

HEADWAY OXFORDSHIRE NEWSLETTER



Headway Oxfordshire, 4 Bagley Wood Road, Kennington, Oxford, OX1 5PL.
September 2011

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Foreword by Jamie Miller

Headway Oxfordshire have been successful in our tender to provide an ABI Advisor Service linked with the JR Trust Hospitals—read more below. We are also recruiting for Community Support Workers and Personal Assistants this month.

The need for acknowledgement and action around those who may not be eligible for “personal budgets” under the new social care system, remains very high on our agenda and we will be continuing to make the case for statutory support. As always, we appreciate the generosity of all those that have supported us so far this year.

Quote of the month:

Healing is a matter of time—but it is sometimes also a matter of opportunity. Hippocrates, *Precepts*,

ABI Advisor

Headway Oxfordshire, in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council and the Primary Care Trust, is able to provide a new community service, effective 1 September.

In this post, the ABI Advisor will work with individuals and their families for approximately 6 weeks (time scale is flexible), and will create a Personal Support Plan (PSP) to facilitate a decrease in hospital stays, waiting time for discharge from hospital and create a smooth pathway through various stages of recovery after brain injury.

This service is also open to individuals who are already out of hospital and are further down the line of their rehabilitation, where a PSP can be developed to help increase independence, overall level of support and interaction between health/social care professionals.

If you would like to know more about this service or make a referral, please contact Jamie Stalker: our Lead Community Worker on 07775 022 682 or email him

jamie@headway-oxford.org.uk

Annual General Meeting

Friday 21 October 2011 from 11.15 a.m.

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of Headway Oxfordshire will be held at Headway, 4 Bagley Wood Road, Kennington, Oxford OX1 5PL at 11.15 a.m. on Friday 21st October 2011.

Our Guest Speaker is Nicola Blackwood, MP for Oxford West and Abingdon.

The AGM will commence at 11.15, and will conclude with a light lunch at 12.15 p.m. We would be pleased if you could join us. Further details available from the Secretary of the Management Committee, Vivienne Taylor, at vivienne.taylor@maverex.co.uk

What is a Personal Assistant?

by Pat Mangan

I have been part of the Headway Oxford Centre for several years, initially as a volunteer and later as a member of staff. Some months ago, I was asked to help one of our Service Users, by providing personal assistance one day a week. Many Direct Payments service users choose a Personal Assistant (PA) as a solution to their care needs, empowering them to ‘take control’ and get much more out of life. Throughout the summer I have been busy helping my client build an aviary in his garden—and this is now fully operational, housing several species of birds, and bringing enjoyment to the whole family. We have both achieved so

much, and the whole experience has been very enjoyable.

Headway Oxfordshire is currently recruiting PAs to help other clients. Details and job description from carole@headway-oxford.org.uk. Tel: 01865 326263



The Royal Caribbean Independence of the Sea

Fantastic opportunity to join a 4 night short-break cruise on the largest liner in the world. Departing Southampton on **Saturday 5 May 2012**, with stopover in Ireland and your chance to visit and kiss the Blarney Stone!!

Independence of the Sea features an interactive water park, the *H2O Zone*, a dedicated sports pool for volleyball and basketball, and whirlpools which extend from the ship's sides. It houses an internal shopping 'street', the *Royal Promenade*, lined with shops, pubs and wine bars, and fantastic dining. There is the three story *Alhambra* theatre, seating 1,200, and a show cabaret lounge, known as the Pyramid Lounge, based on an Egyptian theme. On a lower level is an ice skating rink, home to a series of professional ice shows, and available for personal skating.

Independence of the Seas also features heated, fresh water pools, and a sports deck with a rock climbing wall, a basketball/hockey court, a mini golf course, and a FlowRider® surf simulator. This 15-deck, 1,112 foot long ship accommodates 4,370 passengers. Prices from £379 pp sharing – but these are being snapped up!

