



ACQUIRED
BRAIN INJURY
IRELAND

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



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INTRODUCTION FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE

I am pleased to introduce this annual report for 2023 as we reflect on what has been a year of great significance for Acquired Brain Injury Ireland.

At the centre of our year's work are the 1,300 survivors of brain injury whose determination in the face of often life-shattering events drives us to pursue our mission every day. Their resilience fuels our belief that everyone capable of living a more independent life – with integrity and autonomy – should by right have the opportunity. Side by side with survivors, we work passionately every day to rebuild lives after brain injury.

The great strength of Acquired Brain Injury Ireland is its people. This past year, across all areas of the organisation, in every role, our creative, solution-focused staff have embodied our shared values with energy and purpose. I would like to sincerely thank each member of our team for their commitment and drive. Together they demonstrate how powerful a truly person-centred organisation can be in creating positive life changes for those we serve.

As Co-Founder with my husband Maurice, it has been my great privilege to lead this organisation as CEO for 23 years. In that time, I have served alongside so many exceptionally dedicated and skilled colleagues and partners, both statutory and non-statutory, across disciplines, in Ireland north and south.

My life's work has been driven by the incredible, inspirational stories of struggle and resilience of survivors of brain injury and their families. I have met with and been deeply touched by many over the years.

It is, therefore, with deep honour and gratitude for being able to serve this community, and with optimism for the future, that I step aside as Chief Executive at the end of 2023.

The story of Acquired Brain Injury Ireland began with Peter Bradley, my brother, for whom we created our first assisted living house on Adelaide Road, Glenageary, formally Peter's home. Since 2000, our organisation has grown from that one-person service in one house, to 16 residences across the country. We now provide home and community neuro-rehabilitation services, transitional living, clubhouses, case management, family support, vocational programmes, and rehabilitation using digital assistive technology.

We have achieved the highest level of international CARF accreditation annually since 2003, developing our services year on year. We have become a strong voice in advocacy on behalf of the brain injury community in Ireland, and a valued partner in the development of neuro-rehabilitation policy and research.

In partnership with the International Brain Injury Association, this year we hosted the 14th World Congress on Brain Injury in the Convention Centre Dublin. There, Acquired Brain Injury Ireland stood proudly among the best service providers in the world and demonstrated unequivocally that we deliver a neuro-rehabilitation model of global excellence.

On 1st December 2023, Peter passed away quietly and peacefully, and we are deeply saddened to have lost a great friend and member of the Acquired Brain Injury Ireland family. In this organisation, we have always believed in the power of rehabilitation and the right to independent living. But Peter's life has fundamentally changed the landscape of neuro-rehabilitation in Ireland. He was living proof that with the right specialist support and in the right environment it is possible to leave a nursing home and live a long, fulfilled and meaningful life in the community. Peter will forever be remembered for the legacy he left behind for so many survivors in this country.

I also believe that as Acquired Brain Injury Ireland prepares to navigate its next strategic phase, it is poised for a new period of growth and development. I am exceedingly grateful to our Boards past and present, to colleagues, funders, supporters and partners who have journeyed with us in pursuit of our mission for the past 23 years, and continue to stand alongside the organisation as it embarks on its next chapter. The future is an exciting prospect for us all.

Barbara O'Connell
Chief Executive
Acquired Brain Injury Ireland



MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR

Acquired Brain Injury Ireland will look back on 2023 with a deep sense of pride and achievement.

It was a year in which the organisation resumed full operations post-pandemic, secured funding to sustain and launch new national projects, and grew its services with expert clinical oversight. It campaigned for 'a pathway home' for the estimated 120,000 people living with a disability as the result of an acquired brain injury in Ireland, and partnered on an important strategic direction paper for neuro-rehabilitation services for children and young people.

In 2023 Acquired Brain Injury Ireland also hosted the 14th biennial World Congress on Brain Injury, the largest global gathering of brain injury researchers, practitioners and professionals working in the field. This represented the culmination of years of work and collaboration to bring the Congress to Dublin, and an opportunity for Irish research to be showcased on the world stage. Over three days, colleagues from across our organisation platformed the impact of its work for those living with or impacted by an acquired brain injury.

Having clear data to evidence the effectiveness of our rehabilitation approach is something of which Acquired Brain Injury Ireland is very proud. Our latest clinical outcomes measurement report demonstrated again how those who access neuro-rehabilitation services closer to the time of their injury are more likely to maximise recovery. It also proved that the limitations of the people we serve reduce over time, indicating that our services are indeed having a positive impact. Of course, what follows is a reduction of caregiver burden, and a reduced ongoing cost of care to the state and the HSE.

It is for these very reasons that our top strategic priority continues to be to make access to vital brain injury services more equitable, regardless of geography or financial circumstances. This will only be possible with adequate resourcing, joined-up thinking and appropriate levels of investment. We look forward to engaging with our partners in the HSE and Government over the coming year as we seek to close the sizeable gaps along the rehabilitation pathway for survivors of brain injury, and to advocate for the realisation of the human right to rehabilitation.

The significant work of Acquired Brain Injury Ireland is, of course, driven by strong leadership and an intrinsic, value-led culture. As she prepares to step down from her role as Chief Executive, on behalf of the Board I would like to acknowledge the exceptional contribution of Barbara O'Connell to this organisation and to the brain injury community in Ireland. Her vision and drive over the past 23 years have spearheaded a movement of great change in Irish rehabilitation services. Motivated to create a more fulfilled, meaningful future for survivors of brain injury, and with the support of her committed team, Barbara has worked tirelessly in pursuit of our mission:

To passionately serve and relentlessly advocate to empower and support people impacted by brain injury to rebuild their lives.

As Acquired Brain Injury Ireland prepares to turn its attention to development of a new strategy in 2024, I believe we have the momentum, energy and expertise to build on the strong foundations of the past two decades, do justice to Barbara's important work, and the legacy of her late brother, Peter Bradley.

This annual report also creates an opportunity for me to recognise the expert guidance and oversight of our dedicated Board of Directors, and to thank our funders, donors and supporters for trusting us to deliver on our shared goals.

I look forward to what we can achieve together in the year ahead.

Clair Cullinan
Chair of the Board
Acquired Brain Injury Ireland



ABOUT US

A brain injury can happen to anyone, at any time. It could be your mother. It could be your brother. It could even be you. We believe every brain injury survivor should have the chance to rebuild their life and live it to the fullest, and we will never stop campaigning to make that belief a reality.

Established in 2000 with a single assisted living house in Dublin, our services have grown to support some 1,300 brain injury survivors every year.



OUR VISION

A society where brain injury is understood and all those impacted receive world-class, personalised rehabilitation and support, as and when they need it.



OUR MISSION

We will passionately serve and relentlessly advocate to empower and support people impacted by brain injury to rebuild their lives.



OUR VALUES

Dignity and Respect: We treat each other with the utmost dignity and respect in our interactions.

