

“ Welcome to our new look Newsletter

We have moved to this new style so that it is in keeping with our developing brand which many of you will have seen with our brochures and letterhead. This is a gradual and evolving process, allowing us time and reflection to get it right.

I want to take a little time now to say thank you to BIA Auckland for carrying on with producing **Brainlink** on our behalf until the completion of the October issue, thus enabling us to set up the new format and be comfortable with everything being in place for the way ahead.

My grateful thanks to **Sally Quintrell and her Associates** for all that has gone before with producing the thirty two issues over many years and supporting our Association so willingly.

USL Medical continue to support this publication in many ways and you will see their logo on more things in the future. This kind of tangible help is so incredibly important to organisations such as ours.

Coming up shortly is the totally re-vamped **Website** which is being designed to be more user friendly and again, incorporate the new style. There will be a considerable amount more in information and links, as well as regular updates. You are likely to see this site up and running by the end of the year. **Watch that space.**

This **External Communication** aims to promote the work of this Association covering all regions in New Zealand and more particularly to demonstrate and talk to you about the inroads being made in the area of brain injury, including research and published findings. 90 people a day in New Zealand sustain some form of brain injury and that is an incredible number.

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National General Manager

Graham Menary

You will learn more as we progress this communication and expand its reading targets.

As we approach the **Christmas Season** and a time when we all enjoy holiday breaks, may I wish you well for your festive activities and ask that you all drive with care and play safe in any activities that you undertake. Your head is very precious.

Graham Menary

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when it really matters

Ken's *positive* view

On October 23rd 2005, I was competing in the first sailing regatta of the season, in Doves Bay (Kerikeri). In an altercation with another boat, I was struck hard in the left temple. I did not realise it at the time, but my life was changed, possibly forever.

I lost a great deal, and spent the first few months getting angry about it. Gradually, I came to terms with my limitations and accepted them. Acceptance resolves anger, and empowers you to get on with your life.

In some ways my injury has saved me from myself. Previously I put too much pressure on myself, measuring my being in terms of career and yachting achievements – I was a perfectionist. I have now learnt to relax and take life a lot easier – a very important lesson.

My focus on life has changed completely. I have actually gained a lot from the experience. I realise now life is not so much about the destination, it's the journey and personal development on the way that matters. I place a strong emphasis on facets of my life I previously ignored, and have a lovely girlfriend.

Contrary to expectations, my social confidence has increased. I have lost my inhibitions – I just get out there and do things. I am into Ceroc dancing, something I would have never tried before. I have set up my own photography business, I am on the Advocate freelance list, and getting into wedding photography. I have put aside the list of things I can't do, and instead focus on how I can achieve the things I want to do.

Overall, I think I am a better person now. I am more balanced, and live a more diverse life than before. I can now relax, rather than relentlessly putting pressure on myself. I have limitations, accepting those has been the most important part of the recovery, and has allowed me to get on with things.



Ken Williams and partner Monique

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New Brochures



The new brochures that BIANZ has been redeveloping in the last few months are now available. The first one, *Tips for Teachers*, has been expanded to include the signs and symptoms of a concussion as well as the difficulties commonly seen after a concussion and how to manage these. It has also been renamed *Concussion in Children: Tips for parents, teachers and coaches of children with a concussion*. The second brochure, called simply *BIANZ: The Brain Injury Association of New Zealand Inc* explains what BIANZ is, the differences between BIANZ and the regional associations, and the services offered at both local and national levels. These two brochures have a similar look and feel to the *Understanding Brain Injury* brochure and are designed to be given out together as appropriate.

The brochures are free, so if you would like to place an order, please call the Education Advisory Team on 09 414 5693 or email education@brain-injury.org.nz

Substance Abuse and Brain Injury Toolbox

The **Substance Abuse and Brain Injury Toolbox** focuses on substance use and abuse after brain injury and was developed by the Ohio Valley Center for Brain Injury Prevention and Rehabilitation at Ohio State University. The Ohio Valley Center conducts research, provides education and develops programs to improve the quality of life of persons who experience brain injury. The Center serves individuals, families and professionals throughout North America.

The Ohio Valley Center is located in the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at Ohio State University. John D. Corrigan, PhD, is the Director; Jennifer Bogner, PhD, is the Director of Research, W. Jerry Mysiw, MD, is the Medical Director and Gary Lamb-Hart, MDiv, is the Center Manager.

