Brain Injury Canada Semi-Annual Conference
in conjunction with the
Brain Injury Association of Nova Scotia
April 14, 15, 2015
Holiday Inn Harbourview
Halifax – Dartmouth, Nova Scotia
CONFERENCE PROGRAMME
Please note that this a DRAFT PROGRAM and is subject to change.

8:30  
Welcome, greetings - Minister of Health and Wellness, the Honourable Leo Glavine, MLA

8:45 - 9:30  
Me and My Son and a guy named Justin McKenna
Jason Harps, RPA and Aidan Harps
Jason and Aidan will share their journey of transformation after their encounter with Justin McKenna. Justin’s life was changed after he suffered a TBI while on his ATV at a time when he should have been enjoying his graduating year of high school.

9:30 - 9:45  
Break

9:45 - 10:15  
Session A  
There’s Nothing Mild about it:” When the OT Needs an OT - Head Injury experienced through a Dual Lens - Amy Butler
This presentation will examine the lived experience of mild traumatic brain injury (MTBI) from the perspective of a registered occupational therapist who is also a head injury survivor (secondary to a motor vehicle accident).

Session B  
Unlocking the Mysteries of the Blood-Brain Barrier: Preventing and Treating Long-Term Complications from due to Traumatic Brain Injuries
Alon Friedman, MD, PhD, Professor of Neuroscience, Dennis Chair in Epilepsy Research, Departments of Medical Neuroscience and Paediatrics, Faculty of Medicine, Dalhousie University-Halifax, NS
There has been an increasing awareness to the long-term disabilities and neuropsychiatric consequences of traumatic brain injury. In recent years attention has been increased to sports-related head impacts and their long-term outcome. Blood vessels’ pathology and specifically abnormal permeability through the blood-brain barrier is common in brain injuries, and may last for days, but sometimes for months and years after the insult. The blood-brain barrier is essential to maintain normal brain functions by keeping brain internal environment different from the rest of the body. Using experimental animals we have confirmed that blood-brain barrier dysfunction may play a key role in neural dysfunction and degeneration, thus suggesting the blood-brain barrier as a novel target for the treatment of brain injuries and prevention of delayed complications. We have recently established a novel diagnostic protocol using magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), to detect and quantify vessels’ pathology in the brain. We show that the new method can identify football players with a significant vascular pathology following brain concussion where other methods fail. Our research suggests that for the first time, we may diagnose players at-risk for delayed complications.

10:15 - 10:45  
Break
**Brain Injury Canada Semi Annual Conference - Halifax, Nova Scotia**
Tuesday April 14, 2015

10:45 - 11:15  
**Session A**  
*Mind The Gap* - **Jonathan (Jake) K. McMurray** - Author, B.A. - Georgetown, Ontario  
Following a horrific car accident at the age of 22 that essentially stole his memories and his life, Jonathan (Jake) K. McMurray learned to live with a traumatic brain injury and was eventually able to graduate with a Bachelor of Arts in English from Acadia University in Wolfville, NS. The accident and his journey through his new life, taught him that life itself is a gift—and every moment a present to be enjoyed.

11:15 - 11:30  
**Break**

11:30 - 12:00  
**Session A**  
*Health and Healing: A Single Mother’s Brain Injury Journey and Survival Guide*  
**Kimberley Bernard,** MSW, RSW  
Single motherhood varies by race/ethnicity. The presentation will explore my experience of being a single mother of African descent surviving and recovering from a brain aneurysm. The presentation will conclude with providing advice to health professionals on the role they can play in reframing the dialogue on single mothering and helping to understand the connection between the challenges of single mothering and recovery from a brain injury.

12:00 - 1:00  
**Lunch**  

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**Session B**  
*An Adult Learning Approach to Partner Communication Training*  
**Riva Sorin-Peters, Karen Whitehead-Lye,** Senior Independent Living Manager, Central Ontario, March of Dimes Canada  
This presentation will provide an overview of adult education principles, the Kolb's experiential learning model, and how this model was applied to a communication training program for four couples living with chronic communication disabilities. The concept of “transformational learning” and the methods used to promote more holistic and longer-lasting changes will be discussed. The unique benefits of individual and group sessions will also be outlined. Results will be presented and complemented by a pre- and post- training video clip of one of the couples in the study. The implications of viewing clients with brain injury as adult learners on the delivery and content of intervention will be discussed.

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**Session B**  
*Loneliness and Isolation after Brain Injury: Factors impacting survivor and caregiver’s quality of life after injury.***  
**Cecile Proctor**  
The road to recovery is not always an easy one to navigate. Acquiring a brain injury can impact the mental health and life satisfaction of both a survivor and their caregivers. Changes in leisure activities, employment, and the added burden of caregiving contribute to increased social isolation, depression, and loneliness. The startling results from this study of over 400 survivors and caregivers are critical to understanding the needs of these individuals both during and following formal rehabilitation.
1:00 - 1:45  
**Workshop “Families; How Best to support a relative with a Brain Injury”**  
* Sally Cuddy, MSW, RSW, Nancy McCormick MSW, RSW  
Adjusting to a brain injury is a difficult and complex process. Family members are often left with a confusing landscape, uncertain about how to support their loved one, while exercising self-care. Our workshop offers a practical approach to navigating this landscape, supported by video clips, guided exercises and reading materials. Types of rehabilitation treatment approaches will be covered, with specific suggestions on how families can best assist the rehabilitative process and have their loved one reintegrate into the community.