Relationships: We engage meaningfully with each other with honesty, integrity and kindness.

Choices: We empower each other through choices to manage and direct our lives within our capabilities.

Sharing Everyday Places: We value inclusion for all in our communities and sharing everyday experiences.

Contributions: We encourage everyone to play their part, no matter how small.



**IT WAS POOR
AT FIRST –
VERY, VERY
POOR.**

REBUILDING LIVES: MARTY'S STORY

Father's day was meant to be a day of celebration for Marty, but then his life was altered forever.

Two years ago, on Father's Day, Marty woke up with an immense headache. He had been very busy with farm work over the weekend, cutting silage and sowing grass. He was looking forward to spending some quality time with his wife, daughter and son.

While they prepared a special breakfast for their Dad in the kitchen, Marty had fallen to the floor in the bedroom in excruciating pain. When his son, Kieran, went to check on him, he discovered his father in a near unconscious state. Marty had suffered a brain haemorrhage, forever altering the course of his life.

An ambulance was called and Marty was rushed to hospital for acute care.

Over the coming weeks he was transferred for rehabilitation before eventually being discharged home.

The road to recovery proved difficult. Marty's brain injury had led to limited mobility on his right side, and severe difficulty with speech and coordination. His ability to move his hands and legs was compromised.

On his return home, Marty knew he needed more help. In May 2022, following a challenging period of eight months in hospitals, Marty sought the support and services of Acquired Brain Injury Ireland.

Marty and Vivian, his Rehabilitation Assistant, embarked on a transformative journey together. He had to re-learn basic skills that were once effortless, such as forming words and expressing his thoughts. Prior to his injury, Marty had worked at his family contracting business all his adult life, operating large machinery and helping farmers make silage. As a result of his brain injury, his fingers bunched together and his hand stuck in an uncomfortable position, making it impossible to do his job.

But with guidance from Acquired Brain Injury Ireland and with the support of his family, Marty began to reclaim his independence and rebuild his life. In October 2022, he successfully completed his driving test and obtained his driver's license again. Now, with an automatic Jeep, he navigates the world with a newfound freedom.

His confidence soared, allowing him to form new friendships and engage in social activities, a feat he once considered impossible. Marty embraced exercises and games that retrained his brain, memorising words and constructing sentences. The patience, empathy and expertise of the Acquired Brain Injury Ireland team played a pivotal role in his transformation.

Marty's local Acquired Brain Injury Ireland Clubhouse has become a sanctuary for him and for many others who have experienced similar challenges. Clubhouses are places of belonging where survivors of brain injury can meet and continue their rehabilitation journey together.



**I JUST
WANTED TO
GET BETTER.**



I AM A LOT STRONGER THAN I WAS A YEAR AGO AND ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY IRELAND MADE ME FEEL WELCOME AND VERY AT HOME. THEY ALWAYS TAKE THE TIME TO LISTEN TO ME, AND THEY ASK ME, 'WHAT DO I WANT TO DO NEXT? WHAT DO I WANT TO ACCOMPLISH?'

"HE IS JUST SO PERSONAL, SO DRIVEN. FROM THE GET-GO, HE JUST WANTED TO GET BETTER. HE HAS PUT SO MUCH WORK INTO HIMSELF. HE IS AMAZING."

Vivian, Marty's Rehabilitation Assistant

The unwavering support of Marty's family, his team at Acquired Brain Injury Ireland and his own resilient, determined spirit have yielded extraordinary results.

"TODAY, MY SON, KIERAN, IS 16 AND MY DAUGHTER, SIOBHAN, IS COMPLETING HER LEAVING CERT. THEY ARE VERY PROUD OF ME. IT IS GREAT TO HAVE MY FAMILY BACK TOGETHER AGAIN."





WHAT WE DO

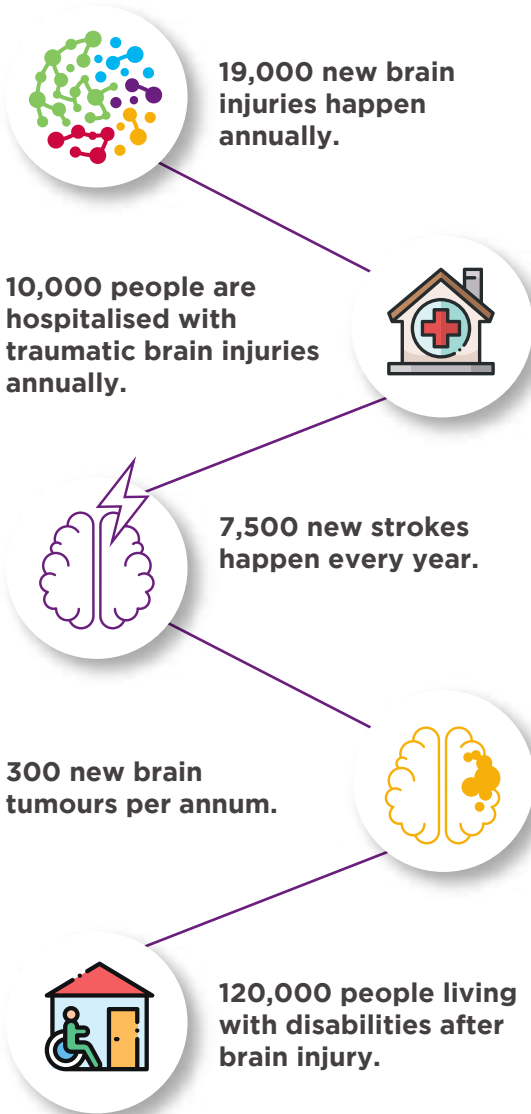
It is estimated that 19,000 people in Ireland acquire a brain injury every year.

At Acquired Brain Injury Ireland, through our community-based rehabilitation services, we help as many of them as we can to return to leading independent lives.

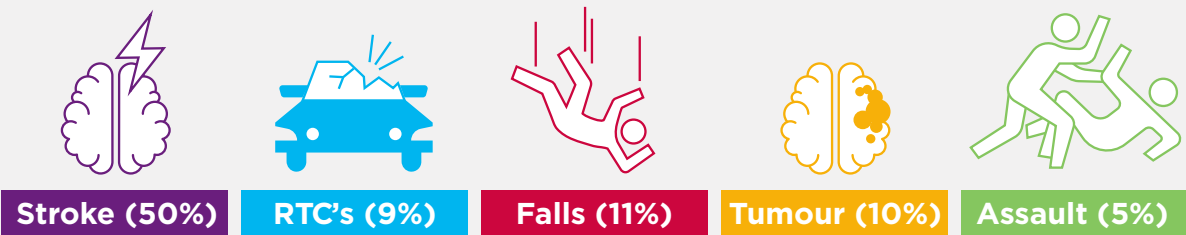
We do this by providing a range of expert clinical services and supports specific to the needs of the person, with individually-designed rehabilitation plans that assist them in reaching their goals.

