



**Acquired
Brain Injury
Network**

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Hilton Toronto • Toronto

Conference Presentation Abstract ~ Workshop

Date/Time/Room: Tuesday, November 4, 2008 10:55 am – 11:40 am Toronto I / II

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Title:

Lifespan Issues in Traumatic Brain Injury

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Presenter:

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Summary:

Brain injury creates a lifetime of disability for the individual and affects the person, and their caregivers. The consequence of aging with a brain injury requires significant resource availability and management to sustain independence. The role of case management will constantly be evolving as individuals age with a disability acquired early in life.

Description: As more individuals enter into the ranks of those living with severe disabilities caused by brain injury, we are better able to understand the convergence between the disabilities acquired in brain injury and the accelerated consequences of aging. Individuals living with the effects of severe brain injury will experience shifts and changes in life processes including: social role; maintaining independence; family life; the world of work and the problems associated with aging. Growing old with severe disabilities caused by brain injury involves the early onset of health problems, furthered by disparities in healthcare resources and access to those resources. Additionally, the role of the caregiver requires significant education, support and resource management as the needs of the individual they help evolve and change over time. The long term survivor studies serve to alert us to the healthcare risks which can occur throughout the aging process and impact on independence and care needs. Assisting individuals with severe brain injury as they age requires that we examine aspects of our brain injury resource systems and consider what is needed to enhance and support a quality of life for people aging with a brain injury. The presentation will use information from long term outcome studies involving survivors of severe brain injury to create a realistic view of the lifespan issues.

Relevance: Effective case management requires integration between the individual, their caregivers and family, rehabilitation professionals and community resource managers. As individuals with severe disability age, their needs will change and broaden. This presentation will provide important information to understand the impact of disability on the normal aging process and what is needed to increase the effectiveness of case management.

Format: The presentation provides citations to benchmarked and recognized long term outcome studies and other relevant research. Six brief case vignettes will be used to illustrate aspects of the aging process who are 10-22 years post injury.

Outcomes/Objectives:

- Develop an understanding of the long term aspects of brain injury.
- Examine severity, age at onset and other issues which affect outcomes
- Develop an understanding of the costs associated with lifetime disability
- Understand the needs of caregivers, including the problems of co-aging
- Review strategies associated with improving long term outcomes
- Examine the issues of "growing up" with a disability related to brain injury.