



Supporting Child Relatives of Adults with Acquired Brain Injury: A Resource for Rehabilitation Teams

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Background

“I think my brother gave mum a stroke because he slept in her bed and had his leg pushed against her neck all night” (5 year old boy)

“I knew what was happening when mum went to hospital first; but now I don’t know...is it the same mum coming home or is she different?” (8 year old girl)

- ▶ Many NRH patients are parents: e.g. mother with ABI has young children at home whom she doesn’t remember; father with ABI who is unable to speak to his child
- ▶ NRH Brain Injury program: IDT works with patients with ABI and helps them to achieve goals in order to improve their quality of life.
- ▶ Increased emphasis on family focused rehabilitation - need to establish meaningful goals with patients
- ▶ Need to have a more consistent approach to including child relatives
- ▶ Desire to do research with a practical application and to develop an intervention to improve the service

“I worry I’m not doing enough to mind my mum” (9 year old girl)



Aims and objectives



- ▶ To strengthen the family approach to rehabilitation
- ▶ To support staff to be more inclusive of child relatives
- ▶ To provide staff with the tools and confidence to work with children
- ▶ To help staff support family members to consider and meet the needs of their children during the rehabilitation process



Methodology

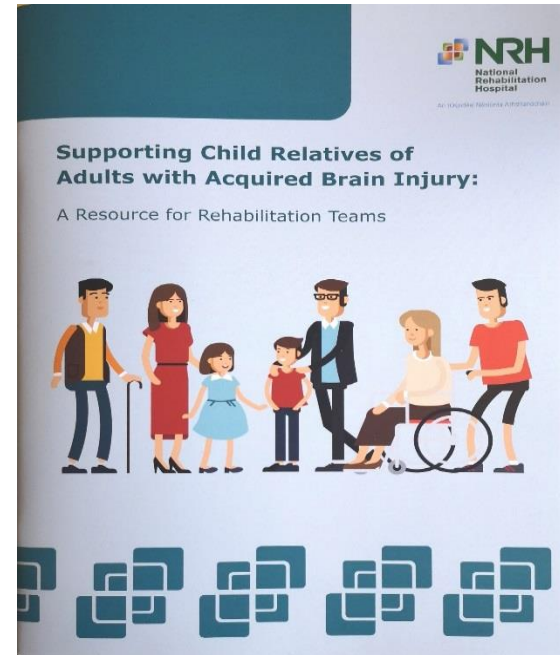


- ▶ Scoping literature search of current research on the impact of acquired brain injury on child relatives and on parenting capacity
- ▶ Consultation with social workers as ‘expert clinicians’
- ▶ Consultation with members of the interdisciplinary team
- ▶ Draft pack piloted for 6 months
- ▶ Final pack launched in October 2018

Contents of the pack

Section 1 Introduction

- ▶ Impact of brain injury on child relatives
- ▶ Impact of brain injury on parenting capacity
- ▶ Rehabilitation benefits of promoting resilience
- ▶ Benefits of family focused rehabilitation



Contents of the pack (contd)

Section 2 Interventions

- ▶ Helping children cope with brain injury
- ▶ Common questions asked by young children (up to age 12 approx.) and how to answer them
- ▶ Common questions asked by teenagers, and how to answer them

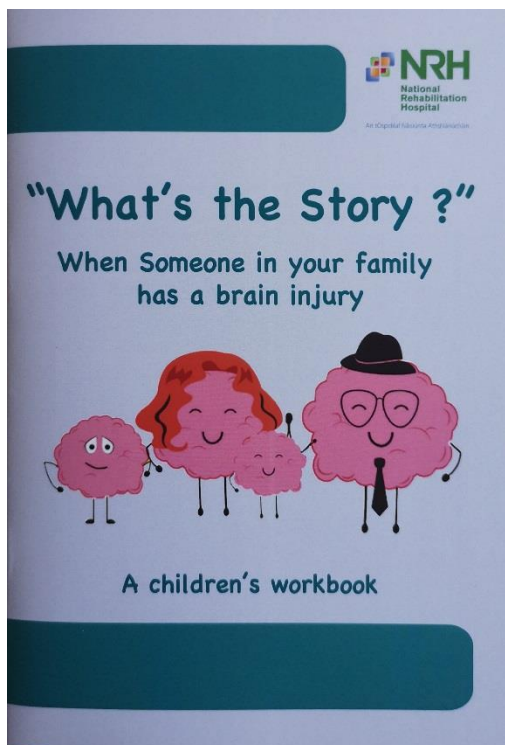
Contents of the pack (contd)

Section 3 Resources

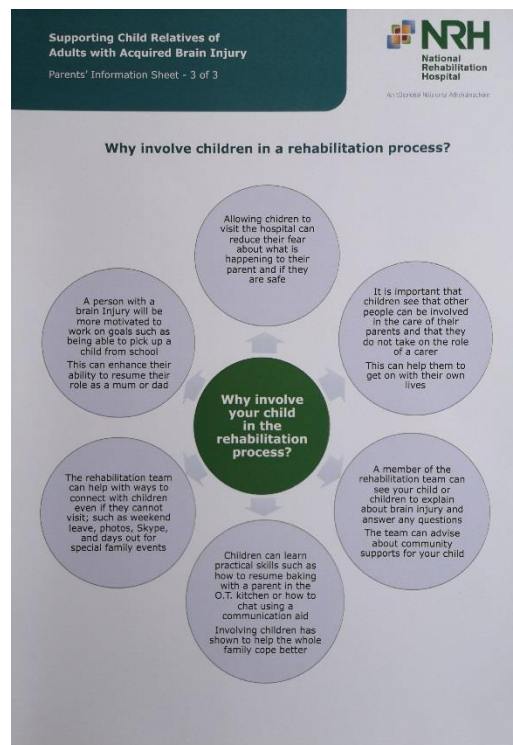
- ▶ Resources for Children of Parents with Acquired Brain Injury
- ▶ Information leaflet: How a child may be affected when a parent or close relative has a brain injury
- ▶ Information Leaflet: Tips to support a child relative
- ▶ Information Leaflet: Benefits of including children in the rehabilitation process
- ▶ Child support services in Ireland

Contents of the pack: Appendices

Children's workbook



Handouts for Parents



Feedback and Outcomes



- ▶ Initial response to pack very positive
- ▶ Plan to survey staff to evaluate its effectiveness in 2020
- ▶ A marked change to social work practice with more social workers engaging in sessions with child relatives
- ▶ More consideration of parenting tasks when setting rehabilitation goals

Future plans



- ▶ Plan to adapt the pack for non-injured parents and adult relatives of adults with acquired brain injury
- ▶ Plan to develop a resource pack for child relatives of adults with a spinal cord injury



Thank You