We provide information, training and practical help to those living with an acquired brain injury, as well as to their carers and healthcare professionals.

We also give people impacted by brain injury a voice so that their rehabilitation needs may be clearly heard, understood and answered by decision makers.



COMMON CAUSES OF BRAIN INJURY IN OUR SERVICES



“GLOBALLY, AN ESTIMATED 10 MILLION PEOPLE ARE IMPACTED BY A TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY EACH YEAR. BY 2020, BRAIN INJURY WILL SURPASS MANY DISEASES AS THE MAJOR CAUSES OF DEATH AND DISABILITY WORLDWIDE.”

- Burke S, et al. (2020)

OUR MODEL OF REHABILITATION

A Person-Centred Approach

Every brain is different, unique to the individual affected. At Acquired Brain Injury Ireland we look at the whole person. We take account of their environment, their ability and support needs. We look at the life they had before their brain injury. We support them and their families through a bio-psychosocial model which considers the biological, psychological and social aspects of rehabilitation.

For this reason, we champion the ‘Individual Rehabilitation Plan’ (IRP). The plan is developed with the individual, their family and our interdisciplinary team with a focus on achieving specific goals related to the individual’s need and personalised rehabilitation. This bespoke person-centred approach to neuro-rehabilitation is at the core of everything we do at Acquired Brain Injury Ireland.

Clinical Leadership

All the support we provide to brain injury survivors and their families is overseen by clinical experts, informed by research and best practice.

Our psychologists, social workers and occupational therapists work as part of an interdisciplinary team to help each person in our services to identify their personal goals and set out their IRP. Our skilled local service managers, team leaders and rehabilitation assistants work with survivors on a day-to-day basis to progress these goals. They are supported by speech and language therapists and physiotherapists when required.

Our clinical neuro-rehabilitation teams:



Our Services

Our expert teams support individuals and their families recovering from the impacts of brain injury with services and tools that help them rehabilitate, adapt and return to their everyday lives with confidence.



Assisted Living

For some survivors of brain injury, returning home after a stay in hospital is not an option straight away. Our assisted living services offer those individuals a home from home, where they can benefit from long-term tailored brain injury rehabilitation. 4 or 5 residents are typically supported in our assisted living houses. In this setting, residents can work on rehabilitation goals related to personal care, cookery, home management and household finances, ultimately maximising their independence in a safe environment with 24/7 support. Community integration is a key focus throughout all our services, and assisted living residents are encouraged to access local amenities such as libraries and leisure facilities.

Home and Community Rehabilitation

Our home and community services deliver one-to-one brain injury rehabilitation to support individuals to achieve their goals at home, and to encourage integration back to community and family life. Often people have experienced some rehabilitation in hospital, but further skills may need to be re-learned at home after discharge. This might include support to build and maintain a daily routine, or manage household activities such as cooking, laundry and personal finance. Our home and community rehabilitation services ensure those individuals continue to make progress on their recovery and maximise their potential after brain injury.

Case Management

When a brain injury happens, survivors and their families often feel overwhelmed and don’t know where to turn. The role of our case managers is designed for these times of distress. Our case managers are brain injury experts who act as a single point of contact, listening to the families’ needs and identifying resources to support their situation. Through our case management service, we help to provide a clear pathway to support the survivor’s transition from hospital to home, linking them to the variety of services they need.



Clubhouses and Group Rehabilitation

Our clubhouses provide vital peer support to enhance independence and encourage learning of new skills. Attendees benefit from group and cognitive rehabilitation in a supportive and welcoming environment. These group rehabilitation services create a space for survivors of brain injury to socialise and develop new relationships, as well as helping them to explore new interests that build on their strengths and capabilities. Our clubhouses are particularly important to support individuals working on goals such as building self-esteem, independence, community involvement and personal growth. They are first and foremost a community, run by and for members with the support of expert staff.

Transitional Rehabilitation

Our transitional living service bridges the gap for brain injury survivors as they prepare to return to independent living at home. The service provides intensive rehabilitation and support in an assisted living setting Monday to Friday, for a period from six weeks up to six months, depending on a person's needs. Currently we operate one transitional living unit in Sligo and we continue to seek funding to grow this much needed service.

Family Support Services

At Acquired Brain Injury Ireland, we understand that a brain injury doesn't just happen to the individual – it happens to the whole family. Delivering support to families is integral to the work we do. Our case managers and social workers play a key role in supporting families to navigate the services and resources that may be available to them. We also provide training, practical help, listening and peer-to-peer support through our free, national 'On With Life Programme for Families and Carers'. There are three strands of the 'On With Life' programme: support for families and carers of adults with an acquired brain injury; for parents and carers of young people under 18 with an acquired brain injury; and for family members and carers preparing to return to work, training or education.

Return to Work and Education

Step Ahead Plus is our free, national vocational assessment and rehabilitation service for adults with an acquired brain injury. Led by skilled occupational therapists and specialist rehabilitation assistants, the service works with each survivor of brain injury to identify their abilities, strengths, and challenges. It also sets out a personalised plan with recommendations and supportive strategies to help every person on their route back to work, training or education.

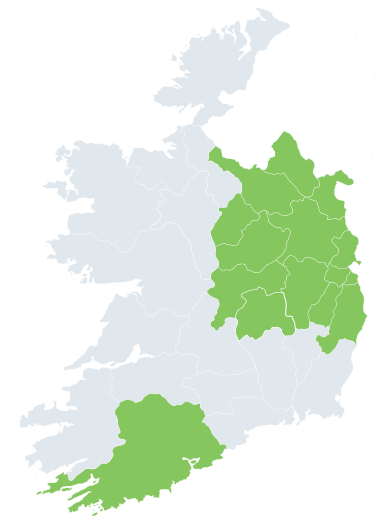
creATe Digital Assistive Technology

For some brain injury survivors, technology and digital tools can play a useful role in overcoming challenges and increasing independence. We provide support to those in our services to access technology to meet their needs through our new creATe digital assistive technology programme.

REHABILITATION SERVICES PROVIDED BY ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY IRELAND



Case Management
Number of clients: 373

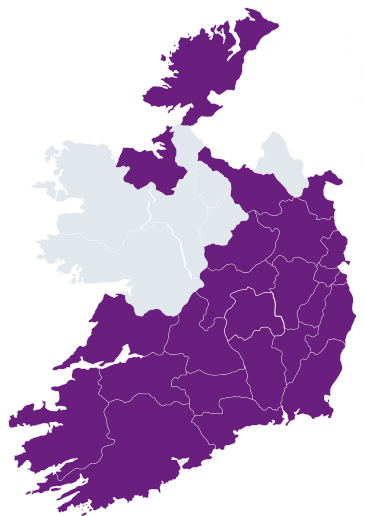


Our Case Managers are brain injury experts who act as a single point of contact providing a clear pathway and linkages to the variety of services to support a person's transition from hospital to home.

