatry clinic which launched in April 2014 has proven unsustainable utilizing current resources. This opportunity was a learning experience which provided valuable information regarding the high demand for this type of service within the region. Moving forward, System Navigation will work collaboratively with the LHIN to identify ways in which the neuropsychiatric needs of individuals with brain injury can be met close to home. There are still many possibilities to explore.

Last July, a Post Concussion Group was introduced to address the need for support and education amongst individuals with persistent concussion symptoms (defined as lasting 3 months or longer). Nearly a year later, we have offered these 4 session groups in October, January, and April, with another series planned for June. Group members report the group has been helpful in developing self awareness in areas including fatigue, symptom management, stress tolerance, and return to activity. Referrals to the group can be made through the Community Brain Injury Services.

March was a very busy month with two opportunities for brain injury education. The Ontario Brain Injury Association "Brain Basics" two day certificate course was offered March 9 & 10. Seventy-three individuals were able to take part. We received tremendous financial support from Burgeron Clifford Law Firm, who covered half of each registration fee. The feedback from participants was extremely positive, particularly the use of stories and practical examples as part of the teaching. We hope to offer this course again in coming years.

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Acquired Brain Injury System Navigation
of Southeastern Ontario

March 26 featured “Advancing the Fundamentals”, a one day workshop with 150 local professionals in attendance. With support from the LHIN, we were able to offer a wage subsidy for individuals or organizations to support them in accessing education. The day featured four expert speakers: Speech Language Pathologist Mary Ellen Thomson, Neuropsychologist Dr. Lindy Kilik, Occupational Therapist Becky Moran, and Neuropsychiatrist Dr. Adil Al-Mousawi. Do you know of someone who has a unique perspective on brain injury rehabilitation? We’re already on the lookout for next year’s speakers line up!

This spring also featured collaboration with Parkwoods Institute in London, Ontario featuring an 8 week survivor and family education series which was delivered by webcast to three sites in our region. These events were open to the public and well attended. Interested but unable to attend? All sessions have been archived to [access online](#) anytime!

We also continue to promote brain injury awareness within the community at various community services, long term care homes, and at public events. System Navigation is here to provide support, education, and consultation to all those affected by brain injury including survivors, families, and professionals. If you’re wondering where to find help, please give us a call!

Discussing Concussion....

While concussions fall on the mild end of the brain injury spectrum, the effects on a concussion sufferers life can be anything but mild. Evidence that was unavailable a short time ago is now beginning to unveil the steps required to ensure a healthy recovery. Through System Navigation we are seeing an increase in referrals from individuals following a concussion who are looking for support, including access to services within the community and the Post-Concussion Group provided through Community Brain Injury Services.

We hope to simplify the process of accessing concussion follow up care through the development of a concussion service providers guide. If you provide a service to individuals following concussion, please let us know about it. If you are currently treating individuals with complex concerns or persistent symptoms, please help them to connect with us so that we can help navigate the recovery process with them.

And please take advantage of the Ontario Neurotrauma Foundation Guides regarding Concussion:

[Guidelines for Concussion/mTBI & Persistent Symptoms: Second Edition](#)

[Guidelines for Pediatric Concussion](#)

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