

Brain Injury

A brief overview of brain injury and how you can help.

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Housekeeping

- Please keep yourself on mute we'll have time for Q&A at the end
- Please do write questions in the chat
- The presentation will be recorded and available later

Learning outcomes

- Improved understanding of the ways brain injury can present in individuals
- Understand how Headway Nottingham helps our brain injury community
- Be better able to empathise with those with brain injury-related disability
- Understand the impact of brain injury-related disability on individuals
- Understand the impact of brain injury-related disability on support networks
- Gain tips for supporting those living with brain injury

What is Brain Injury?

- Has often been split into two categories TBI (traumatic brain injury) and ABI (acquired brain injury)
- TBI's include those injuries resulting from a blow to the head road traffic collisions, falls, assaults and other accidents
- ABI's are those resulting from illnesses or medical events stroke, brain tumours, meningitis, encephalitis, aneurysms, lack of oxygen after cardiac arrest/strangulation/near drowning
- A movement towards referring to ALL brain injuries as ABI's now

How often does it happen?

EVERY 90 SECONDS
someone in the UK is admitted to hospital with a brain injury

What is Headway Nottingham?



What does brain injury mean?

Physical disabilities

- Paralysis or weakness
- Balance and co-ordination problems
- Loss of taste, smell, vision, hearing or sensation
- Extreme fatigue
- Difficulty with physical sequencing and voluntary actions
- Headaches

What's your most important memory?

What does brain injury mean?

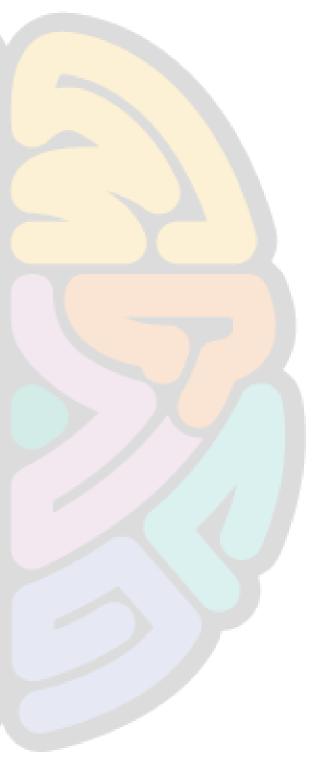
Cognitive disabilities

- Long- and short-term memory loss
- Slowed thought processes and diminished understanding
- Difficulty with word-finding
- Repetition/perseveration fixating on particular tasks and/or subject matter
- Reduced attention span and concentration particularly impacted by noisy environments
- Visuospatial difficulties
- Loss of reading and writing
- Difficulty with planning, organising, problem-solving and decision-making
- Perceptual difficulties, affecting someone's ability to see other's perspective

What does brain injury mean?

Behavioural challenges

- Lack of insight into the self and other people
- Mood swings including agitation, restlessness, aggression and irritability
- Disinhibition
- Inflexibility and obsessiveness
- Impulsivity, lacking understanding of the consequences of actions
- Self-centredness, with appearance of insensitivity or indifference
- Apathy, poor motivation and depression
- Social isolation



Steps to manage residual difficulties

- Long or short term memory loss simple aids and prompts such as phone alarms, notebooks, wall-planners, calendars or voice recordings (with permission)
- Where there is opportunity, manage the environment to avoid overstimulation which can exacerbate other issues
- Open and clear communication with individuals, asking them about their information and feedback preferences
- Where struggling with fatigue, request revisiting important conversations when most receptive
- Ask and listen. Each ABI is individual and the ways in which you can most successfully interact with the individual will vary
- Talk to someone helpline@headway.org.uk / 0808 800 22 44

How to support someone to manage their brain injury

- Learn about brain injury to foster a supportive environment
- Prompting use of aids for memory and routine where required
- Respond openly and honestly providing praise and reassurance, and constructive suggestions where necessary
- Offer practical support (whilst remaining mindful of your own workload) but...
- Don't disempower the individual or assume they can't do something
- Avoid overloading the individual with lots of direction or corrective suggestions at once
- Allow time for the individual to process the information that's been given

How to support someone to manage their brain injury

- Be understanding and do make allowances where it is reasonable to do so, but don't be afraid to challenge behaviour:
 - Ensure you have their full attention during conversations
 - Challenge behaviour immediately to overcome any confusion which may arise from memory loss
 - Avoid sarcasm or ambiguous speech
 - As far as possible, maintain the same routine during any interactions with the individual, routine is important

How to support someone to manage their brain injury

- Remember that difficulties can fluctuate
- Provide written reminders of conversations for reflection.
- Avoid escalations in difficult situations encourage those involved to remove themselves to calm down.
- Remember that the effects of brain injury can fluctuate and be exacerbated in certain situations.
- Ask! The support each person requires will be unique to them, their injury and their situation.



Any questions?