- Cavan
- Louth
- Wicklow
- Dublin
- Meath
- Monaghan
- Offaly
- Westmeath
- Kildare
- Laois
- Longford



Home and Community Rehabilitation
Number of clients: 335

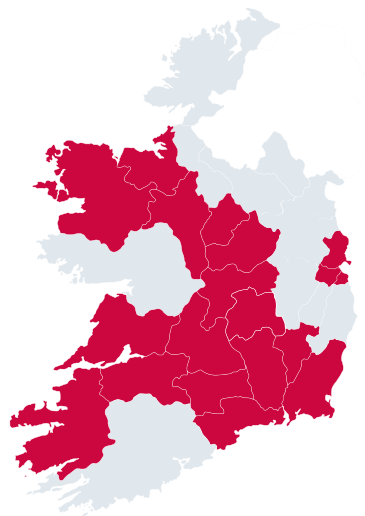


Our Rehabilitation Assistants deliver one-to-one neuro-rehabilitation to support individuals with their rehabilitation goals at home and integrate back into their community and family life.

- Carlow
- Louth
- Wicklow
- Cavan
- Meath
- Offaly
- Monaghan
- Sligo
- Donegal
- Tipperary
- Waterford
- Dublin
- Westmeath
- Wexford
- Kerry
- Wicklow
- Kildare
- Limerick
- Laois



Clubhouses
Number of clients: 479

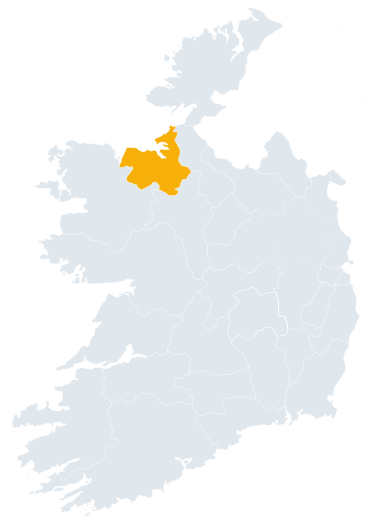


Our Clubhouses provide vital peer support, group rehabilitation and cognitive rehabilitation to enhance independence and encourage learning new skills.

- Carlow
- Mayo
- Clare
- Offaly
- Roscommon
- Dublin
- Sligo
- Kerry
- Tipperary
- Waterford
- Kilkenny
- Westmeath
- Limerick
- Wexford
- Longford



Transitional Living Services
Number of beds: 4

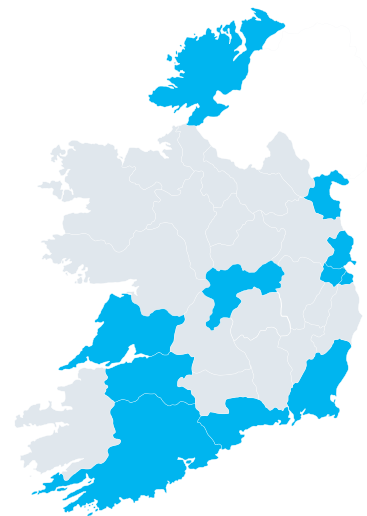


Our transitional living service is a bridge for brain injury survivors to prepare to return to independent living. It provides intensive rehabilitation and support in an assisted living setting from Monday to Friday from six weeks up to six months.

- Sligo



Assisted Living
Number of beds: 66

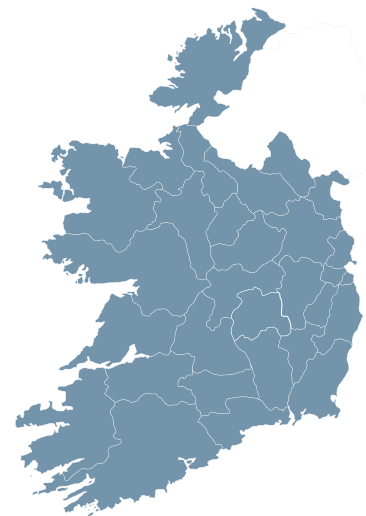


Our unique neuro-rehabilitation assisted living services provide long-term, tailored rehabilitation and support to 4-5 residents in a house to maximise their independence in a safe and homely place on a 24/7 basis.

- Clare
- Louth
- Cork
- Offaly
- Donegal
- Waterford
- Dublin
- Wexford
- Limerick



Family Services
Nationwide



Our family services deliver support nationally through case management and, through the On With Life programme, through family therapy, parenting skills training, carer training and peer support groups.

- Case management
- Parenting skills training
- Family and carer training
- Peer support groups
- Nationwide



OUR COMMITMENT TO QUALITY

Acquired Brain Injury Ireland is committed to providing services at an internationally recognised standard. We deliver on this goal through regular CARF accreditation (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities) – a prestigious and internationally recognised quality mark which signals that the services we provide meet or exceed international best practice. Our organisation has been successfully accredited every three years since 2003.

A Quality Improvement Plan was submitted to CARF, following the CARF Accreditation Inspection in November 2021 which saw successful gold standard accreditation across:

- Home and Community Services (Adults)
- Home and Community Services (Children)
- Residential Rehabilitation Programmes (Adults)
- Governance Standards
- Case Management

This plan set out how the organisation will respond to recommendations received during the 2021 survey and ongoing measures for continuous improvement ahead of the next survey in 2024.

HOW WE MEASURE UP

At Acquired Brain Injury Ireland, our day-to-day work is built on transparency and two-way communication with those we serve. We believe it is of the utmost importance to measure the quality of what we do through the feedback of the survivors in our services. This ensures our standards are maintained and that our clients are continually empowered to achieve their rehabilitation goals.

Every year we run an independent customer satisfaction survey with the people we serve, using the internationally benchmarked uSPEQ model. The uSPEQ survey provides feedback in relation to five key areas: service responsiveness, informed choice, respect, participation, and overall value.

This feedback informs the organisation of any areas of concern, so we can respond to reported issues or needs. It’s also a source of motivation and positively drives our person-centred culture so we can continuously improve and grow our services.

For 2023, here is what the people we serve said:



HEALTH INFORMATION AND QUALITY AUTHORITY (HIQA)

Acquired Brain Injury Ireland's assisted living services are all fully registered with HIQA and monitored under the Health Act 2007 (Care and support of residents in designated centres for persons (children and adults) with disabilities) regulations 2013.

There were several inspections across services in 2023, all with excellent outcomes and positive feedback regarding the work of staff teams and our person-centred practice. Issues that arose were invariably legacy-based and premises-related, due to the establishment of many of our assisted living services in ordinary houses well in advance of regulation in 2013.



