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Upcoming Community Events

Prince Albert Coffee Talk

- Mondays (Except stat holidays)
- 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM
- Community Room @ the South Hill Mall
- Free of charge
- Refreshments served

Saskatchewan Brain Injury Association (SBIA) Support Group – Prince Albert Chapter

- Contact Glenda James @ 1-877-373-1555 for details

Introduction to ABI Online Series

- Available online at www.abipartnership.sk.ca
- Designed to provide basic level knowledge about the effects of brain injury and strategies to help recovery
- Many other resources also available on this website

Sask North Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) Services

1521 – 6th Ave West
Prince Albert, SK. S6V 5K1
Phone: 306-765-6630
Toll Free: 1-866-899-9951
Fax #: 306-765-6657

Caregiver's Corner

ABI Newsletter

Driving After an ABI

Brain injury often affects a person's ability to drive. After a brain injury, driving is often taken for granted and many families are unaware of the potential for danger if a family member returns to driving without first being evaluated to determine that skills necessary for operating a motor vehicle are in place.

On discharge from hospital, an individual may experience many physical &/or mental deficits after a brain injury that affect good driving. Reflexes may be slow, vision may be affected and problem-solving and decision-making abilities may be impaired.

There are other skills involved in driving than just starting, steering and stopping. In addition to the visual acuity needed, an individual must have intact perceptual skills (e.g. the ability to judge distances between cars, space in parking lots, etc.) all while operating a rapidly moving vehicle. These skills need careful evaluation to ensure the safety of the driver and others on the road.

In Saskatchewan, all drivers are required to report to Saskatchewan Government Insurance (SGI) if they have any medical conditions that may affect their ability to drive (like a brain injury) at the time they are diagnosed or at the time of license renewal. Saskatchewan law has given SGI the mandate to determine who may drive.

A doctor may advise an individual & their family about an individual's safety to drive. However, SGI must be notified of the change in the individual's medical condition even if the doctor says an individual is safe to drive. If the medical condition is not reported and the individual is involved in a motor vehicle collision, their insurance coverage may not be valid.

To notify SGI, a Supplementary Medical Application form should be completed. The form can be found at any driver's license issuer or on the SGI website www.sgi.sk.ca.

Once SGI receives the form, an individual's driving ability will be assessed by their Medical Review Unit (MRU).

When a review by the MRU indicates that an individual's medical condition is affecting their driving ability, restrictions may be applied to ensure their continued safety.

Driving privileges will be suspended by the MRU if an individual:

- Does not meet Canadian Medical Association medical guidelines or Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators (CCMTA) medical standards for driving
- Fail to provide medical information
- Do not pass a requested driving assessment

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Driving Assessment Programs

Driving assessment programs assess an individual's medical fitness to drive – your ability to operate a motor vehicle in a way that's safe for you and others on the road.

Driving assessments typically include:

- Driving history, driving needs, license status and road knowledge will be reviewed
- Medical history will be reviewed
- Vision, cognition, visual perceptual abilities, reaction time, ability to respond to different situations and to potential dangers will be evaluated
- If deemed appropriate, an on road test will complete the driving assessment. A car will be provided for this portion of the assessment

When an assessment is completed, a report will be sent to you within two weeks outlining appropriate recommendations.

Recommendations of the assessment will indicate:

- Medical fitness to drive
- If adaptive equipment, techniques or additional training may be beneficial
- If further testing in the future is necessary or warranted



References:

The Survival Guide: Living with Acquired Brain Injury in the Community by Phyllis Goertz & Bryan Acton. Acquired Brain Injury Partnership Project

Safe Driving after Brain Injury by Carolyn Roccio. Brain Injury Association of Washington

Saskatchewan Government Insurance (SGI) website; www.sgi.sk.ca

Saskatoon Health Region website; www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca

Sask North Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) Services

Sask North Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) Services is a group of programs that offer a variety of services to residents in the Prince Albert Parkland, Kelsey Trail, Athabasca, Mamawetan Churchill River and Keewatin Yatthé Health Regions including...

Case Management: helping develop client-driven goals, coordinating health services, providing referrals, etc.

Consultation: providing information to others in regards to specific client care

Education: providing general ABI education and offering a variety of prevention activities

Independent Living Services: assisting clients to find housing, providing recreation opportunities and helping with short-term interventions to increase independence

Program Admission Criteria

- Must have a diagnosis of a **moderate to severe** brain injury supported by medical records
- Be a resident of Saskatchewan or eligible for Saskatchewan Health coverage
- Are open to working cooperatively on goal-directed rehabilitation with ABI and other service providers
- Community agencies, employers, families and schools who require resources & support are eligible as well
- ** Priority will be given to applicants whose brain injury occurred within the past three (3) years
- ** Congenital brain injury or one that is a result of a progressive condition will not be considered

How to Access Services

- Participation in our program is **voluntary**
- Contact us @ 306-765-6630 or toll free @ 1-866-899-9951

