

BRAIN INJURY SUPPORT IN NORTHERN IRELAND

REHABILITATION



REHABILITATION

Rehabilitation is a process of change aimed at helping brain injured persons regain former skills, compensate for skills lost and to achieve the optimum levels of physical, cognitive and social competence. This is followed by integration into the most suitable environment.

Rehabilitation is a continuous process involving family and friends of the injured person, working on recovery of function lost by the injured person and helping the family adapt and cope with the longer term outcome of the injury.

Research suggests that patients who make the best recovery are those whose family is actively involved and can maintain this informal rehabilitation at home.

The greatest physical improvement generally occurs in the first one to two years. Improvements in cognitive and neurobehavioural functions, may continue at a slower rate for a number of years after injury.

WHO'S WHO ON THE REHABILITATION TEAM?

As the effects of a brain injury can be wide-ranging, there may be a number of different specialists involved in a person's rehabilitation.

This core group of medical and nursing staff is called a Multi Disciplinary Team, and ensures that every aspect of the patient's brain injury receives proper attention.

- Consultant in Rehabilitation Medicine
- Clinical Neuropsychologist
- Neuropsychiatrist
- Nurses
- Ward Manager
- Deputy Ward Managers
- Health Care Assistants
- Physiotherapist
- Occupational Therapist
- Social Workers
- Speech and Language Therapists

Other specialist health care professionals may be involved in the rehabilitative process.

REHABILITATION UNITS

There are four inpatient rehabilitation units in Northern Ireland, each providing a specialist service. Following a referral assessment, generally by rehabilitation medicine, and discussion with the family, the brain injured person will be admitted to the unit that will serve their needs most appropriately.

Within each unit, the management of the patient will be provided by the Multi Disciplinary Team in full agreement with the family, based upon a treatment plan that addresses the needs of patient and family.

COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMMES

Community Rehabilitation programmes involving the Multi Disciplinary Team are carried out in the patient's home or another suitable community setting. Once the patient has been referred, a member of the team will meet the individual to undertake the initial assessment. The team may complete further assessments after this.

The team will work closely with the individual and family to ensure the development of a rehabilitation plan. They will discuss appropriate goals and work closely together to make sure the rehabilitation plan meets the individual's needs. As well as individual therapy, the team will offer advice, support and education to carers and family to enable them to be involved as appropriate. For further information on your local Community Brain Injury Team, contact your local Health and Social Care Trust.



Health and Social Care Board

12-22 Linenhall Street
Belfast BT2 8BS
enquiry.hscb@hscni.net
T: 0300 555 0115

www.hscboard.hscni.net