The Substance Abuse Toolbox includes the *User's Manual for Faster, More Reliable Operation of a Brain after Injury*, which is a booklet for individuals and family members that discusses risks of alcohol and other drug use after brain injury. The *Substance Use and Abuse after Brain Injury: A Programmer's Guide*, is a manual for rehabilitation facilities to develop a systematic program of education and prevention about the use of alcohol and other drugs after brain injury. The Toolbox also contains a video and DVD based on the *User's Manual*

for Faster, More Reliable Operation of a Brain after Injury. The educational materials in the Toolbox use a metaphor that compares the brain to a computer. The brain operates using software – the knowledge, attitudes and beliefs controlling behaviour. After brain injury, new knowledge about the effects of alcohol and other drugs is needed. The information in the Toolbox provides this knowledge which is necessary to make informed decisions about your health and wellbeing post injury.

Professor John Corrigan was the keynote speaker at the recent TBI conference 'Seize the Moment', where he discussed in depth his findings surrounding substance abuse after brain injury, while also sharing his resources. The BIANZ are the national distributor of the Substance Abuse and Brain Injury Toolbox so for ordering or for further information please contact the national office on 09 414 5693 or education@brain-injury.org.nz



Brain Food for Brain Power

We all know that we need to eat well to stay slim, keep our heart healthy, and prevent cancer, but what you may not be aware of is the profound effect your diet can have on the health of your brain. Certain foods can either increase or diminish brain function, and this month we are starting a new series of articles that will look in detail at good brain foods and provide you with tasty recipes to try out at home.

'Brain foods' are those foods which improve brain function. A diet heavy in omega-3 fatty acids, for example, can help keep the blood vessels of the brain clear of

blockages and allow nerve cells to function at a high level. So you may want to eat fatty fish such as salmon (a major source of omega-3s) twice a week or take a supplement. It is equally important, however, to recognise the foods that diminish brain power. Alcohol and some other drugs just kill brain cells directly, but there are many less obvious brain-attacking foods. Artery clogging foods can lead to restricted blood flow to the brain, and high-glycaemic-index (GI) foods can cause blood-sugar swings that make you irritable and sluggish.

Here are some examples of good and bad brain foods:

Good Brain Foods		Bad Brain Foods	
Avocados	Eggs	Salmon	Alcohol
Banana	Flaxseed oil	Soybeans	Artificial food colorings
Beef (lean)	Legumes	Spinach	Artificial sweeteners
Brewer's yeast	Melon	Tuna	Corn syrup
Broccoli	Milk	Turkey	Frostings and cake icing
Brown rice	Oatmeal	Wheat germ	Hydrogenated fats such as butter
Brussels sprouts	Oranges	Yogurt	Soft drinks
Cheese	Peanut butter		White bread and other baked goods
Chicken	Peas		
Cos Lettuce	Potatoes		

In the next issue, we will look in detail at the good brain food, and find out just why it is so good for our brains.

Q&A

Q: Who should be referred to Concussion Clinic?

A: A person should be referred to the concussion clinic by their doctor if they have had a concussion within the last 6 months and have ongoing symptoms.

Q: What can a person expect when referred to a Concussion Clinic?

A: There are two parts to the Concussion Service, the Assessment and the Intervention.

The Assessment will include:

1. Having a medical assessment by a medical specialist such as a Neurologist
2. Undergoing a neuropsychological screen with Neuropsychologist (this differs from a full Neuropsychological Assessment).

Following these two assessments a combined report is written, the CARR report, which gives an overview of current level of functioning, any identified limitations along with recommendations if further medical or therapy intervention is required. This report is sent to the person, their GP and ACC Case Manager. The assessment process does not require prior ACC approval.

The **Intervention** can be provided by an Occupational Therapist, a Registered Nurse, a Physiotherapist, a Speech Language Therapist and a Psychologist depending on the persons identified need/s. They can also be reviewed by the Medical Specialist if required. Intervention requires ACC approval. Any reports are sent to the person, their GP and ACC Case Manager.

Do you have a question you would like an answer to?

We have a team of professionals who can help. Send your question to BrainLink, PO Box 83, Albany Village, Auckland 0755.

Grown Ups

Are you looking for an interesting and useful website, either for yourself or for your parents?

www.grownups.co.nz is an online lifestyle magazine primarily for New Zealanders aged 50+, covering a raft of information including travel, health & well-being, hobbies, entertainment, discussions, games, and competitions. You also can submit your own articles and recipes share your thoughts and meet like-minded New Zealanders... and it's all Free!

More than 50,000 people are visiting the site each month, so we hope that you enjoy it also.

GrownUps is proud to have an association with the Brain Injury Association of New Zealand, which you can view at

http://www.grownups.co.nz/read/community/community_services_charities/brain-injury-association



you don't have to lose your freedom



BRAINlink

A Newsletter of the Brain Injury Association of New Zealand

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