

Psycho-Educational groups for patients and carers

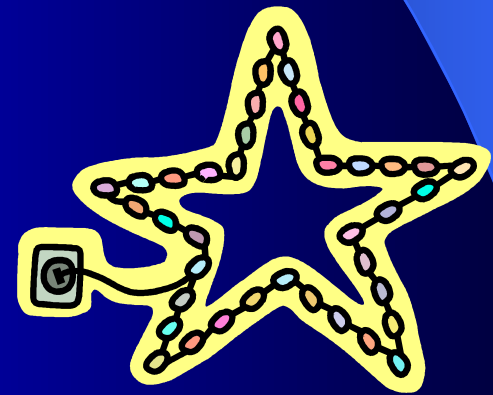
Dr Noelle Blake, Consultant Clinical Psychologist
Croydon Community Health Services
Stroke Study Day, 29th April 2010

What do we offer?

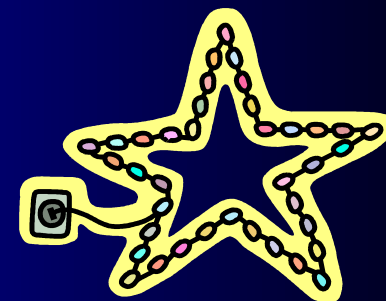
Neuropsychology Service based in Community, work closely with the MDT Community Neuro-rehab Team.

4 group sessions for people with acquired brain injury, held in a Community Resource Centre in Croydon (stroke, head injury, tumours, MS, encephalitis etc) at any stage in their rehab pathway. Family members, carers or other staff who work with people with brain injury also welcome.

- Understanding Brain Injury
- Coping with memory problems
- Organisation and problem- solving
- Coping with emotions



Why is education important?



- Timely, individually tailored information about illness facilitates better coping and self-management.
- NSF and British Psychological Society guidelines for stroke care emphasise the importance of education for patients and families.
- Neuropsychology service surveys consistently highlight patients' desire for information about their condition.
- Education needs to be available at different time scales along the rehab journey as information needs change with circumstances and changes in awareness.

What is our Aim?



Explain

Understand

Make sense of

Improve coping

Re-build

Identity



Considering the impact of:

Personality

Beliefs

Culture

Education

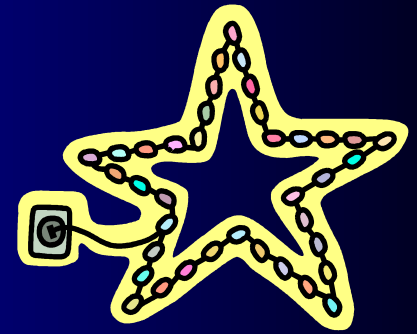
Social Circumstances

Family circumstances

Illness factors

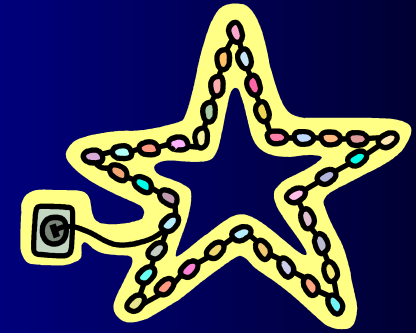
Life Experience

Topic 1 – Understanding Brain Injury



- Explains simply how the brain works. How the brain is affected by different conditions? How the brain affects our thinking, feeling and behaviour.
- Basic anatomy of the brain – recognising names and terminology.
- Basic laterality and localisation of different functions.
- Basic explanation of how different conditions such as stroke commonly affect the brain.
- Asking questions about their own symptoms and concerns.

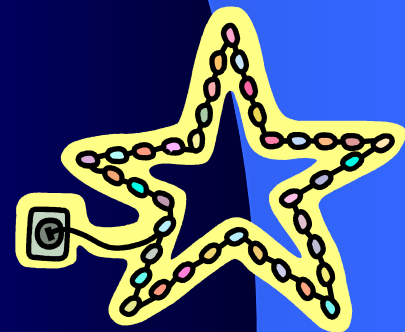
Topic 2- Memory Strategies

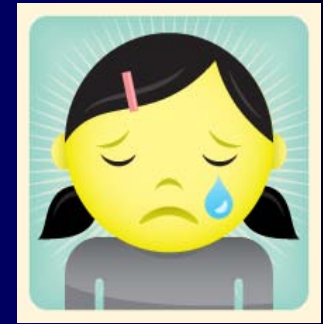


- How does normal memory work? – memory for different kinds of information, long term vs. short term learning, differences in learning styles.
- What causes memory difficulties – impairment, attention, environment, mood, strategies.
- Strategies for improving learning and memory –memory aids, adapting the environment, mood and attention.
- Realistic goals for memory and learning.

Topic 3: Planning and Problem-Solving

- Learn about Executive Functions in the brain and how they can be affected by brain injury.
- To learn problem-solving strategies to help the person feel more in control, work more efficiently and get things done.
- Aims to help define the problem, set an aim, work out a plan, review what worked/didn't work and set new goals on the basis of what's been learned.
- Aims to encourage positive, realistic problem-solving.





Topic 4:Coping with Emotions

- Explaining normal emotional reactions to illness and disability
- Explaining effects on patients and effects on families , similarities and differences.
- Explaining thinking styles and traps that lead to depression, anxiety and poor coping behaviours.
- Teaching positive emotional and thinking based coping strategies that facilitate better adjustment and problem-solving



How was it for you?.....

3 groups
65 attendees
Attendance
2-12 per
group

My feelings are
normal

Good strategies
to cope with
my memory

Good to learn how
the brain works

Listening/
talking to others

No-one was impatient
Very interactive

Everything explained
Good handouts



Where to next?

- Widening access
- Improving Marketing
- Better use of staff resources
- Adapting groups for neuro-rehab team





Thank you for listening

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