

History

KABIF owes its existence to Pam Munro, co-founder of Headway Tunbridge Wells & District and now a local Headway volunteer. She persuaded a busy catastrophic injury solicitor, Frances Pierce from Rix & Kay LLP, to start this Forum for the benefit of the county of Kent.

The Forum exists because of its members' support. It started with a small steering committee consisting of Ros Eastwood, Mary Ryan, Frances Pierce, Tony Merriman and Pam Munro. At the outset the Forum was assisted greatly by Mike Hope (who was the Acquired Brain Injury Co-ordinator for East Sussex, Brighton & Hove) and its sister organisation, the Sussex Acquired Brain Injury Forum.

The Forum meets at venues across the county and seeks to improve access and knowledge of acquired brain injury services. The members are both friendly and committed to the cause and enjoy a wealth of experience between them.

The Forum serves adults as well as children and enjoys regular presentations from people working in the field.

Kent is a large demographic county and its services are widespread. The Forum has worked on a mapping exercise to try and make the selection of the services available easier for those who need access to them. See www.kabif.org.uk and click on Find a Service or Facility.

KABIF's Aims

1. To develop, foster and facilitate greater awareness and understanding of current services and proposed developments in the field of acquired brain injury (primarily through information sharing and networking).
2. To be proactive in developing opportunities for people with acquired brain injury, their carers and other interested parties to obtain accurate and useful information and training related to acquired brain injury.
3. To be a focal point for consultation between the community, the health service, social services and voluntary organisations as well as the private sector and education department on the development and commissioning of services in the field of acquired brain injury throughout Kent.
4. To contribute to the development of life-long care pathways for people of all ages with acquired brain injury, with a view to maximising their independence.
5. To contribute to the advancement and development of localised community services for people with acquired brain injury.
6. To promote education and training in acquired brain injury for professionals working in that field.

Why Not Join Us?

There are still a number of people who work in the county of Kent who are not part of the Forum. KABIF is very keen to ensure that the Forum is as widely represented as possible, if you have experience in the field of acquired brain injury we urge you to join us.

Membership is free and the meetings alternate between afternoons and evenings and at locations across the county. There will be a meeting near you. We encourage you to come along.

KABIF has already raised awareness in the county of 'hidden' services and will, with the support of those involved in this field, continue that work into the future.

Every member is a volunteer and every meeting is an experience where something new can be learnt. You will be given a very warm welcome and will be joining a group of people who all have the same thing in common. We are committed to ensuring that those who suffer from acquired brain injury in this county are heard and seen and are given access to appropriate rehabilitation and support.



Achievements

So far KABIF has:

1. developed and facilitated greater awareness of acquired brain injury services in Kent;
2. been the focal point for consultation between the health service, social services, voluntary organisations and the private sector. We have helped to promote training and education by holding regular meetings facilitating an exchange of ideas and useful information. Meetings included speakers in the field of acquired brain injury;
3. contributed to the development of community services for those with brain injury by launching a project to focus on the needs of young adults living with brain injuries within the context of housing/independent living, vocational training/return to work and help with drug and alcohol related problems;
4. constructed a website to provide further information for our members, which includes mapped services available in Kent; and
5. ensured a warm welcome was extended to everyone who attended meetings and invited everyone who was involved in this field in the county.

Website

www.kabif.org.uk

Our website is updated regularly and contains some useful information including:

- KABIF's aims;
- Our History;
- Useful links to brain injury organisations in Kent and the rest of the UK;
- Members' Contact details;
- Minutes of Past Meetings;
- Information on the Consequences of Brain Injury; and
- Find a Service or Facility.

How do I join KABIF?

Please go to www.kabif.org.uk and click on 'Join KABIF' or contact:

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KABIF is a group of acquired brain injury survivors, carers, front-line professionals and policy-makers who wish to advance the brain injury agenda in the county of Kent.

www.kabif.org.uk