All money raised through this group booking will be donated to Headway Oxfordshire.

Enquiries to: Leo Boles 01865 739739 or email advancetools@btconnect.com.

Kennington Choir supports Headway Oxfordshire

The Kennington & District United Church Choirs meet on a regular basis, and perform oratorios in the spring, lighter non-religious works in the summer, and an annual performance of The Messiah in the autumn. This year Kennington Choirs will be performing Handel's Messiah at the Holywell Music Rooms, Holywell Street, Oxford OX1 3SA, with the collection made for the benefit of Headway.

Performance starts at 3.00 p.m. Sunday 9 October

Admission is FREE and everybody is welcome

Good Luck to James Pearce

who is completing the Snowdonian Marathon on 29 October in aid of Headway Oxfordshire. Headway have nominated James as an Olympic Torchbearer, and he has successfully passed the first stage! Final decision in December.

www.justgiving.com/james-pearce

James wishes to compete in next year's Brighton Marathon, and this charity is able to purchase 5 places for this event. Would anyone like to join James? Please contact carole@headway-oxford.org.uk, tel 01865 326263, for further details.

Charity Dinner 2011

Headway Oxfordshire's Charity Dinner on 23 July was a great success, raising, with the proceeds from the raffles, in excess of £1,000. Thanks to all those who attended—with special thanks to those who got into character and actively participated in the Sherlock Holmes

mystery. You were all great, and some people gave really memorable performances.

The results

of the Summer Raffle Draw were:

1st prize £250 Julie Dean; 2nd prize £150 Mrs A J Manning; 3rd prize £50 Geoff Malcolm; 4th prize Voucher for Four Pillars Dinner Fiona Burne; 5th prize Voucher for Oxford City Tour Shirley Lockhart; 6th prize Voucher for Randolph Dinner A M Bowdon; 7th prize Voucher for Blenheim Palace Mr Sear.



Headway Oxfordshire—Golf Day

Headway Oxfordshire's Charity Golf Day will be held at Frilford Heath—one of Oxfordshire's most prestigious golf courses—on Thursday 17 May 2012, as part of Acquired Brain Injury Week. Individual players, pairs and teams of 4 are invited to join us, and to log their interest in this event. Further details are available from Jamie Stalker email jamie@headway-oxford.org.uk, or phone 07775022682, and will be available on our website as soon as possible.

Messing about on the River

We thank the Oxford North Rotary Club and the Abingdon Rotary who were both kind enough to provide our service users with a day excursion on canal barges. Eighteen members of Headway Oxfordshire, with volunteers and staff, enjoyed beautiful scenery on two excursions during June.



Sad Farewell

We say a fond farewell to our Community Support Worker, Rachel Coates. Rachel joined us in April 2011, and quickly established herself as an important member of our Team. She has been active in the community, assisting many service users and family members. Rachel is now moving to London, and returning to University, studying Occupational Therapy. We wish her well in her future career.

Hormonal Imbalance following Brain Injury

Headway UK's website includes information on hormonal imbalances following brain injury. The website states: "In the early stages after brain injury most people's hormone levels are severely affected, making diagnosis of hypopituitarism difficult. Later in the recovery process it may become clear that some symptoms are caused by hormonal changes and some rehabilitation units test for this on assessment. However, there are currently no clear guidelines in place for the assessment and treatment of pituitary function after brain injury and **more research is needed to determine the scale of the problem.**" Visit <http://www.headway.org.uk/hormonal-imbalance.aspx> for more information.

The following article has been submitted by Joanne Lane, whose son committed suicide some three years ago, at the age of 31. Joanne is now campaigning for better recognition of this condition.

A Secret Discovered after Death by Joanna Lane

Our son took his life three years ago aged 31. What we discovered afterwards is something we must share with everyone who has ever had a head injury.