2023: THE YEAR IN REVIEW



During 2023, Acquired Brain Injury Ireland continued to work creatively to respond to the identified and often complex needs of a significant acquired brain injury population. Throughout the year, the organisation maintained a range of essential national clinically-led and outcome-focussed services.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS INCLUDE:

- Full HIQA registration in all assisted living services, with all mandatory three-year re-registrations successful.
- A new clubhouse established in Navan, County Meath.
- Additional clinical resources across psychology, occupational therapy and social work funded by the HSE in CHO1, CHO8, CHO4 and CHO3, providing invaluable clinical support for those areas.
- Funding from Pobal secured for the period 2024 - 2029 to ensure the continuation of the Step Ahead Plus vocational assessment and rehabilitation programme, including to serve many of the 160 people currently on the waiting list.
- Success in obtaining funding from the HSE to sustain the creATe digital assistive technology programme, which enables survivors to access technology to support and increase their ability to live independently.
- Additional equipment sourced and additional groups and activities run through grant funding for community services, led by the fundraising department.
- Continued growth in our nine clubhouse services. However, as in previous years, these developments were mainly possible due to the generosity of private grant funders and the support of community fundraising activities.
- As of 2023, Acquired Brain injury Ireland has 16 assisted living services in Dublin (six), Wexford, Waterford, Cork, Limerick, Clare (two), Sligo, Donegal, Drogheda and Offaly. Development of three further assisted living rehabilitation services is underway in Offaly, Kerry and Tipperary.
- Our home and community rehabilitation services continued to be a strong and significant area for the organisation, with 15 services in operation nationally. Developments in this service are largely due to the HSE's funding response to local identified acquired brain injury needs.
- On exiting the Covid-19 pandemic, established protocols and guidance used to keep services and persons served as safe as possible were widened to include a broader infection control approach. Management of Covid-19 locally was devolved to local service managers with support available from senior management as required.





ON WITH LIFE: SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES AND CARERS

2023 saw...

- The launch of ‘On With Training & Employment’, funded by Pobal to provide support to family members and carers preparing to return to work, training or education.
- A well-established network of face-to-face and online peer support groups held nationally throughout the year.
- Delivery of a range of education seminars, workshops and National Carers Day 2023.
- Growth of our programme for parents and carers of young people under 18, through funding from the Community Foundation for Ireland and the Late Late Toy Show Appeal.

STEP AHEAD PLUS: VOCATIONAL ASSESSMENT AND REHABILITATION

DURING 2023

52 → 	52 PERSONS SERVED received one-to-one services
16 → 	16 PERSONS SERVED availed of group services

OUTCOMES

32 → 	32 PERSONS SERVED returned to or were supported in existing or new employment.
21 → 	21 PERSONS SERVED engaged in educational or training courses.

creATe DIGITAL ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

DURING 2023

58 → 	58 PERSONS SERVED were internally referred to creATe.
35 → 	35 PERSONS SERVED were assessed and became active for creATe intervention(s).

Interventions

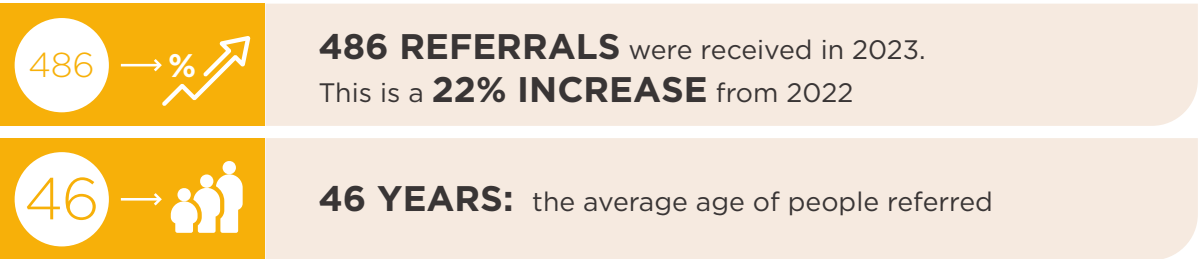
The three most common interventions provided in the creATe service were:

<div>1 </div> <div>Communication Apps or software used to support communication.</div>	<div>2 </div> <div>Cognitive Aids Resources to help with executive function, such as shared calendars and smart devices with reminders.</div>	<div>3 </div> <div>Access – Physical Adaptations and devices that allow for control of technologies.</div>
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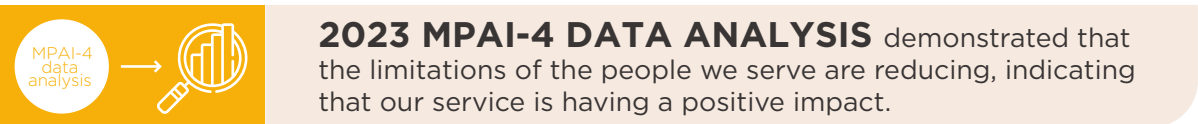
CLINICAL PROGRAMME: OUTCOMES 2023

During 2023, the Clinical Programme Manager role continued to develop as part of the senior services team. There was a key focus on reviewing the organisation’s clinical governance framework, reviewing key policies and procedures, and contributing to learning and development from a rehabilitation perspective.

A Clinical Outcomes Report presented and analysed the trends evident from referrals and in assisted living and home and community services:



At Acquired Brain Injury Ireland we use the MPAI-4 outcome measure to assess the effectiveness of service in our community and assisted living services. The measure provides information about a person’s limitations in three areas: **Abilities, Adjustment, and Participation.**



There is also emerging evidence that those who access our rehabilitation services earlier after injury have a greater reduction in limitations than those who wait longer for input. This data was presented at the IBIA World Congress on Brain Injury in Dublin in March.

HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Housing and Development Department has overall responsibility for all housing and development, including new property acquisition and optimisation of the existing property portfolio. Housing supply is delivered from service need, which requires the full support of the HSE.

The Ombudsman’s ‘Wasted Lives’ report supports the need to acquire additional properties in strategic target growth areas where there has been an identified need for both transitional and assisted living houses. There is an active focus on CHO3, CHO4, and CHO5 areas. The viability of such services has full support from the HSE, Local Authorities and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

An emphasis on sustainability is also a key driver for the property portfolio. Older properties are being refurbished to align with the overall property strategy. Universal design and developing barrier-free dwellings in existing communities is critical in the delivery of this objective in line with government policies.

