



Minister John Moloney officially opens Acquired Brain Injury Ireland Day Resource Centre in Dun Laoghaire

Individualised Rehabilitation Programmes must be central to national rehabilitation strategy

Wednesday 4th March 2009: Side by Side, a new Day Resource Centre for people with an acquired brain injury (ABI) was officially opened by Mr John Moloney, T.D. Minister for Equality, Disability and Mental Health, in Dun Laoghaire today.

Side By Side has been opened by Acquired Brain Injury Ireland with funding from the HSE. Formerly known as The Peter Bradley Foundation, Acquired Brain Injury Ireland is the leading advocate for, and provider of services to, people with Acquired Brain Injury in Ireland.

Speaking at the official opening, Minister Moloney said; "An acquired brain injury can have a devastating impact on the individual impairing them mentally, physically and socially. To be able to meet in a supportive and encouraging environment where their social, educational and vocational needs are met is a huge benefit not just to those attending the centre but also to their families.

"Side by Side is an important step in the journey those attending the centre are making towards living as independent a life as possible. Members are encouraged to take an active part in running the centre and each makes a positive contribution, no matter how small. It may sound like a small thing, but it is a marvellous approach which epitomises the ethos of Acquired Brain Injury Ireland - Maximising Abilities, Changing Lives.

"I am delighted to officially open the new Side by Side Day Resource Centre and congratulate Acquired Brain Injury Ireland and the HSE on this wonderful initiative. I wish all those who will use the centre many happy years."

19 people attend the Side by Side centre where they can enjoy activities ranging from art, drama, music therapy, head massage, digital photography, literacy and brain gym exercises. They actively participate in the running of the centre. It is they who decide what activities they would like to undertake and Acquired Brain Injury Ireland staff act as facilitators to help them with the organisation of their activities and events.

Previously located on the grounds of the National Rehabilitation Hospital, the new centre on Northumberland Avenue in Dun Laoghaire is close to public transport, shops, education and leisure facilities, providing an ideal environment for personal growth and community involvement. The centre also boasts improved internal wheelchair access and facilities.

Ms. Barbara O'Connell, Chief Executive of Acquired Brain Injury Ireland said "We are delighted to officially open the Side by Side Day Resource Centre and we are very grateful to the Health Service Executive for supporting the organisation on this venture.

"As those working in this area know, one size does not fit all when treating a brain injury. Each individual is unique; each brain injury is unique and the impact it has on the person is unique to that person. That is why individualised rehabilitation programmes are so important. Acquired Brain Injury Ireland's work in this area is regularly discussed at international conferences in Europe, the USA and Canada, where the support we receive from government, though the HSE, for this approach to care is seen as world leading best practice.

"As the government works towards developing a national rehabilitation strategy it is important that we stop and consider carefully the type of rehabilitation care we want to provide in Ireland in the years ahead. At the centre of this strategy must be, I believe, individualised rehabilitation programmes based on the type of injury and the needs of the person".

Ms. O'Connell said that the new name of The Peter Bradley Foundation, Acquired Brain Injury Ireland is "more appropriate to the people we serve, the work we do and the regions in which we operate. Acquired Brian Injury Ireland is, and will continue to be, the leading advocate for, and provider of services to, people with acquired brain injury in Ireland. We will continue to put the people who use our services at the centre of everything we do".

Since its establishment Acquired Brain Injury Ireland has led the way in developing and providing services specific to the needs of people with acquired brain injury in Ireland. Today, Acquired Brain Injury Ireland provides Assisted Living Services, Transitional Living Service, Community Rehabilitation Services and Day Resource Services, Rehabilitation Support, Case Management, External Awareness and Education Programme to people with ABI in Ireland.

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About Acquired Brain Injury Ireland

Established in 2000, Acquired Brain Injury Ireland (formerly the Peter Bradley Foundation) was set up to provide a range of pioneering, flexible and tailor-made services to people with Acquired Brain Injury (ABI). The services provided by the organisation place a critical emphasis on client-centeredness, quality, effectiveness and value for money. Rehabilitation and clinical support are key aspects to the service.

Approximately 10,000 people suffer from a head injury in Ireland each year and face a dramatically altered life thereafter. People with ABI progress at different rates, and may need to access services at different points in time as their needs change. Within each stage of rehabilitation a range of different service providers is involved, which must be co-ordinated. Once back in the community the emphasis is on more extended activities of daily living, integration, and return to work or education. Interventions focus on enhanced participation, improved quality of life, psychological adjustment and carer stress. Acquired Brain Injury Ireland is filling a vital service gap, in collaboration with statutory bodies.