



INSWABI Progress Report

Vol 3, Issue 1

January - June 2009

Dear INSWABI members

It gives us great pleasure to provide the 5th Progress Report for the International Network for Social Workers in Acquired Brain Injury.

In this progress report, we are able to outline progress on a number of fronts. The Family Outcome Measure is finalised and we are expecting to release the measure with a User Manual in September. As you will also read below, initial work has started on the Systematic Literature Review and the Psychosocial Assessment Framework Project. We have exciting news about the Satellite Symposium in

Dublin in 2010. We feature a new journal that is about to be launched as well as an upcoming activity in the UK. Our membership continues to grow – we now have over 90 members. Finally in previous progress reports we highlighted profiles of the INSWABI co-convenors (Report No. 2), two of our UK members (Report No.3), and two of our Canadian members (Vol 2, Issue 2). In this report, we feature profiles of two of our Australian members. Enjoy the read.

Dr Grahame Simpson
Co-convenor

Patti Simonson
Co-convenor

1. Family Outcome Measure project ready for imminent release

A long 3 year journey is about to reach an important milestone. If you have been following our Progress reports you will know that a group of INSWABI members from Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United Kingdom have been working to develop a new Family Outcome Measure (FOM).

I am pleased to report that the measure is now finalised. It will have 42 items grouped into seven subscales. The subscales are:

Subscale Title	Number of Items	Higher Scores Represent
Relative coping	8	Better Relative Coping
Family Cohesion	6	Increased family closeness
Impact of support (Burden)	8	Decreasing levels of burden
Client (with TBI) adjustment	5	Improved client (with TBI) adjustment
Adequacy of service support	5	Sufficient levels of service support
Family Resilience	5	Increased degree of resilience
Sustainability of support	5	Longer term support is sustainable

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The FOM will have a four-point scale (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, and Strongly Agree). Because family functioning is multi-dimensional, we will not be able to combine all the scales and create a single FOM score, but will have separate scores for each subscale. The subscales will be easy to score – it will simply involve adding up the responses from each of the items in that subscale (SD=0, D=1, A=2, SA=3).

We are just doing some final formatting and creating a brief two-page manual on how to use the scale, as well as a scoring sheet. So keep an eye out, we will let INSWABI members know when it becomes available.

The scale has been developed on a population of people with traumatic brain injury (TBI). Our next task will be to trial it with families supporting people with other forms of acquired brain injury.

2. Meet two of our INSWABI members in Sydney Australia



Martine Simons is a Senior Social Worker – Clinical Specialist, in brain injury at The Children's Hospital at Westmead in Sydney. The hospital is one of the three tertiary paediatric hospitals in

New South Wales, Australia. She has worked in the area of outpatient paediatric brain injury rehabilitation for 16 years within a multidisciplinary team. Martine is currently the Convenor of the Social Workers in Brain Injury Practice Group of the Australian Association of Social Workers (NSW Branch) and a member of INSWABI.

In addition to focusing on the long-term issues of the impact of Acquired Brain Injury for children and families, Martine's interests include: grief and loss and adjustment to disability, child

protection, advocacy and public policy for paediatric brain injury and social work practice.

She has researched and published in paediatric acquired brain injury, social work practice and sexuality. She is also a member of the Shaken Baby Prevention Project which combines primary prevention, health promotion and research to prevent injury, disability and death from shaking infants see:

http://www.chw.edu.au/parents/kidshealth/crying_baby/.



Marianne Bush is a senior social worker in the Liverpool Brain Injury Rehabilitation Unit in Sydney where she works in the community team. She has extensive clinical experience in the field of disability

including 15 years in the field of TBI. She has particular interests in ethics, the interface between social work and the law and young people with disabilities in nursing homes.

Social work in brain injury is a relatively small and specialised area. Marianne values the global collegiality and opportunity for learning and research membership of INSWABI provides. She has researched in TBI on state, national and international projects including the Family Outcome Study.

She has been an active member of the Australian Association of Social Workers, undertaking a leadership role across the ethics portfolio. She led the last major review of the Association's Code of Ethics.

Marianne holds a Masters in Ethics and Legal Studies and is an accredited member of the AASW.

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3. Exciting News – the drums are beginning the beat in Dublin!



There have been some exciting developments in respect of providing a focus on SW in ABI at the 6th International Conference for Social Work in Health and Mental Health which will take place in Dublin from 28th June to 2nd July 2010.

The conference organisers have agreed that we will be able to hold a Satellite Symposium focusing on Social Work practice in ABI and rehabilitation. This Symposium will run over a whole day. The morning will involve a 3-hour workshop on Contemporary Developments for SW in ABI: Evidence-base for SW practice, core competencies and legal/ethical issues. This will be followed by lunch and then an afternoon tour of the National Rehabilitation Hospital in Dublin. We will finish the day with an INSWABI dinner. In addition to the whole day Satellite Symposium, there will one or two parallel sessions on other days at the conference with free papers addressing different aspects of current research and practice in the field of SW and ABI. We will provide more information about these sessions later this year.