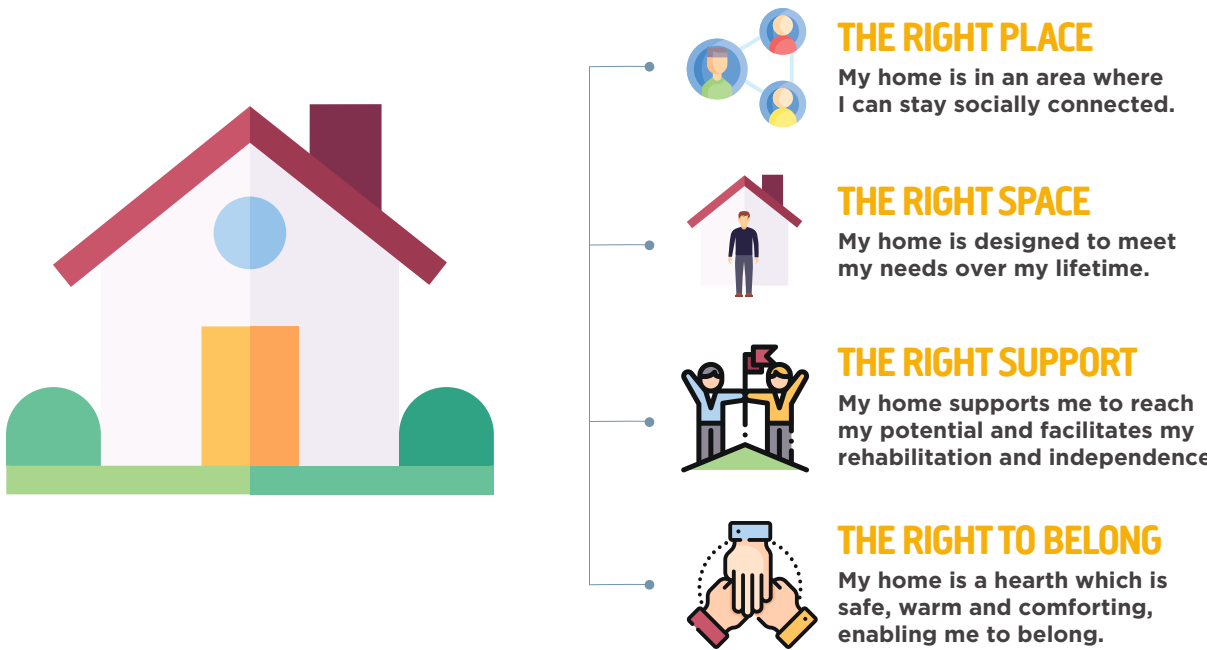
In 2023, the Housing and Development Department agreed the acquisition of a 9-bed assisted living service in CHO3 and full refurbishment of assisted living houses at 69 and 70 Adelaide Road, Dublin (CHO6).

Anvers Housing

Working in conjunction with Acquired Brain Injury Ireland, Anvers Housing is the approved housing body that provides supported housing and independent living options for people with an acquired brain injury. The housing model requires a whole of government approach including the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, the Department of Health, and the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. Anvers Housing properties represent an award-winning model recognised by the Irish Council for Social Housing Community Housing with Supports Award in 2023.

Existing Anvers Housing properties are funded by the government through the Capital Assistance Scheme and facilitate supported housing options for Acquired Brain Injury Ireland and the person served.

The core principles adopted by Acquired Brain Injury Ireland and Anvers Housing are: The Right Space; The Right Place; The Right to Belong and The Right Support. Together, both organisations will continue to provide accommodation to meet these principles.



OUR PEOPLE

Just as every brain injury is unique, at Acquired Brain Injury Ireland our people are unique. Our teams are highly skilled and qualified in their area and extremely passionate about the work they do. Rebuilding lives through rehabilitation takes time. In addition to key skills, it requires the ability to see things differently and think outside the box. That’s why we place so much value on our team of problem-solvers, who have an ability to drive everyday solutions to help those in our services adapt to life after their brain injury.

Providing choice is at the heart of what we do. Our teams thrive on finding creative solutions to preserve the right to choose for the people we serve. Our approach to service delivery is about partnership and collaboration. Building positive relationships between rehabilitation assistants and the people they serve is essential to achieving personalised goals.

During 2023, our average employee headcount was 377 to meet the requirements of the organisation (2022: 352).

Human Resources (HR)

The HR Team provides a broad range of services to the organisation across the employee life cycle, including recruitment, induction and training, employee engagement, HR administration, performance management, learning and development and data protection.

Recruitment was a key focus of 2023, ensuring adequate staffing in an increasingly competitive marketplace. 110 roles were filled during the year. A project to streamline the recruitment process initiated in 2022 was recognised as a finalist at the Irish Healthcare Awards 2023.

A significant Garda re-vetting project was completed in 2023, with 180 colleagues re-vetted over the course of the year. The HR team also ensured successful delivery of pay scale adjustment for colleagues in the second quarter of 2023.

Employee engagement remained an important consideration in 2023. Four

“I HAVE BEEN OFFERED MANY OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP NEW SKILLS AND I HAVE ENJOYED MY TIME WORKING WITH ABI IRELAND.”

“THE VALUES, BELIEFS, ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS THAT CONSTITUTE ABI IRELAND’S ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE HAVE A POSITIVE INFLUENCE ON MY WORK ETHIC.”

national Colleague Engagement Days were hosted in October, with 65% of the entire team attending in person to network with leadership, peers and to hear organisational updates. This marked the first group face-to-face engagement for the organisation since before the Covid-19 pandemic.

In conjunction with the Executive Assistant to the CEO, all data protection activity was successfully completed. A data protection audit was carried out in April 2023 and its subsequent actions were implemented.

In 2023...



Learning and Development

Acquired Brain Injury Ireland continues to invest in its team by offering learning and development opportunities in a blended format, including through use of an online learning platform. 2023 saw an increase in training completions, now standing at 94%. 5,847 hours of training were completed in total. This averages 14.3 hours per colleague. 151 courses were delivered to 408 participants, with all material rooted in our vision, mission and values, and ensuring our compliance with regulatory requirements.

A key initiative in 2023 was the recruitment of 13 colleagues to volunteer as trainers. These people, from a cross section of roles within the organisation, offer their time and expertise to deliver training across a range of programmes including fire safety, first aid, manual handling, and PMAV levels 1 and 2.

Information Technology (IT)

The IT Department noted improvements to support services for the organisation during 2023, with 3,331 support calls logged throughout the year. Subsequently, reliance on third party support was reduced by 18% to 6.9%, ensuring better in-house outcomes.

In the first quarter of the year, the department supported the creATe Digital Assistive Technology Programme team to procure the technologies it uses to support persons served.

The legacy fileserver to SharePoint migration was also successfully completed. In total, more than 200 network shares and a million files were migrated.

In September, some 18 months after a proposal to the HSE for cybersecurity funding, Acquired Brain Injury Ireland received funding to make improvements for its network. The HSE provided €164k in funding for the project, to include year 1 license subscriptions and project management costs. This work will continue into 2024.

POLICY AND ADVOCACY

Brain injury is a hidden phenomenon in Irish society. Too often people who acquire brain injuries are young and, due to the lack of services available at the time of their injury, they are often left in inappropriate settings such as nursing homes, community hospitals or at home where families are unable to cope.

