

Kent Acquired Brain Injury Forum (KABIF)

MINUTES

of the meeting held on 19 January 2005 at 7pm

at the offices of Thomson Snell & Passmore, Lonsdale Gate, Tunbridge Wells,

In Attendance:

Louise Brown, Paralegal, Thomson Snell & Passmore
Jan Cartmell, Service Manager, The Regard Partnership
Gerhard Florschutz, Director, Raphael Medical Centre
Tim Gilbert, Brain Injury Case Manager from Independent Living Solutions
Deborah Harding, Unit Co-ordinator, West Kent Neuro-Rehabilitation Unit
Mike Hope, ABI Coordinator for East Sussex, Brighton and Hove
Judy Horwood, Chairman, Headway Tunbridge Wells and District
Bhavna Jones, Service Development Manager, Unsted Park Hospital
Sarah Keily, Trainee Solicitor, Thomson Snell & Passmore
Jacqui Locke, Head Teacher, West Kent Hospital School Service
Chris Merriman, Website Designer
Tony Merriman, Solicitor, ASB Law
Pam Munro, Founder and Volunteer of Tunbridge Wells and District Headway
Frances Pierce, Solicitor, Thomson Snell & Passmore (Chair)
Dennis Smith, President of Tunbridge Wells and District Headway
Jennifer Stockley, Independent Paediatric Neuro-psychologist, Tadworth Court
Susan Ware, Independent Speech & Language Therapist

1. Apologies for absence

Sophia Chung, Executive Director, S C Support and Care Services Limited
Diane Cloke, Retired Chartered Physiotherapist
Rosanne Corben, Chairman of Maidstone Weald PCT
Rosalind Eastwood, Head Teacher, East Kent Hospitals School Service
Julie Reynolds, Chairwoman, CBIT Kent
Julia Selby, Speech & Language Therapist, Adult East Kent Coastal Teaching PCT
Janet Walker, Physiotherapist and parent of daughter with ABI
Andrew Watson, Solicitor, Thomson Snell & Passmore

2. Approval of Minutes of Meeting of 3 November 2004

These were approved

3. Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting of 3 November 2004

None

4. Information exchange

Pam Munro said that she and Ella Squires are delighted to have booked Kit Malia and Anne Brannigan for a two-day course entitled “Cognitive Rehabilitation Workshop For Carers” on 5 and 6 October 2007. This is for carers for people with brain injury, to help them cope with the situation they are in. It was recently run in Sussex. Sponsorship is now sought to fund the event and a venue needs to be found. The cost will be £2,435 for 30 people to attend, although this could be stretched to 50 if the need was there. It was felt that this was an ideal project for KABIF to support and that we should run something on our website about it straightaway. With regard to a venue for the workshop, discussion ensued about possibilities for this; it was felt that somewhere neutral but comfortable, such as Aylesford Priory, would be ideal; fortunately there is plenty of time to think about this. Gerhard Florschutz offered to cover the cost of lunches for the conference.

Judy Horwood said that Headway were very aware of a gap in social support for young people with ABI. She had seen a talk recently given by a young man from Belfast about the Star Project which has been very successful in meeting the needs of young people with ABI. Headway in conjunction with CBIT have therefore booked a room at the Royal Wells Inn on 17 February and letters have gone out to all young people they know to come to the Royal Wells on that day and say what it is that they would like. It would cover the 14-35 age group and will be an information gathering event. Judy suggested that we all think of young people whom we could invite to such an event.

She also mentioned the 60s and 70s disco at High Rocks for CBIT and Headway taking place on 19 March. See the KABIF website for further details – www.kabif.org.uk

Jan Cartmell said that, although they are based in Surrey, they tend to liaise with Headway in Tunbridge Wells as it is closest to them.

Mike Hope talked about the forthcoming SABIF conference with specific reference to the following: the ABI Pathway – the progress of a person with a head injury from hospital admission onwards, their transition into rehab and funding difficulties. Dr Richard Greenwood will be talking about ABI from the NHS perspective; Mike Oddy will be talking about neuro-rehab in the private sector and after lunch there will be talks from survivors and carers, followed by workshops regarding e.g. the involvement of social services.

Mike also mentioned the Brain Injury Social Work Group conference on 11 April in Sheffield, called “Mind The Gap” and concerns the transition from rehab back to the community. There is information about this on their website – www.biswg.co.uk

5. Neuro-Rehab Stakeholders Group - Debbie Harding

Debbie Harding said that KABIF have been invited to talk to the Neuro-Rehab Stakeholders Group. She also said that, as a result of developments with neuro-rehab in West Kent, there is now an opportunity to co-locate and work with Headway. This is a great opportunity as it will lead towards autonomous but collaborative services.

**6. Website www.kabif.org.uk - Frances Pierce
Forthcoming events for the website**

Frances explained that the website had begun by getting it set up in plain format. Chris Merriman, who has been assisting with the design of the website, which was shown to us on a projector, then took us through each of the areas on the site as follows:-

- Home Page
- Aims (terms of reference)
- Forthcoming events
- Useful links
- Members and contacts
- Minutes
- Reports and research

It was pointed out by Debbie Harding that we should have a disclaimer on the site which states that we do not necessarily endorse those organisations to which we have links.

It was also suggested that non-verbal icons would be good and also larger text. Chris said that these ideas were in hand.

He said that the website committee has been working hard on the website and it will ensure that its references are constantly updated.

KABIF tendered their gratitude to Chris for his hard work with regard to the website.

7. Mapping exercise report – Frances Pierce

Frances reported that the sub-committee will meet on 7 February 2005.

8. The Raphael Centre – Dr Gerhard Florschutz

Gerhard gave us a talk about the work of the Raphael Centre.

He said that it began 21 years ago and was an attempt to develop a holistic centre. They take a variety of patients but are increasingly dealing with ABI patients. Patients are mainly acute but there are also the “walking wounded” who need a new approach to their road to recovery.

A psychiatric unit has recently been added so that patients with underlying problems who do not fit anywhere else can be diagnosed. A local psychiatrist assists.

Over the last three years work has been at the acute end, i.e. patients who are still in a coma in hospital and are deteriorating. The hospitals do not have the expertise to deal with them. It is the Centre’s job to move them on to rehabilitation.

About eight years ago the severe problem of bed-blocking in hospitals came to the fore. Patients were rehabilitating up to a point but their entire social framework had broken down, they possibly had no home to go back to anymore and were in a no-man's land. So Raphaels opened a unit in Brighton for them. Brighton was chosen as it is a young person's place with good transport and employment prospects. It is a 31-bed unit but a similar problem with bed-blocking has arisen. The Centre cannot move people on when they have gone as far as they can with them, so they provide their own final stage of living in the community as a stepping-stone to finding their own accommodation.

So the service provided goes from the acute stage to independence. They have a team with all the usual facilities; a resident physician, consultants, visiting consultants from Germany, specialists in neuro-rehabilitation and neuro-psychiatry, plus all the usual therapy teams supported by a nursing team.

Short-term respite is provided and is usually funded by the social services. Patients are also PCT-funded.

9. Any other business

None

Next meeting

This will be held on 24 February 2005 at 2.30 at the RBLI.