1:45 - 2:00  
**Coffee Break**

2:00 - 2:30  
**‘Couldn’t Be Better’ - A Life of Survival**  
*Ryan Emms* is a poet and songwriter with an incredible story of survival and love. In 1988, age seven, Ryan was in an accident where he sustained permanent brain trauma. His neuropsychological deficits impact everyday life from socialization to employability, but Ryan is a survivor! Ryan is a big country music fan, and over the past two years he put some of his poetry to music. An artist with a big heart, his love of music comes straight from his very soul. Ryan and his music open the listener’s heart with pride and inspiration knowing his story of survival.

2:30 - 2:45  
**Break**

2:45 - 3:15  
**Session A**  
*Learning Tools for Professions from a Survivors Prospective - Loose Your Tool Box*  
*Jo-Ann McInnis*  
This presentation is addressed and assist professionals who work with individuals who have sustained a Traumatic Brain Injury. They will have a better understanding of the course of healing one goes through following an injury, from a survivor’s perspective. They will also appreciate the feeling of what it means to return to work and meaningful time occupation.

**Session B**  
*The Neuro Response Team: Improving the rehabilitation experience*  
*Lisa Cicchelli RN MN, Clinical Nurse Specialist Pediatric Rehabilitation, IWK Health Centre -Halifax, NS*  
Pediatric brain and spinal cord injuries are considered two of the most devastating injuries a child and their family can experience. This presentation will outline the role of the NRT and the various health professionals who provide rehabilitative care to children. The presentation will also highlight the challenges and accomplishments that have been encountered for this team.

3:15 - 3:30  
**Break**

3:30 - 4:15  
**Session A**  
*Strategies of Hope* - Alison McDonald and Coleen Lawlor  
In this workshop, a panel including these authors and two participants in the film – a survivor and a family member – will share how the making of this film provided an amazing opportunity for expression of opinions, thoughts, choice and control, regardless of current abilities.

**Session B**  
*Conductive Education*  
*Brittany Jennings, BA (Hons), QCS, March of Dimes Canada (MODC)*  
Halifax, Nova Scotia-Conductive Education*“ is a community rehabilitation program whose mission is to maximize the independence, personal empowerment, and community participation of people with neurological motor disabilities such as acquired brain injury and stroke. Participants in our Conductive Education* program work in diagnosis-specific groups towards their own clearly identified aims and are taught strategies and techniques to overcome the challenges their condition presents on a daily basis.
8:30 Welcome

8:45 - 9:30 The LINC Study
Tanya Packer, Joan Versnel
How a focus on everyday living created a unique contribution to the National Population Study of Neurological Conditions - The objective of this presentation is to describe 1) the three studies that comprised the LINC study, 2) present key findings from the LINC study and how they contributed to the final Synthesis report that went to the Federal Minister of Health in the fall of 2014, and 3) report on findings about how our focus on everyday participation was received and endorsed by participants and stakeholders.

9:30 - 9:45 Networking Nutrition Break

9:45 - 10:15 Session A
SeSex Differences in Clinical Profiles Among Patients with Traumatic Brain Injury Across Post-Acute Settings: Need for innovation - Dr. Angela Colantonio, University of Toronto, Toronto Rehabilitation Institute - UHN Sandy Escobar, BFA, Dalhousie University
This study informs policy makers/clinicians of resource implications for male and female TBI patients in relation to other clinical populations. Recommendations for programming are made using examples such as the Happily Ever Active program in Halifax that brings arts programming in nursing homes.

Session B
From School to Home
Ruth McDonald - National Manager - Fee for Service - March of Dimes Canada,
Jason Lye, National Director Independent Living, March of Dimes Canada
In 2010, after 4 years of planning, March of Dimes opened a 10 person accessible ABI congregate care home in Northern Ontario. This modern facility has 2 individual apartments as well as an 8 person congregate care area. Service funding sources include government as well as fee based services. This presentation will explore models of Assistive Living as well as provide highlights of this setting built to support individuals that have experienced moderate to severe brain injury.

10:15 - 10:45 Nutrition and Networking Break

10:45-11:15 Session A
eRehabilitation™ - The Future of Rehabilitation
Arden McGregor, MA, CPsych, CBIST and Dennis Radman, HBSc, RRP, CBIST
eRehabilitation™ is a comprehensive web based treatment platform using interactive audio, video, and/or data streaming to deliver quality rehabilitation services at a distance. eRehabilitation™ integrates today's technologies with long standing, evidence-based face-to-face practices maximizing service quality and efficacy of treatment delivery. This presentation explores the use of eRehabilitation™ and discusses the changing service requirements of traditional rehabilitation services.

