

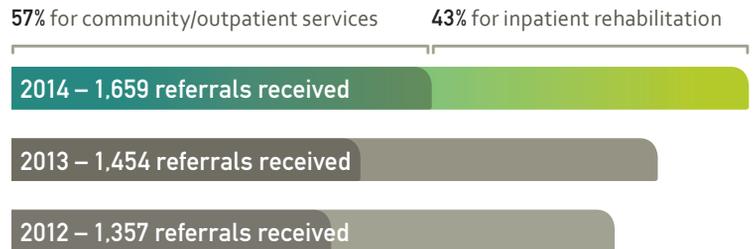


making
connections
for
change

connecting people to services

The Toronto ABI Network provides a forum for individuals, families, service providers and government to talk about the services and supports needed for those living with the effects of acquired and traumatic brain injuries; this includes connecting people to services.

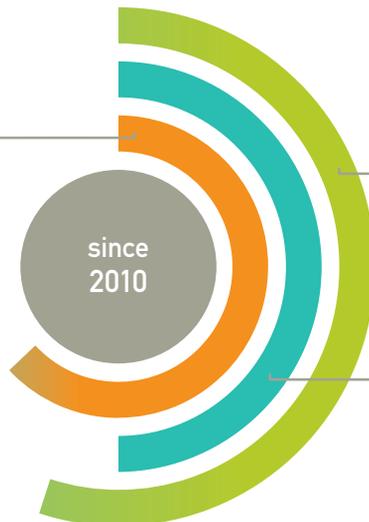
Connecting people to the services they need is an important aspect of the Network's mandate. We manage a centralized wait list for inpatient ABI rehabilitation programs across Toronto and coordinate referrals to a variety of other community based services including outpatient rehabilitation, community based supports, mental health services, and recreational, vocational and supportive housing programs, among others.



There has been a

63%

increase in referrals to inpatient rehabilitation



The total number of referrals has increased by

55%

There has been a

50%

increase in referrals for community/outpatient services

Data reflects referrals received by the Toronto ABI Network only and is not an indication of incidence or prevalence data. Referrals received for more than one service are counted for each service type.

a message from the chair and executive director

'Making connections for change' speaks so vividly to the work of the Toronto ABI Network. Every day finds us working together with individuals and organizations from the ABI community, health care, social services, legal services, shelters and the public and private sectors with the goal of influencing policy and service changes that will help improve the lives of those living with the effects of ABI.

Since 2008, the ABI Network has seen a dramatic 188 per cent increase in the number of ABI referrals it has received. While this is not an indication of incidence or prevalence, it does speak to the growing number of people who are seeking access to local ABI services through the Toronto ABI Network.

As the demand for ABI services continues to rise, the Network is called upon year after year to bring people together to develop creative solutions to some of the greatest challenges facing the ABI community today. We are grateful to the many partners and individuals we work with who share our passion for improving the quality and accessibility of publicly-funded services for individuals affected by ABI.

Through the delivery of formal networking and educational events, the Network has become an innovative 'hub' for collaborative thinking and knowledge exchange, drawing like-minded individuals and organizations together to help stimulate important dialogue about what is working well within the system, and what needs to be improved.

We are pleased that our ABI Network family continues to grow. This year, we welcomed PACE Independent Living as a new member. PACE provides support services to adults with physical disabilities and in June 2014 integrated the services provided by abi Possibilities into the family of PACE services.

Over the past year, we have continued to focus our efforts on:

- 1) tracking data to inform system needs and to assist people with access and transition
- 2) working with system partners to develop recommended options for a service resolution process that would address the needs and system gaps for complex clients who face system barriers and access issues
- 3) continuing to support education opportunities through the hybrid development of tools (e.g., transfer list), think tanks, education sessions and the Network's bi-annual conference.

It now offers short and long term community-based support services to individuals living with the affects of brain injury and is a welcome addition to the Network.

Our thanks to Network members for remaining vigilant in our collective efforts to initiate system change. As we look to the year ahead, we look forward to working together with member organizations, individuals living with ABI and their families, and our system partners, to help people make the meaningful connections that will make a long-term difference in their lives.

Hedy Chandler, *Chair*
Charissa Levy, *Executive Director*





improving access to care

Working across sectors to mobilize resources for those with complex needs

Within the ABI community are individuals who are not only living with an acquired brain injury, but who also face challenges related to co-existing mental health, addictions, developmental and/or justice issues. This year, as a co-chair of the Human Services and Justice Coordinating Committee (HSJCC) Complex Sub-Committee, the Toronto ABI Network worked with a consulting firm and representatives from the ABI, mental health and addiction and justice sectors, to conduct a review to develop and propose several options for a service resolution process that would address the needs and system gaps for complex clients who face system barriers and access issues.

Service resolution pulls together the organizations, services and sectors that are involved as part of an individual's support network to enable agreed upon service interventions, collaborative solutions, and cross-organizational partnerships for those with complex needs. The review was conducted over several months and was comprised of a series of key informant interviews and focus groups, a web-based scan of services, organizations and partnerships, and an examination of existing system data.

The draft report, featuring three service resolution models for consideration, was presented to the committee in February 2015. Next steps include ensuring we have the right data and evaluation in place to test the models to better understand what the impact will be in supporting advocacy of those with complex needs.