This highlights a greater need for awareness around brain injury. The more people who understand acquired brain injury at political level, in the health system and widely in the public, the easier it is to push for the services needed to support individuals and their families.

At Acquired Brain Injury Ireland, we give people impacted by brain injury a voice so that their rehabilitation needs may be clearly heard, understood and answered by decision makers. **We do this by:**



Making submissions and policy briefings based on the real experiences of brain injury survivors and their families



Partnering with other organisations who respond to the rehabilitation needs of brain injury survivors



Putting those with lived experience of brain injury front and centre of our public campaigns for change



Supporting research that provides strong evidence, improves services, ensures best practice, and helps us to better campaign for policy change

Influencing Policy

Despite some service development during 2023, many national acquired brain injury service gaps remain unaddressed. In particular, there is insufficient investment in home and community services, assisted living services and case management, leading to significant waiting lists, delayed discharges from acute and rehabilitation hospitals, and the inappropriate placement in nursing homes of young people with an acquired brain injury.

In 2023 Acquired Brain Injury Ireland coordinated and participated in a variety of local, regional and national communication, policy and research activities. These events and activities helped to raise awareness of acquired brain injury as a condition, the impact of the neuro-rehabilitation we offer in the community, and the need for increased service provision to support survivors and their families.

We continued to advocate strongly for implementation of the recommendations of the Ombudsman's 'Wasted Lives' report. The organisation engaged with the office of the Minister for Disability and relevant senior policy makers in the HSE. In February, Acquired Brain Injury Ireland was invited to present on the challenges faced by young brain injury survivors inappropriately placed in nursing homes to the Oireachtas Committee on Disability Matters, alongside Inclusion Ireland, the National Advocacy Service and the Disability Federation of Ireland.

Our pre-budget submission for 2024 called for investment to establish three National Assessment Teams to begin to transition 90 people under 65 inappropriately placed in nursing homes back to community living.

A strategic position paper was developed on paediatric neuro-rehabilitation pathways together with partners from Children's Hospital Ireland (CHI), the National Rehabilitation Hospital (NRH) and Brain Tumour Ireland.

Supporting Brain Injury Research

In March, Acquired Brain Injury Ireland hosted the 14th biennial International Brain Injury Association (IBIA) World Congress in the Convention Centre Dublin. This represented the culmination of years of work and collaboration to bring the World Congress to Dublin and an opportunity for Irish research to be showcased on the world stage.

Hundreds of brain injury experts from across the world travelled to Ireland to share learning and knowledge on cutting edge research, practice and policy.

The Strategic Position Paper on paediatric neuro-rehabilitation pathways developed during 2022 and 2023 was launched formally at the Congress.

Raising Public Awareness

Acquired Brain Injury Ireland achieved substantial national and local media coverage during 2023, including news reports on the RTÉ news, in key broadsheets (Irish Times and Irish Independent), an extensive feature on Newstalk FM, and features across print, broadcast and online platforms that raised the voices of brain injury survivors and families.

A public awareness campaign launched at the IBIA World Congress in March called for investment in case management services and funding to transition young survivors of brain injury out of nursing homes and back to community living.

A new website was also launched for the organisation in the first quarter of 2023. This project sought to increase and facilitate easier access to service information and educational resources online, as well as to raise public awareness of brain injury prevention and rehabilitation.

Acquired Brain Injury Ireland also continued to drive engagement across social media platforms (Facebook, X, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube and TikTok), and all channels experienced steady growth.

FUNDRAISING

Acquired Brain Injury Ireland's work goes further through the generous donations and fundraising of hundreds of individuals, community groups and businesses. We are also supported by trusts, foundations and grant-making organisations, both private and public.

Combined, this support allows us to progress local and national projects that would not otherwise be possible, as well as enabling us to respond quickly and effectively when challenges arise. It allows us to purchase essential equipment, resources and activities required by those we serve and supports us to engage essential specialist services on a contract basis.

We are extremely grateful to all our donors, funders and grant agencies for their support which truly makes a life-changing difference for survivors of acquired brain injury.

Community Fundraising

In 2023 we continued to develop virtual event concepts established during the Covid-19 pandemic and in-person gatherings. 'Step Up for Brain Injury' in January and 'Abseil for Brain Injury' in April were more successful than the previous year. Other events included 'Woof Walkers' in May and the fourth annual 'Paul McGrath Golf Classic'. A noticeable increase in face-to-face fundraising events was observed from February onwards, reflecting the return of and enthusiasm for traditional third-party community fundraisers with

many supporting through their own initiative and innovation. One supporter raised more than €27,000 in 2023.

Corporate, Major Donors, Trusts and Grants

We continued to grow relationships with private companies and public sector bodies during the year, through employee fundraising, corporate donations and project sponsorships, among other activities. A Corporate Fundraising Manager was hired in July 2023. Companies including PIMCO, SMBC Aviation Capital, Hyperwallet Systems, Meta, EI Electronics and Tesco Ireland supported Acquired Brain Injury Ireland. Multiple grants were received including from the Community Foundation for Ireland, Pobal, Monkstown Hospital Foundation, Hospital Saturday Fund and several Local Authorities.

Individual Giving

The Fundraising Department continues to focus on promoting individual and regular giving to increase unrestricted and predictable sources of income into the future. Strategic direct mail activity in 2023 included two newsletters and three direct appeals. All appeals and donation requests were integrated across postal mail, email and social networks.



“THIS CONGRESS IS A ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME OPPORTUNITY TO SHINE A LIGHT ON THE KEY ISSUES SURROUNDING BRAIN INJURY – THE LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH AND DISABILITY WORLDWIDE – AND TO INFLUENCE OUR GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES, POLICY MAKERS AND THOSE IN OUR HEALTH SERVICES TO ACCOUNT FOR THE RESOURCES AND RESEARCH IT REQUIRES.”

- Brian Waldron, Congress President and Principal Clinical Neuropsychologist, Acquired Brain Injury Ireland

IBIA WORLD CONGRESS ON BRAIN INJURY

Leaving a legacy for survivors of brain injury in Ireland

Over four days from March 29th – April 1st 2023, the world’s leading minds in the field of brain injury came together in Dublin, to share the latest findings on the assessment, treatment and future priorities in brain injury research and rehabilitation. The 14th World Congress on Brain Injury was presented by the International Brain Injury Association in partnership with Acquired Brain Injury Ireland.

More than 1,000 delegates from 34 countries gathered at this landmark event, which was hosted at the Convention Centre Dublin. Among them were 100 internationally recognised keynotes, panellists and speakers, united in their commitment to progressing the recovery and rehabilitation journey of those impacted by brain injury.



