

HEADWAY OXFORD NEWSLETTER

Registered Charity No: 299377

Headway Oxford, 4 Bagley Wood Road, Kennington, Oxford, OX1 5PL.

Tel: 01865 326263 admin@headway-oxford.org.uk



August 2010

Issue 19

Foreward by Jamie Miller

Key elements of the Transforming Adult Social Care agenda will be rolling out in the coming few months. We continue to advocate on behalf of those affected by ABI and develop our services accordingly. If you would like to find out more about how this may affect you, please contact us at Headway Oxford or have a look at www.takingcontroloxon.org.uk Oxfordshire Adult Social Care's website.

I would like to extend a welcome to our new Fundraising & Publicity Officer, Carole Newbigging, who starts with us this month. We are all looking forward to working with Carole.

A word to Mr Cameron, regarding the "Big Society", George Orwell spells it out in this month's quote.

"Society has always seemed to demand a little more from human beings than it will get in practice".

George Orwell

BOB'S FUNDRAISING CYCLE FROM LANDS END TO JOHN O'GROATS FOR HEADWAY!

Our cycle ride through England and Scotland was worth every single moment apart from one! 2 miles out from Lands End my front chain



wheel gears jammed beyond repair. My companions were not happy but they contained themselves perfectly. We found a gem of a bike shop down a hidden alleyway in the middle of Penzance and we were back on the road again within two hours with a severely damaged wallet.

Our route tried where possible to follow minor roads which tended to be more hilly but much more rewarding. As we struggled relentlessly up long steep hills we thought about the members of Headway and the traumas they have been through in their lives and realised our very brief moments of pain were nothing.

Our ride was unsupported. We relied on some wonderful hospitality passing through a wide variety of B&B's and three hotels. Our route took us through Southern Cornwall and Devon towards Bristol. Beyond that we crossed the Severn and into the beautiful Wye Valley. Then came Hereford, Telford, Manchester and beyond to the Eastern Lake District. We were full tilt for the Scotland and Loch Lomond via Gretna Green and Kilmarnock. The remaining four days were a blur of sublime views, mountains and wild moors.



We arrived at John O Groats elated by our journey having ridden 1020 miles in 13 days.

Cycling is a great way to travel. People become quickly interested in what you are doing and are keen to help and give directions. Its amazing how quickly you adapt to being in the saddle for many hours getting fitter by the day. The team our so pleased that our fundraising for Headway has gone so well. Our initial target was £2500. We had to re-adjust this to £4000 and at the time of writing we have now reached £5300.

Thankyou to all those who have donated so far.

If you would like to make a donation go to the just giving site www.justgiving.com/headwaylejo

Or send a cheque made payable to Headway Oxford C/O Manor Farm, The Green, East Hanney, Wantage, Oxfordshire OX12 0HQ

Bob Wilson Nick Lemm and Peter Hughes



PERSONAL INJURY CLAIMS

Editorial by Michael Berrett

Although I retired as the Chair of the Headway Oxford Management Committee in November 2009, I am still running an active specialist brain injury personal injury practice from the offices of Charles Lucas & Marshall in Wantage, Oxfordshire. I have been conducting personal injury claims for brain injured victims for almost 20 years. In fact it was my first large case that encouraged me to attend a lecture given by Professor Derick Wade and this led to becoming acquainted with Headway Oxford! Since then I have found my involvement with the work of Headway Oxford both at the day centre and in connection with community support work to be invaluable in terms of referring clients and sharing signposting information. The needs of brain injured clients are quite different to the needs of other injured clients and it is very important to communicate with the family with understanding and knowledge of the bewildering predicament they first find themselves in.

During the last 6 months happily I have settled 3 large cases. The first involved a claim for clinical negligence because the NHS had failed to deliver a distressed baby in time and she had been born with the condition termed cerebral palsy. Such was that family's shock and isolation that they did not obtain legal advice until their daughter was 17! It is useful to know that claims are not barred until 3 years after a child turns 18 (until they are 21) and in the case of people deemed to lack mental capacity there is no time limit running against them. A very large settlement has enabled the family to re-house themselves in spacious adapted accommodation and the provision of a lump sum and annual periodical payments mean that there will never be any problem in obtaining and providing the latest technology aids and appliances to make life a little easier.

