



**Acquired  
Brain Injury  
Network**

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## **Conference Presentation Abstract ~ Poster**

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**Title:**

**Building Capacity Locally through Global Collaboration: The Value of the International Network of Social Workers in ABI**

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**Summary:**

Most Canadian acquired brain injury (ABI) programs have social workers who provide a broad range of interventions including assessment, case management, individual and family counselling and education, advocacy and care planning. However, as a relatively new area for medical social work practice, there are currently no profession-specific training or education opportunities. This experience is echoed in many countries. In order to address such issues, the International Network of Social Workers in Acquired Brain Injury (INSWABI) was founded in 2006, and now has a membership of 70 social workers across nine countries. INSWABI operates through an e-mail network and website.

The mission of INSWABI is "Through international collaboration, [to] advance the social work contribution to the field of acquired brain injury (ABI), for the benefit of people with ABI, their families, significant others and broader support networks." INSWABI members have identified a number of initial tasks to progress this agenda. These include: (i) surveying and addressing the training needs of social workers practicing in the field of ABI; (ii) creating a network of social work researchers with an interest in ABI; and (iii) documenting approaches to the management of clinically complex cases.

In addition, a number of ANSWABI members are involved in an international multi-centre project to develop a new family outcome measure. In light of the geographic dispersal of ABI programs and services across Canada, INSWABI provides an invaluable forum for social workers practicing across rural and urban areas to come together. The network also allows for the sharing and development of evidence-based practice knowledge and research that is specific to the Canadian health care context.

**Outcomes/Objectives:**

To let Social Workers in ABI know about INSWABI

To have input into INSWABI projects from as diverse a group of professionals as possible