

## Acquired Brain Injury Service Training Summary

Two separate training courses have been designed to raise awareness of Brain Injury and to promote effective use of strategies that can be employed to overcome consequences of Acquired Brain Injury (ABI). From consulting care providers, service users and carers affected by brain injury, it was decided that two separate sessions would be written in order to fulfil the needs of both our service users and carers and our Partner Agencies.

The former, Family Training Pack was designed to be a short session with the principal aim of promoting discussion and the sharing of knowledge and experiences between service users and their family members. The latter session, designed for Care Providers, was written as a longer, more detailed pack with an emphasis of understanding how ABI affects individuals and their families. Delegates also learned about how they can support individuals affected with ABI more effectively. Both training packs are described in turn below.

### Training Pack 1 – Care Provider Guide

From the data collated from training needs analysis forms completed by our Partner Agencies and Care Providers, we understood there had been little or no training to date on Acquired Brain Injury. We agreed, therefore, to design an interactive training session that provided a general introduction to Acquired Brain Injury. The content also promoted the use of evidence-based techniques designed to assist individuals with ABI in working to overcome the consequences of their injuries. Learning objectives for the Care Provider course are as follows:

- *To enhance knowledge of how brain injuries are acquired and their nature.*
- *To understand the possible consequences of acquired brain injury (ABI).*
- *Gain insight about how these consequences can affect individuals and friends/family.*
- *To consider practical day-to-day strategies that can be employed when working with individuals with brain injury.*

This session also included an 'Understanding challenging behaviour' component. At the request of our Care Providers who attended our pilot sessions, this section was later modified and extended to provide a more comprehensive focus on challenging behaviour - a common, yet complex consequence of ABI.

### Training Pack 2 – Family Guide

This pack was presented at the first 'Brain Injury Service Open Information Day', attended by over 35 people, including service users, family members and representatives from local carers groups, employment support services (*STRIVE*) and the Healthy Living Initiative. A 50-minute 'Family Guide to ABI' session, which was presented during this Open Day, was built under the advisement of one service user and his carers who are now keen to assist in the delivery of future family based training sessions. The learning objectives for this session were agreed as follows:

- *To provide information on the nature and consequences of brain injury.*
- *To outline methods to overcome the effects of ABI.*
- *To learn from each other and about the local support networks available to you.*

### Future Directions

With over one hundred individuals trained in one of two sessions detailed above, the next stage for the training programme will now be solely determined by those who use the Brain Injury service. This vision includes seeing those with ABI being consulted about their individual needs, in terms of learning and information, and to promote an environment where we can learn from each other. Service users will therefore drive the future direction of training by suggesting future learning areas, which have been found to require more detailed focus. It is the overall aim therefore, to allow service users themselves to support each other to learn and become actively involved in the delivery of future training sessions.

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