Connecting people with concussions to the right services

Demand for specialized services for people following a concussion is on the rise in Toronto. The release of the Ontario Neurotrauma Foundation's Concussion Guidelines has generated increased awareness of the importance of concussion care and this has had a significant impact on wait times for related services.

In late 2014, the Toronto ABI Network convened representatives from specialized brain injury centres to form the Concussion Task Group to review the needs of individuals with concussions and how people currently move through the system. The group is working to clarify how the guidelines can be used to support decision-making at the point-of-care so that timely referrals are made to the most appropriate service(s). As part of this work, the group also spearheaded the revision of the ABI Network's referral forms.

Supporting improved transitions between care providers

Earlier access to ABI rehabilitation is associated with a shorter length of stay, higher cognitive levels on discharge, better functional outcomes and increased chance of discharge home. The Toronto ABI Network's Transitions Task Group meets quarterly to share performance data on the flow of patients with ABI from acute care hospitals to inpatient rehabilitation centres to identify trends and opportunities for improved service delivery and patient satisfaction. With introduction of the provincial Life or Limb policy, the group is working to develop a resource tool that clinicians can use to communicate patient status to receiving hospitals upon repatriation.



supporting system planning and advocacy

The Toronto ABI Network plays an essential role as a collective voice for people living with acquired brain injuries, advocating on their behalf for accessible, high quality, publicly-funded services. We work to identify opportunities aligned with the priorities of the Local Health Integration Networks LHINs so that we can strengthen advocacy efforts and build a sustained profile for ABI among policy-makers.

Advocating for greater inter-organizational collaboration

In the Fall 2014, the Toronto ABI Network hosted a Think Tank discussion, bringing together key representatives and system leaders to dialogue about the development of a plan for a community-based shared model of care. The proposal would support LHIN priorities for health system transformation and target the complex and multi-dimensional needs of individuals with ABI (i.e., addiction, mental illness, homelessness, or issues with the justice sector). This was an exceptional opportunity to engage in innovative multi-sector thinking about key issues facing the ABI community including individual and family burden, hospital utilization, wait time for services, and societal/economic burden. Input from this group was used to help inform work on the service resolution process.

Informing work on a clinical practice guideline for Moderate to Severe TBI

This year, the ABI Network was among a 60-member consensus panel brought together by the Ontario Neurotrauma Foundation (ONF) and the Institut national d'excellence en santé et en services sociaux (INESSS) to select and adapt recommendations for a clinical practice guideline for the rehabilitation of adults with moderate to severe traumatic brain injury. The panel consisted of individuals from Ontario, Quebec and beyond with a range of clinical, research, policy, decision-making and knowledge translation expertise. The panel developed evidence-informed practice recommendations that could be implemented in TBI rehabilitation programs in Quebec and Ontario, and planning will continue in the coming year.



driving change

through education

Enhancing awareness of community based services and support

The Toronto ABI Network hosted an information session for organizations and health care professionals in the Fall 2014 to bring everyone up-to-date on the publicly funded services and supports available in the community to those living with ABI. The half day event featured presentations on neuropsychiatry, behavioural outreach and support, outpatient rehabilitation, residential and ongoing community supports, and survivor and caregiver support, and was designed to ensure those treating people living with ABI can help connect them with the services that will best meet their needs. The half day session was attended by more than 16 organizations and over 50 health care professionals working in acute care and rehabilitation hospitals, brain injury associations and a variety of other community agencies.

Inspiring dialogue and fresh thinking at ABI conference

Once again, the Toronto ABI Network's bi-annual ABI Conference was a resounding success, attracting more than 400 delegates to the Allstream Centre at Exhibition Place in Toronto in November 2014. This highly anticipated two-day event featured

an impressive roster of speakers including ABI researchers, providers, advocates and individuals living with the effects of ABI and provided an exceptional opportunity to network, share knowledge, advance new thinking, and stimulate dialogue on key challenges facing the ABI community. This conference was made possible thanks to an impressive and committed team of individuals representing cross-sectoral organizations with a special interest in supporting individuals with ABI. The next conference will be held in 2016.

Showcasing joint ABI education initiative

A joint education initiative involving St. Michael's Hospital, Toronto Rehabilitation Institute/UHN, and the Toronto ABI Network was showcased as a poster presentation at Health Quality Transformation 2014, an annual conference hosted by Health Quality Ontario. Facilitating the Transition from Acute Care to Inpatient Acquired Brain Injury Rehabilitation... the Development of an Education Session, referenced the work completed to help determine the long-term impact of a collaborative education session designed to support health care professionals in transitioning patients with ABI to inpatient rehabilitation and is one of the many ways we share knowledge with colleagues across sectors.

improving
outcomes
through
collaboration

Members of the Toronto ABI Network

Acute Care

Mackenzie Health
St. Michael's
Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre
Trillium Health Partners
University Health Network

Inpatient & Day Hospital Rehabilitation

Baycrest
Bridgepoint Active Healthcare/Sinai Health System
Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital
Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences
St. John's Rehab/Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre
Toronto Rehab/University Health Network
West Park Healthcare Centre

Community Service & Support

Central Community Care Access Centre
Community Head Injury Resource Services
Cota
PACE Independent Living
Peel Halton Dufferin Acquired Brain Injury Services
Toronto Central Community Care Access Centre

Advocacy/Other (ex officio)

Brain Injury Association of Durham Region
Brain Injury Society of Toronto
Ontario Neurotrauma Foundation
University of Toronto

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