



**B.I.A.P.R.**  
Brain Injury Association  
Peterborough Region

Date: September 2, 2020

Dear Members, Clients and Care Partners,

As we move into yet again the start of another season during the Pandemic, I hope that everyone is staying well and continuing to follow the Public Health guidelines on staying safe by washing your hands (or using hand sanitizer), physically distancing and wearing a mask (or face covering). We may be feeling like “this is enough let’s go back to normal” now that the infection rate is lower, however this is when we still need to be continuing to do the GREAT work that each of us have been doing. We will be together again in the future. It will be different but, in the meantime, stay the course and reach out if you need supports.

I would like to tell you about all the hard work that the BIAPR team have been doing to keep our supports and services going throughout the last 5 months and the plans for moving forward.

The BIAPR Rebound Plan will be reviewed by our Board at the Sept 15<sup>th</sup> board meeting. Our ABI Day Service staff have been participating in 3 working groups (face-to-face, virtual, and mobile ADPs) facilitated by the CE LHIN since the beginning of June to September. The purpose of these meetings is to provide input into ADP service delivery during the Pandemic and to share resources and learning for Adult Day Programming (ADP) across our region. Both the Brain Injury Association Durham and BIAPR are identified as ABI ADPs and as such are a unique ADP environment. Our input at these discussions has been important representation for our ABI community.

When we do resume onsite, our ABI Day Service will look different. We are following Ministry Health and Public Health guidelines at each stage of our resumption plans. Clients and members will be contacted and asked to complete an informed consent prior to returning. Clients must consent verbally to the following; 1) wearing a mask while on-site 2) physical distancing, and 3) practicing proper hand hygiene, before coming back on-site. They will then be asked to sign the Informed Consent form at their first visit. Client/member visits will be by appointment only to ensure that we are following all safety protocols and are able to provide fair and equitable access to on-site supports. Staff will be reaching out to each of you individually.

In the meantime, BIAPR Staff have been continuing to support our clients through virtual supports, including calls, texting, emails, WebEx video conferencing as well as the conference line, and in the community porch visits. We have begun to add in home visits as needed. We are continuing to support our ABI Day Service clients virtually using the Zoom platform for programming groups such as Trivia and Games Group, a Connections Group in both the morning and afternoon on Wednesdays and the Music Group continues on Monday afternoons. There is COVID-19 Education Group that meets Thursday afternoons at 2:00 on

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Zoom where Public Health updates and other information is shared. We continue to offer the ABI FYI Education Sessions monthly (see attached flyer). These sessions are led by Nicole Nadeau - OT and are free to ABI survivors, care partners and community supports who are interested in learning more about brain injury. If interested, please call the office.

The BIAPR Staff have been busy and are doing important work. It is important to be able to share our experiences as ABI services and as such I would like to thank the staff at CHIRS (Community Head Injury Resource Services) for their willingness to include BIAPR staff in the Virtual programming that they are doing with their clients. I hear that the monthly combined virtual events are exciting and energizing. Sharing and working collaboratively with our brain injury clients is exciting and rewarding for all, clients, care partners and staff alike.

We were successful in having our Canada Summer Jobs Grant application (submitted last March – pre-COVID19 shutdown) approved. We would like to thank the Honourable Maryam Monsef and her staff for supporting our application. We have hired a staff for a 6-week full-time placement to work within the ABI Day Service Team. The staff's name is Heaven and her position is Virtual Programming Coordinator. Heaven has created two surveys, one by phone, and one digital using Survey Monkey, to assess member interests, needs, and barriers. She will then use this information to design the best fit within virtual programming for each member. She has diligently researched and developed a variety of new virtual programs that could create more opportunities for BIAPR clients/members to participate. As a Recreation Therapist her goal is to leave behind virtual prescribed programming suited to each clients' needs and interests. As a part of this goal, Heaven has planned for a pilot of an all day drop in using our virtual Zoom platform.

We are thrilled to be able to test something new. The "BIAPR Live & Online" (9:00-3:00) and all day program via Zoom will take place on Sept 14<sup>th</sup> (see attached flyer). This will be open to all clients of BIAPR. So, if you are new to the virtual world that we are living in and need support to get connected reach out and Heaven will assist you in getting connected. Or if you have been looking for more connection time with your Brain Injury Community and would like to attend for just a while or for the whole day please join us.

In other good news, the Transitional Support Program - funded through Ontario Trillium Foundation has been approved for extension and will now be extended until December 30<sup>th</sup>. This is important for the clients who were still in the process of having their ODSP application completed at the time of the shutdown due to COVID-19. It will also be important for supporting the clients through the tribunal process when it starts up again. Thanks to Lenka at OTF for working with BIAPR to extend the time that we can offer these valuable supports to these individuals.

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In my August letter I included the following information and felt that it would be good to include again in case you were in busy mode due to summer and did not have the time to follow up on these initiatives.

The Brain Injury Speaks (the OBIA/ONF Stakeholder Engagement project). To learn more and to sign up go to the OBIA.ca website at this link <http://obia.ca/about-brain-injury-speaks/> . Sign up and add your voice to this important initiative.

OBIA is pleased to announce the launch of the new **Brain Injury Impact Study**. OBIA has been conducting research for more than 25 years. Many things have changed over the years, including the incidence and impact of concussion being brought to the forefront. The current research questionnaire is transitioning to the **Brain Injury Impact Study**. There are two versions of the new study, one for **Individuals Living with Brain Injury/Concussion** and the other, for **Family Members and Caregivers**. By completing the annual study, participants will receive a FREE membership to OBIA and a participating Community Association. Click on this link for more information. <http://obia.ca/obia-launches-new-brain-injury-impact-study/>

And finally, thanks to all of you who voted for BIAPR in the OBIA/PIA - Awards of Excellence in Brain Injury Rehabilitation for the 2020 Community Brain Injury Association of the Year. It is not a matter of winning as much as being recognized as one of the Brain Injury Associations who are doing some great work!

Thank you and stay safe.

Teryl Hoefel  
Executive Director