



This is your guide to our acquired brain injury services for children and young people across the north east.

Your ABI Coordinator has given you this booklet to introduce you to the services the Child Brain Injury Trust has to offer.



The Child Brain Injury Trust is a national charity working with families across the UK who are affected by childhood acquired brain injury. We support families in hospitals, schools and in the community – providing support when it is needed. All our services for families are offered without charge.

An Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) is not something that anyone plans for or sees coming. It can be a sudden and life changing situation and our team are here to help you and your family with the support and information you may need at this difficult time.

Our ABI Coordinators understand acquired brain injury and the impact it might have on the whole family. They are local to your area and have a network of support services that they can also signpost you to.

You can access our services by visiting the Advice, Information and Referrals page on our website: childbraininjurytrust.org.uk/how-we-help/advice-information-referrals/ or by contacting your ABI Coordinator directly.

What services can families expect?

Direct support for families in hospital and at home

Our ABI Coordinators are not clinicians or doctors but are experts in their field and have a wealth of knowledge and experience to enable them to help people understand childhood acquired brain injury. They are there to listen and to help explain or clarify things for you.

They offer support to you whilst your child is in hospital and can help you to understand what is going on around you and who everybody is, sort out finances and accessing appropriate benefits, taking time off from work and importantly, how to return to school in a supported way.

They can speak to other family members for you and advise you who to speak to in the hospital if you have questions. When you leave the hospital we will be with you and help with the transition when the time comes.

Support for siblings

We can offer specific help and support for siblings and can often explain things in an age appropriate way that they can understand. We can provide resources for them to read themselves or with you.



Goal setting and assessment of need

Although we don't offer a clinical service, we are able to assess non-clinical needs and help to put a plan in place to enable you and your family to move forward. This will involve working with you to help prioritise your needs and goals.

Signposting

When we are not able to help directly, we often know of an organisation or team that can. Our ABI Coordinators have a great understanding of local networks where you can access additional support and they will signpost to the most appropriate organisations and help you understand what can sometimes be a minefield of information.

Family Support Hubs

Once things are more settled, you may want to come along to one of our family support hubs where you can chat to other families going through a similar experience, or even to share your own experience and help other families. We also offer one to one support from our ABI Coordinator and sometimes have guest speakers.

Referral Service

In some cases, we are able to refer families for additional support and further intervention from other agencies such as Social Services, Outpatients clinics or community rehab, etc.

Support getting back to school

When your child is ready to go back to school, our ABI Coordinators will work with you and the school team to develop a 'phased return to school' schedule and make sure that the return is supportive and timely. We can help with staff awareness sessions, peer support and with Special Educational Needs support and we offer training for teachers - Understanding Childhood Acquired Brain Injury - which is without charge.



Social opportunities

When a brain injury happens, it can be an isolating situation. From time to time we offer social activities for the whole family to participate in. These activities are an opportunity for families to forget about brain injury and to focus on having fun. Please speak to your ABI Coordinator about what events are coming up in your area that you can become involved with.

Adolescence

We understand that teenage years and adolescence can be a tough time, so adding in possible effects from a brain injury may make things a little bit more difficult. We know and understand about this and it is another area that we can support you with. We can help with the transition through to further education and provide some helpful advice and strategies.

Information resources

Our website is full of useful information and resources for parents and carers, as well as for children and young people to understand what's going on. Your ABI Coordinator will have some of these resources in the hospital and can bring some of them to you. You can download factsheets onto a tablet or smartphone on many different topics by checking out our website: childbraininjurytrust.org.uk. We can also print and send them to you on request.

We facilitate Family Support Facebook Groups. Your ABI Coordinator will invite you to join, once we have your consent and when you're ready. The groups are a great place to chat, share information and hear about news and events going on in your area. See: facebook.com/childbraininjurytrust.

E-learning

We have a large range of e-learning sessions that are completely free of charge for families and professionals. They cover topics such as returning to school, behaviour issues, sleep issues, understanding acquired brain injury, legal support and many more. You can access these via our website and can view them as many times as you wish. You can also take part in one of the live and interactive e-learning sessions we host regularly.

Family Counselling Service

We are able to refer families to our UK wide virtual Family Counselling Service. The service is provided by independent and qualified counsellors who can provide support to:

- Parents and carers
- Children and young adults with an ABI (11yrs and over)
- Siblings of a young person with an ABI (11yrs and over).

Families are able to access six to eight 50-minute counselling sessions (one session per week) without charge.

Please note you must have completed a referral form to access this service.



CBIT in Hand

CBIT in Hand is a mobile app that you can download from the App Store or Google Play. CBIT in Hand provides personalised support guides suitable for families at different stages of the rehabilitation journey. It's full of useful information and advice via your 'mobile device' and something to recommend to your friends and family.