The second case involved a road traffic accident and very unusually the defendant driver while admitting he had been at fault for the collision, suggested through his insurers that the collision was not responsible for the totality of our client's injuries. It was suggested that my clients lifestyle meant that at the time of the accident he was developing a condition known as Wernicke Korsakoff's Encephalopathy which was responsible for the same kind of cognitive impairment one sees with a traumatic brain injury. There was much argument in this case between neuropsychologists and neuropsychiatrists but in the end a substantial settlement was negotiated which will enable my client to re-house himself and his

family and to buy in such case management and support work as will help him live a more fulfilled life.

The third case also involved a road traffic accident where a young man sustained traumatic brain injury shortly after leaving school at age 18.

It is always difficult in these cases to project how the future loss of earnings might be calculated. A young person might move jobs and indeed career a couple of times before settling down. The lawyer's role is to talk to the family about pre-accident aspirations, look at qualifications and what was actually earned prior to the accident and perhaps also take into account the occupations and earning levels of other members of the family.

As you have probably gathered in all this work a high degree of consultation with the family is essential and given that the prognosis is rarely clear with brain injuries before around 2 years, most cases involve a fairly long ongoing relationship of trust.

The statistics tell us that those most vulnerable to traumatic brain injuries are young men in their late teens or twenties. I was interested to see that the road safety minister has announced new safety ratings for motorcycle helmets. As fellow bikers, this is also of interest to Jamie Miller and I. SHARP is the department of transport's safety helmet assessment and rating programme. All the ratings have been published on its new website which has been overhauled to include more information for motorcyclists on how to found the right helmet. The site also includes demonstrations of the tests and how to ensure that a helmet fits properly. The ministry estimates that 50 deaths could be prevented each year if all riders wore the safest helmets available. The new SHARP website can be found at www.direct.gov.uk/sharp

Michael Berrett

HATS FOR HEADWAY—21ST MAY 2010

A big thank you from Headway Oxford to all those who took part in our Hats for Headway day. A fabulous £250 was raised —special thanks to Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton Leisure centres who raised £148 and to Bladon CE Primary School who had a fun day and raised £90!



WAITROSE COMMUNITY MATTERS SCHEME

Headway Oxford would like to say a huge thank you to anyone that has visited Waitrose Witney over the last month and voted for us!

We were thrilled to be selected for the community matters scheme; the idea behind this project is for Waitrose to put a share of their profits back into their local community. Three local charities are selected each month and depending on how many tokens each charity gets from the shoppers a budget of £1000 is divided proportionately.

Headway Oxford received £494 this month from Waitrose Witney so must have received a large share of the tokens!

Thank you so much to all who voted and to the Waitrose Witney team!

All branches support this scheme; so please pop in and nominate Headway Oxford next time you pass a Waitrose!

Nicki Holland

OXFORD FUN RUN

A massive thank you goes out to all Headway Oxford members, staff and volunteers who gave their time and energy to support this event. The RAF Falcons planned to drop in from above to open proceedings but the weather was not suitable. Despite this the boys did us proud, running in Headway Oxford T-Shirts. Sgt Matty Alan came in first with a time of 17 minutes and 35seconds. Total funds raised where £2424.50



RAF FALCONS 24 HR CHALLENGE

Huge thanks go to the RAF Falcons Parachute Display Team who completed the Marshside Kent 24 hour challenge—this involved running around the 6.55 mile route as many times as possible in 24 hours. Each member of the team had to cover 36 miles by the 12 hour point to qualify for the next 12 hours—which they all achieved. The teams combined completed distance was 550 miles! Their fantastic efforts raised approximately £1500 for Headway Oxford!

SIMON'S STORY (Part 2)

I'm a guy called Simon Head. I was unfortunate enough to acquire a brain injury in March 2006. I used to work at McLaren F1 where I was a Design Engineer. I lived for cars and motorbikes and working with McLaren was a lifetime ambition. Being able to drive is really important to me.