“EACH DAY, WE’VE WITNESSED THE ENTHUSIASM OF PRESENTERS AND ATTENDEES TO WORK TOGETHER TO ADVANCE BRAIN INJURY RESEARCH AND TRANSLATE IT INTO THE VERY BEST CLINICAL PRACTICE. WE’RE CONFIDENT THAT THE OUTSTANDING SCIENCE PRESENTED WILL DIRECTLY RESULT IN IMPROVED OUTCOMES FOR PERSONS WITH BRAIN INJURY UPON THE RETURN HOME OF THE DELEGATES.”

- Dr David Arciniegas, Chair, IBIA Board of Directors

Introducing the keynote presentation on the final day of the Congress, Ireland’s Minister of State for Disabilities, Anne Rabbitte TD, announced her commitment to secure funding in the next annual budget for the country’s first community-based, specialist paediatric neuro-rehabilitation team. This is a significant development, representing a legacy from the Congress that will make a real difference for young people impacted by brain injury and their families.



“IN IRELAND, WE RECOGNISE THE VITAL IMPORTANCE OF INVESTING IN BRAIN HEALTH AND BRAIN INJURY TREATMENT AT ALL STAGES OF THE NEURO-REHABILITATION PATHWAY, FROM ACUTE HOSPITAL TO HOME. TIMELY, INDIVIDUALISED REHABILITATION HAS THE POTENTIAL TO INCREASE INDEPENDENCE, MAXIMISE ABILITY AND ENABLE SURVIVORS TO PARTICIPATE AS ACTIVE CITIZENS IN OUR COMMUNITIES.”

- Minister of State for Disabilities, Anne Rabbitte TD

Key areas of focus at the Congress included paediatric brain injury, brain injury from intimate partner violence, brain injury and the criminal justice system, approaches to and outcomes of neuro-rehabilitation.

As hosts, Acquired Brain Injury Ireland played a central role in programming and curating the event. The Congress was Chaired by Brian Waldron, Principal Clinical Neuropsychologist and Co-Chaired by Barbara O’Connell, Chief Executive and Gráinne McGettrick, Research and Policy Manager.

Nine members of the Acquired Brain Injury Ireland team made oral presentations on areas including research, policy and neuro-rehabilitation service provision. The organisation also hosted an information stand, an exhibition of artworks created by brain injury survivors, participated on judging panels for poster presentations, and moderated sessions across the duration of the event.

I've walked a mile in their shoes

The organisation also hosted a fully subscribed panel discussion with clinicians who were working in the field of brain injury when they acquired their own brain injury. Sharing unique perspectives from their lived experience, the panellists offered stories about diagnosis and life after injury with heightened compassion and empathy. They also explored the personal and systemic challenges faced by survivors of brain injury in Ireland, and the role of neuro-rehabilitation in supporting them to rebuild their lives.

Don't save me then leave me: Give me a pathway home

The IBIA World Congress created a platform for the launch of Acquired Brain Injury Ireland's campaign: 'Don't Save Me Then Leave Me: Give me a pathway home'. The campaign called on Government to invest in specialist brain injury case management services and measures to address the inappropriate placement of young survivors in nursing homes:



"WE FEEL ABANDONED, DENIED OUR HUMAN RIGHT TO REHABILITATION, AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO REBUILD THE LIFE WE FOUGHT FOR."

- Rosie Mangan, survivor and brain injury advocate

The campaign contended that if you have a brain injury in Ireland tomorrow, you will be rushed to hospital to save your life. After that, your future is decided by lottery. Depending on where you live, there is every chance you will have no access to rehabilitation, no one to answer your family's questions, and no clear pathway to guide you home.



"TOO MANY BRAIN INJURY SURVIVORS ARE LEFT MERELY TO EXIST, INAPPROPRIATELY PLACED IN HOSPITALS AND NURSING HOMES WHERE THEY DO NOT BELONG. WE HAVE SOLUTIONS TO HELP SURVIVORS REBUILD THEIR LIVES IN THEIR OWN COMMUNITIES – AND WE NEED URGENT INVESTMENT."

- Barbara O'Connell, Chief Executive





SUMMARY FINANCIAL POSITION 2023

Total income for the year ended December 2023 at €20.3 million represented an increase of €1.7m (9.1%) over 2022.

Expenditure for 2023 increased by 16.5% to €21.7 million. The net expenditure for the year was €925,891 (2022: net income of €365,431).

The majority (95.5%) of Acquired Brain Injury Ireland’s income can be attributed to the HSE and other statutory agencies. This is relatively consistent with 2022 (93.3%).

Direct service grants and other income increased by 11.6% year on year.

Income of €118k was received in respect of a programme to support the employment of people with disabilities funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development (Dormant Accounts Fund) in 2023.

Fundraising and events income increased by €81.1k (21.2 %) to €463.2k in 2023.

The Department of Social Protection also provided funding to support the employment of people with disabilities and this programme commenced in late 2021. Income declared was €90k.

FINANCES AND ACCOUNTS 2023

Income and Expenditure Account
for the year ended 31 December 2023

	2023	2022 (as restated)
	€	€
Income	20,351,030	18,658,412
Expenditure	(21,276,921)	(18,292,981)
Net income/(expenditure)	925,891	365,431

Balance Sheet
as at 31 December 2023

	2023	2023
	€	€
Tangible Assets	3,147,631	2,269,177
Current Assets		
Debtors: amounts falling due within one year	575,124	1,044,646
Cash at bank and in hand	1,245,101	1,764,609
Current Liabilities		
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(1,880,988)	(1,843,863)
Net current (liabilities)/assets	(60,763)	965,392
Total assets less current liabilities	3,068,868	3,234,569
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	(971,551)	(193,361)
Net Assets	2,115,317	3,041,208
Total Reserves including Capital Reserves	2,115,317	3,041,208

The accounts were approved and authorised for issue by the Board on September 19th 2024.


Claire Cullinan
Director


Hugh O'Connor
Director

COMPANY INFORMATION

PETER BRADLEY FOUNDATION CLG
T/A ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY IRELAND
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Directors	Clair Cullinan (Chairperson) Niamh Cahill Hugh O'Connor Colm Eustace Ann Coyle Robert McCarthy (appointed 28 June 2023) Michael O'Mahony (appointed 28 June 2023) Tina Leonard (appointed 9 November 2023) James Mahon (appointed 16 February 2024)
Chief Executive	Barbara O'Connell (resigned 31 December 2023) Pat Bennett, Interim (appointed December 2023)
Company Secretary	Eamonn O'Dwyer (appointed 27 February 2024)
Revenue Number	14289
Registered Number	334659
Charities Regulator Number	20046200
Trading name	Acquired Brain Injury Ireland
Independent Auditors	Registered Office
Crowe Ireland Chartered Accountants & Statutory Audit Firm 40 Mespil Road Dublin 4 D04 C2N4	National Office 2nd Floor, Block A, Century House, 100 George's Street Upper, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, A96 R2V3
Bankers	Solicitors
Allied Irish Bank Cornelscourt Dublin 18.	TP Robinson Solicitors 24 Fitzwilliam Street Upper Dublin 2.





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