To download the App
scan this QR code

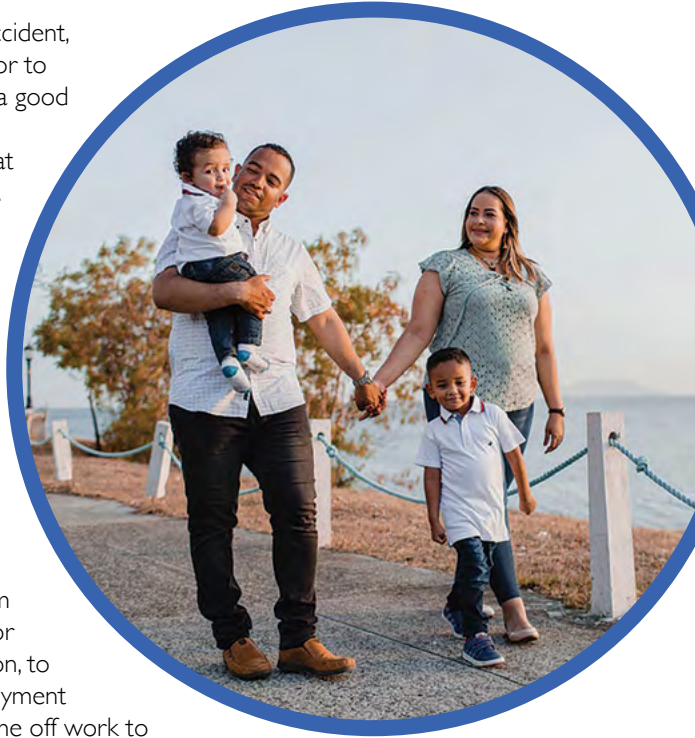


Legal Support Service

When a brain injury happens, we understand that the whole family is affected. We understand what you are going through and want your family to have the best support for your journey. It's really important to get independent advice from an expert legal professional who understands childhood acquired brain injury and knows how to get the very best for your child's rehabilitation. It's also important to speak to someone as soon as you feel ready to have the conversation.

If your child was injured in an accident, the sooner you can ask a solicitor to investigate matters, the quicker a good legal expert can intervene and relieve some of the pressure that you are currently going through. They can work with the team of health professionals around your child and assist with the journey.

We have created a UK network of regional, trusted partnerships to ensure that the children, young people and families that we support get the right legal support as soon as possible. This can cover a wide range of specialisms, from assisting with pursuing a claim for welfare benefits or compensation, to understanding what your employment rights are if you need to take time off work to care for your child.



Across the north east, our legal partner is Sintons Solicitors and the firm and its expert team have extensive experience and expertise. Importantly, they share our values of putting families first and listening to their needs. They have worked with the charity for many years and have represented countless families in similar circumstances to your own. They understand what you are going through and how to help you look to the future.

The members of the Child Brain Injury Trust's Legal Support Service have all made a donation to support the vital work of the charity. Further information can be found by visiting: childbraininjurytrust.org/legalsupportservice.

Meet the team

Andrew McGowan

Andrew McGowan is the Head of the Neurotrauma department at Sintons. He has over 30 years' experience acting on behalf of seriously injured children and their families.

Claims involving children are specialist in their nature and Andrew puts the rehabilitation of the injured child at the forefront of his work, to provide the opportunity at the earliest stage to achieve the best outcomes, and a better quality of life post-injury.

He regularly works with specialist Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDT) providing support and therapy clinically, and also educational support, to assist with a return to schooling and further education.

The family are also central to his work – too often families get forgotten about whilst the injured child's rehabilitation is ongoing, and it is vital that families are supported through this time also.



Experience:

- Andrew is an APIL accredited Brain Injury & Spinal Injury lawyer
- He acts for clients nationally & internationally in cases involving brain and spinal injuries
- He has extensive experience of acting on behalf of seriously injured children in Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority (CICA) proceedings. This includes physically injured children and those with neuro developmental disorders being born to drug and/or alcohol addicted parents
- Andrew has a proven track record of high value settlements and outcomes.

Client/professional quotes:

Andrew was ranked in the Legal 500 2022 as a rising star.

Contact Andrew: 0191 226 3720
andrew.mcgowan@sintons.co.uk

Hannah Fitzpatrick

Hannah Fitzpatrick is an Associate solicitor in the Neurotrauma department at Sintons, where she acts for Claimants who have suffered serious and life-changing injuries. Hannah has a wide range of experience of representing children in litigation including injuries resulting from road traffic accidents.



Experience:

- Hannah has over 10 years' experience within serious injury
- She represents clients who have suffered serious life changing injuries and is passionate about providing support to those affected and their families
- She represents clients across England and Wales and is a member of the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers.

Clients/professional quotes:

Hannah was recognised as an 'Associate to Watch' in the Chambers and Partners 2020 and 2021 guides and was described as having '*amazing technical knowledge and an understanding nature.*'

Contact Hannah: 0191 226 3644
hannah.fitzpatrick@sintons.co.uk

Notes

My ABI Coordinator is:

Phone number:

Email address:

Professionals involved with my child:

Questions I may need to ask:



We are a charity and we would
love your support

The Child Brain Injury Trust is a charity and we rely on donations and fundraising to continue to deliver our services. If you are able to offer your support please contact us – details are found on the back cover.


childbraininjurytrust.org.uk

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Doc ID: 237
V2
Feb 2022



Child Brain Injury Trust

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