



INSWABI Progress Report

July-December 2007

Dear INSWABI members

Please find the 2nd progress report for the International Network for Social Workers in Acquired Brain Injury (INSWABI).

Overall, we have made good progress and in fact, outstripped the initial work plan that was proposed as part of the original INSWABI prospectus.

1. Membership profile

We have made significant progress in building up our membership profile. We now have a total of 70 members from 9 countries.

The main work role for the majority of members is as practitioners. Therefore, we are a real

grass-roots network which is a real positive, because it means that we will be able to address issues that are relevant to social workers at the coal face.

Finally, the largest group of members work predominantly with people who have traumatic brain injury, followed by practitioners working with a mixed ABI population.

2. E-mail contact list

I want to thank Brigitte Lane, who is one of the research assistants at the BIRU, for establishing the INSWABI E-mail network, and entering everyone's membership details.

COUNTRY	
Australia	23
India	3
Singapore	1
Sweden	4
USA	1
Canada	11
New Zealand	4
UK	22
Ireland	1
Total	70

MAIN WORK ROLE	
Practitioner	56
Practitioner & other (Includes service management, vocational evaluation)	6
Service management	1
Solicitor	1
Unknown	1
Research/Education	5
Total	70

ABI AREAS	
Principally TBI	34
Mixed ABI population and other conditions	8
Other	
*Principally TBI; Mixed ABI population	2
*Principally Stroke	1
*Specialise exclusively in other ABI group (organically acquired BI; progressive neurological: MS)	1
Mixed ABI population	24
Total	70

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3. 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.

We are hoping that the website will become a focal point for members as INSWABI develops.

At the moment, the INSWABI webpage includes

- ◆ Information about the network
- ◆ PDF files for the INSWABI mission and membership form
- ◆ PowerPoint slides for the presentations made as part of the SW and ABI symposium that was held as part of the 2006 International SW Conference in Health and Mental Health held in Hong Kong.

4. Project task list

In the second half of 2007 we circulated a list of potential tasks that INSWABI members might like to address.

Based on member's responses, we selected 5 tasks:

- ◆ Address the training needs of social workers practising in ABI
- ◆ Apply to the organisers of the 2010 International Social Work Conference in Health and Mental Health to run a symposium on social work in rehabilitation and ABI
- ◆ Establishing mechanisms to address clinically complex cases
- ◆ Run an INSWABI side meeting at the 2008 International Brain Injury Association Congress in Lisbon

- ◆ Start to develop a network of social workers who are conducting research in the field of ABI

5. Address the training needs of social workers practising in ABI

A group of 16 volunteers from 5 countries (AUS, CAN, NZ, US, UK) indicated interest in addressing this topic. We have done an initial round of introductions and have commenced the brainstorming process. This is taking longer than had originally been anticipated (I think we are all still on a learning curve) and we will now aim to have completed the first stage of the brainstorming by the end of March 08.

6. Application for Satellite symposium at 2010 International SW Conference

Grahame Simpson (AUS), Thomas Strandberg (SWE), Martha Vungkhanching (US), Patti Simonson (UK) and Anne O'Loughlin (IRE) all collaborated on an Expression of Interest which has now been submitted to the Organising committee for the 2010 International Conference for Social Work in Health and Mental Health which will be held in Dublin.

We are hoping that by running such a symposium, we will be able to highlight the area of SW in ABI and have a valuable opportunity for practitioners to come together and share knowledge, network and exchange ideas.



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7. Establishing mechanisms to address clinically complex cases

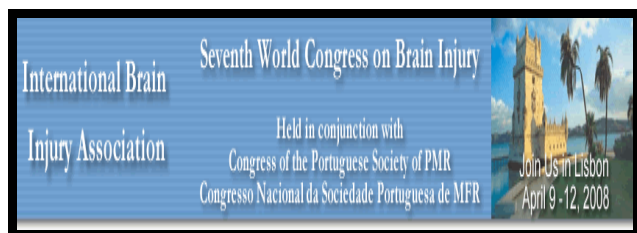
A smaller group of 6 volunteers from 3 countries (AUS, CAN, UK) agreed to look at this topic. The group has been a little slow to get started, and I think that this is a reflection of the

number of other activities that are going on. We can make a decision in early 2008 about how to progress this particular working topic.

8. INSWABI meeting at the International Brain Injury Association (IBIA) Seventh World Congress on Brain Injury in Lisbon, April 2008.

INSWABI members Patti Simonson (UK), Guy Soulsby (UK), Kim Russell (UK) and Grahame Simpson (AUS) have all had abstracts accepted for the upcoming IBIA conference.

It is hoped that we will be able to connect with other social workers attending the congress and hold an INSWABI side-meeting on the Friday (11th April) evening.



9. Start to develop a network of social workers who are conducting research in the field of ABI

As a first step, we are aiming to upload the profiles of social workers who are conducting research in the area of ABI and who may be able to act as a resource for other INSWABI members interested in research.

The first four research profiles have been uploaded on the INSWABI website.

10. Meet the INSWABI co-convenors

Grahame Simpson PhD

Grahame graduated in social work from the University of Sydney in 1984. He has worked continuously at the Brain Injury Rehabilitation Unit at Liverpool Hospital since 1987 in a number of roles including community team social worker, social work team leader, and since 2000, as research officer / research team leader. The unit specialises in treating people with traumatic brain injury (see www.swsahs.nsw.gov.au/biru).

He completed a Masters of Counselling at Macquarie University in 1994 and his PhD back at the University of Sydney in 2004. He is currently completing a postdoctoral fellowship. Grahame was one of the founding members of the Social Workers in Brain Injury, a Special Interest Practice Group of the Australian Association of Social Workers (NSW Branch) in 1989.



Patti Simonson

Patti Simonson is a registered social worker with extensive social work experience in the statutory, independent and voluntary sectors in the UK. She is Head of Social Work at the Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability in London, a national organisation providing specialised rehabilitation and longer term healthcare for people with complex acquired brain injury and other neurological disabilities

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She is Chair of the Brain Injury Social Work Group which provides information and education for professionals working in all areas of brain injury. She is an Executive Committee Member of the United Kingdom Acquired Brain Injury Forum and is a member of the steering committee of the Acquired Brain Injury Forum for London launched in 2007.



Patti has undertaken advanced post qualifying social work training at Kingston University to compliment her practitioner and management roles and has a practice teacher award.

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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