In the last issue of the Headway Oxford Newsletter, I told of the difficulties I faced in learning to drive again: I started off by going Karting, but I found this really difficult; a friend told me that I could use a computer game. The Logitech G25 steering wheel and pedals allow me to do some driving simulation on my PC. I now do that every day for 30 minutes.

I am also using a Functional Electrical Stimulation box—an Odstock Medical device that stimulates the muscles at the front of the shinbone.

This enables me to lift my toes. My calf muscle is so strong that I use a plastic foot splint, AFO, made for me at OCE as well as using the FES. These are helping me to regain the movement in my leg that will allow me to walk, run and drive.



I found out about a company called Physiofunction at the OCE, they supplied me with a SeaboFlex hand device and a Seabostrech hand splint. These hand devices are designed to allow me to straighten the fingers of my right hand and strengthen the muscles that allow me to open my hand much easier. They do a lot of work with people who have had strokes.

Years ago, before the motor biking I used to compete in, and sometimes win, bicycle races. I have tried cycling on a static device called a turbo trainer, basically a bike bolted to a frame, but my toes point downwards even with an elastic splint supplied by the NHS, so I don't do it at the moment. I have set myself a target of completing a triathlon. The cycling, swimming and running all coming together.

Find out in the final part of my story how I am achieving my aims.

Simon Head

YOUTH OFFENDING TEAM

Thank you to the Youth Offending Team who ran a car wash at Headway Oxford on Saturday 24th July—they raised £40! They are planning another date soon!

Experiences of Carers following an Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) in the Family

Study by: Clair Johnson, Community Worker, Headway Oxford

Dr Henderson Slater, Consultant in Neurological Rehabilitation, Oxford Centre for Enablement

What did we do?

- Interviews with carers associated with Headway Oxford (Thank you to all who participated!)
- Analysed the interview data using 'thematic analysis'; compared and contrasted interview responses and highlighted key themes that emerged

What did we find?

We found eight major themes emerged:

1. Uncertainty
2. Changed Personalities, Relationships and Roles within the Family
3. Change of lifestyle in the family
4. Need for a break and respite
5. Transport problems
6. Problems with hospital/care staff
7. Coping with inadequate aftercare and bureaucracy
8. Positive experiences of service provision

Carers felt that services needed to be more integrated. The report gives some suggestions of what could be done to bridge the gap, including: developing an integrated ABI care pathway with a care co-ordinator to ensure delivering of appropriate services throughout hospital, rehabilitation and community settings, developing a sustainable ABI database and creation of an up-to-date discharge pack.

What now?

- Findings and implications have been written up and the full report will be available via Headway Oxford's website soon
- Findings are being used to inform Headway Oxford and OCE services
- Findings to be presented at the Local Implementation Group for the National Service Framework (NSF) for Long-term conditions in relation to the NSF
- Presentation in October at the British Association of Neurological Nurses Annual conference



"We specialise in representing clients who have suffered a brain injury as a result of an accident.."

For more information please contact
Michael Berrett
michael.berrett@clmlaw.co.uk
or 01235 771234
www.clmlaw.co.uk

CHARLES LUCAS MARSHALL
solicitors

Newbury Hungerford Swindon Wantage

HEADWAY CARERS' GROUP

A group set up for carers of an adult with an acquired brain injury
We will be gathering at 7.30pm until 9pm

| Aug 11th | Sept 8th | Oct 13th |
|-----------|------------------------------|---|
| CANCELLED | Money Skills Workshop CAB | Changes in Social Care: How might this affect you? Jamie Miller |

The informal meetings are held at the Headway Oxford centre:
4 Bagley Wood Road, Kennington, Oxford OX1 5PL
If you would like any further information please contact
Clair Johnson on 01865 736 354 or
communitysupport@headway-oxford.org.uk

If you will require a paid carer for the evening please contact me to discuss the possibility of Headway Oxford helping towards this cost.