This will be the most concentrated examination of SW practice in ABI that has ever been organised, and provides a wonderful opportunity for us to reflect on our own practice and to hear from other SWers about their practice and/or research in this field. It will be a great

opportunity for social workers to mix with colleagues from other countries and share their experiences. So start planning now so that you can make it to Dublin in 2010,

4. Systematic Literature Review

Work has commenced on the systematic review of the literature into SW practice in ABI. INSWABI members Andy Mantell (UK), Thomas Strandberg (Sweden), Martha Vungkhanching (USA), Patti Simonson (UK), Bronwyn Stephenson (NZ) and Graham Simpson (Australia) are involved.

Andy and Grahame have been reviewing various databases to identify all possible articles, books and book chapters on the topic of Social Work in ABI. To date, over 20 articles addressing different aspects of SW practice in ABI have been identified. When we have tracked down as many articles as we can, the team will start to review and evaluate the articles so that we will build up a profile of what are the current parameters of SW knowledge and practice in ABI.

5. Psychosocial assessment

As a first step in developing a Psychosocial Assessment Framework, Bronwyn Stephenson (NZ) is currently conducting a review of how 'psychosocial' is defined in the TBI literature. She is doing this as part of her Diploma in Disability Studies at Massey University in New Zealand.

The next step will be to do a survey of INSWABI members about what elements they include in their psychosocial assessments and whether there are any assessment tools that they currently use.

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6. SW in ABI training

A group of 8 social workers recently met in Sydney Australia to finalise a draft outline for a series of four workshops (each covering 6 hours of instruction) that will provide a training program for SW practice in ABI. Some examples of the topics that the workshops aim to cover are listed below:

- (i) Introduction to ABI (increase neuroliteracy, epidemiology of ABI, trajectories of ABI)
- (ii) SW in neurology: Theory and Practice I (theories of health/disability, context of practice – evidence based, multidisciplinary team, and approaches to assessment and goal setting)
- (iii) SW in neurology: Theory and Practice II (Theories of recovery/rehabilitation, transitions, intervention modalities)
- (iv) SW in neurology: Societal, ethical and legal issues (Theory – paternalism vs autonomy, capacity and risk assessment, substitute decision-making, violence in relationships).

We are hoping this material may eventually form the core for a postgraduate diploma for SW in neurology.

7. A new Journal is announced

In an exciting development INSWABI members Dr Andy Mantell and Patti Simonson are launching a new journal called 'Journal of Social Care and Neurodisability' in 2010. The journal has a focus on the sharing of information and good practices in the advances in the rehabilitation, treatment and care of people who have neurological conditions.

It will include peer-reviewed articles with clear implications for practice; case studies; reviews in policy, practice and legislation; critical analysis of assessment tools, ethics, and practice dilemmas; reviews of books and resources; as well as international perspectives and learnings.

If you want to find out how you can contribute to the journal or to subscribe, please contact Dr Andy Mantell at andymantell@chi.ac.uk or Patti Simonson at psimonson@rhn.org.uk.

8. Brain Injury Social Work Group UK 9th Annual Brain Injury Legal Seminar

The Brain Injury Social Work Group UK is organising a one-day seminar on Thursday 8th October 2009 in London with the title: Your Life, Your Rights. The seminar has been organised by Patti Simonson and has an impressive array of speakers from the legal profession and the field of ABI covering topics including Children with brain injury; Withdrawal/limitation of treatment – the role of the courts versus medical profession; Vocational rehabilitation in the UK; Disability and Discrimination in Employment – the rights of people with ABI; Housing and Care Support; Mental Capacity and the role of a Deputy; and the role of Case Management in litigation to name some of the topics. Contact Patti Simonson for more details or to find out how to register (see her contact details below).

9. New developments in Western Australia

Jan Roberts (INSWABI member, Aus) reports that work has commenced in Western Australia to examine whether the government should introduce a no-fault compensation scheme for people sustaining traumatic injury. While such schemes can address the inequity that arises from fault-based compensation schemes, they can introduce new bureaucratic systems that may not be responsive to the needs of individuals. So watch this space. If you want to find out more, contact Jan at her e-mail address jan@networkcms.com.au.

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10. INSWABI website

The Brain Injury Social Work Group UK is kindly hosting the INSWABI web pages.

If you log onto www.biswg.co.uk, you will see the INSWABI button on the left hand side of the page.

11. Pass this on.

Please circulate the progress report to any of your colleagues who you think might be interested.

12. Interested in joining INSWABI?

Please contact

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