Although Chris had a girlfriend for four years, we found from old letters that he had been impotent. Speaking to her we learned that this, together with his depression, had lain behind their break-up. This sad secret explained so many things, particularly his lack of confidence when he was so attractive and kind, so popular and so good at his job. It also explained why he'd never 'moved on' in the six years after their split – because he must have feared any new relationship would be doomed. How hard his final year must have been for him, filled as it was with family weddings and babies. But this was not all. We found research showing his impotence was in all probability caused by a serious head injury in childhood. Damage to the pituitary gland can show itself years later, for example after adolescence, and cause, not only sexual problems, but depression too. But nobody warned us, nobody knew, even though some research had already appeared in the '70s.

Post-traumatic hypopituitarism or PTHP is often not diagnosed, or diagnosed years afterwards, because medics are just not aware how common it is. At least five people treated Chris for depression but nobody thought of his past brain injury and checked his hormone levels. In fact, around 25% of survivors of traumatic brain injury, even mild, have pituitary damage. For the past three years we have been doing all we can to raise awareness, because there must be many head injury survivors who, like Chris, have no idea why they are suffering, or that there is treatment that could help them.

We learned that hypopituitarism (after a head injury at any age) can affect fertility as well as sex drive, weight problems, muscle loss, fatigue and diabetes insipidus—yet all these can be treated with hormone replacement.

I was pleased to learn recently that the military hospital at Headley Court is screening head-injured soldiers routinely for PTHP. I have been told the US Army also screen their soldiers. If anyone deserves the best possible treatment soldiers do – but why are civilian patients not even warned?

<http://www.headinjuryhypo.org.uk> lists more research. If anyone feels our son's story strikes a chord, please get in touch (020 8660 5774, joannalane@blueyonder.co.uk).

HEADWAY CARERS' GROUP

A group set up for carers of an adult with an acquired brain injury

My name is Toppo Tysoe and I am a community support worker with Headway Oxfordshire. I have taken over the role of Carers' Co-ordinator from Nicki Holland, who remains as Day Centre Manager, and hope that my extensive background of working with carers will help formulate a structured Carers Support Programme. In order to provide the support that is needed, we are consulting with all carers with whom we currently have contact.

Thank you to everyone who has returned completed questionnaires: your opinion is important to us, and we need to know what YOU need to make YOUR life a little easier. If you are a Carer, or family member of someone affected by an acquired brain injury, and have not received a copy of this questionnaire, please do contact me on 01865 326263, or mobile 07775 022683 or email Toppo@headway-oxford.org.uk

There are currently no arranged dates for monthly Carers' Group meetings. Support meetings will be re-arranged as soon as possible.

A Journey To Volunteering

By Katharine Fernwood



I have been volunteering at Headway for three months now, and I find it very rewarding. You may have seen me chatting to members, making tea or playing games. What may not be immediately obvious is that I, also, have had an acquired brain injury – I had

a spontaneous left temporal lobe intracerebral haemorrhage and a craniotomy seven years ago. Although the brain, initially, was a subject of great distress to me, after a long period of rehabilitation and an increased acceptance of my deficits, it started to be a topic of immense interest to me. So much so that I started, and will soon finish, a six-year part-time psychology degree with The Open University.

My personal (and academic) understanding of acquired brain injuries means that I feel I am able to appreciate what members are looking for: to be listened to without being judged; to be encouraged and supported with their activities (e.g. the brain gym or word puzzles); and to feel a valued member of Headway, as well as the wider community. I don't really discuss my stroke with the members; my volunteering is not about me - it's about helping and supporting others... and being beaten at dominoes!

"We specialise in representing clients who have suffered a brain injury as a result of an accident.."

For more information please contact

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or 01235 771234

www.clmlaw.co.uk

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www.headwayoxford.org.uk

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Newsletter costs:

In order to save postage costs, we are attempting to move towards electronic Newsletters—although we are pleased to continue to send you printed Newsletters if you prefer.

Newsletter contributions:

We welcome articles for inclusion in our Newsletter—either from personal experiences or