Session B
Female Students’ with Acquired Brain Injury: Experiences in University
Kendra Gottschall B.A. (Hons), B.S.W., M.S.W., R.S.W., Clinical Social Worker-Antigonish, N.S
Brain injury has become a more topical issue over the past decade, however limited research has been done on experiences of university students and few are specific to female students. As a person who acquired a brain injury at the age of sixteen, Kendra has lived experience with navigating the postsecondary system, in addition to the research findings of her study. This Master of Social Work research answers the question: “How has having an acquired brain injury impacted the experience of female students within postsecondary education?”
11:15 - 11:30  Break

11:30 - 12:15  
**A whole-person, neuroplasticity-based approach to brain injury rehabilitation**  
_Tatiana Reymarova_
This interactive, hands-on workshop will present the basics of a brain injury rehabilitation program the author has been developing over the past three years. Participants will be introduced to the “rules” governing neuroplasticity—the conditions that provide the optimal environment for our brain to notice, accept, and integrate new information, and thereby have a crucial bearing on rehabilitation outcomes in all spheres: physical, emotional, cognitive, or social. Participants will take away concrete techniques for creating these conditions in their life.

12:15 - 1:15  Lunch, Speaker Peter Stoffer

1:15 - 2:00  
**Hand in Hand in Halifax**  
_Randi Monroe, Director, Capital Health and Bill Bean, CEO, QEII Foundation_
Randi and Bill will highlight how two important projects will impact neurological care – from the OR to the road to recovery. The Neuroscience Alliance will create Atlantic Canada’s first academic neuroscience program, focusing on preventing, and treating, neuro and sensory system disorders and conditions. The Revitalizing Rehab campaign is restoring aquatic therapy and two new state of the art independent living apartments for patients and their families at the Nova Scotia Rehabilitation Centre. This session will demonstrate how the Neuroscience Alliance and Revitalizing Rehab go hand in hand when it comes to improving patient care here in Halifax.

2:00 - 2:15  Break

2:15 - 2:45  
**How to Apply the Research in Neuroplasticity to Heal Concussions**  
_Dr. Joanny Liu, TCMD, RAc, PEng Calgary, Alberta_
Dr. Joanny will discuss how the research in neuroscience and neuroplasticity supports practical clinical application. The brain can be used to heal the brain. This follows a new trend in medicine that is beginning to understand how one’s psychological wellbeing heavily influences one’s physical wellbeing. She will include quickly, a few practical and concrete solutions to help rewire the brain to begin the healing process. In fact, the entire healing process requires a major and committed pattern interrupt.

2:45 - 3:15  
**Session A**  
_Exploring the Potential Role of Complementary Alternative Medicine (CAM) Therapies in Concussion Management_  
Swapna Mylabathula and Sandhya Mylabathula
While conventional medicine and the current approach are still necessary, the added component of CAM features may be especially beneficial in contributing to a more comprehensive approach that addresses the unique nature of the injury through a personalized approach.

**Session B**  
_All age helmet legislation for skiing and snowboarding: a multifaceted approach for the prevention of brain injury in Nova Scotia_  
_Lynne Fenerty, RN, BN, CNCC(c), DO(MP) Research Manager / Parachute Coordinator, Neuro-Trauma & Injury Prevention Programs Capital Health, Division of Neurosurgery-Halifax, Nova Scotia_
Public policy is an effective strategy for behavior change and promoting health and safety. Nova Scotia is the first jurisdiction in the world to mandate ski and snowboard helmet use for all ages at ski hills in the province. This study represents a longitudinal examination of helmet use in skiers and snowboarders before and after snow sport helmet legislation.
3:15- 3:30  Break

3:30- 4:30  Panel on Concussion

A panel format will be used to cover the continuum of concussion management. Current definitions will be explored through an anatomical and management review. Complex concussion and models of care will be discussed as well as the challenges faced in achieving effective return to school, work and play. The patient perspective on concussion will be presented with a survivor’s story and current concussion resources put forth during the open audience panel discussion.

Panel participants will include:
Moderator- Dr. Erica Baker, Lynne Fenerty, RN, Dr. Tina Atkinson, Dr. Joan Backman, Isabelle Germain, and a clinician from the Acquired Brain Injury Program, NS Rehab Centre, Swapna Mylabathula, Sandhya Mylabathula, Dr. Joanny Liu

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440 Laurier Ave. West, Suite 200,
Ottawa, Ontario, K1R 7X6
Toll free: 1-866-977-2492
Local calls: (613) 762-1222
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Holiday Inn Harbourview
Tuesday, April 14th
7:00-9:00pm

In conjunction with the
"Brain Injury Matters" Conference
Halifax, 2015

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