

**BRAIN INJURY COMMUNITY RE-ENTRY
(NIAGARA) INC.**

**STRATEGIC
PLANNING FORUM
BOOK OF PROCEEDINGS**

SEPTEMBER 2022



MOVING FORWARD AS A COMMUNITY

ACCESSIBLE FORMATS & COMMUNICATION SUPPORTS

Special accessibility accommodations and materials in alternate formats can be arranged by contacting Brain Injury Community Re-entry (Niagara) Inc at 905-687-6788 extension 663 or www.bicr.org.

We are also interested in your comments and feedback about accessibility at BICR. Please send us your comments.

Disclaimer:

Brain Injury Community Re-Entry (Niagara) Inc. acknowledges funding support for many of our programs and services from the Ontario West HNHB and the Government of Ontario.

The views expressed in this publication are the views of Brain Injury Community Re-Entry (Niagara) Inc. and do not necessarily reflect those of the Ontario West HNHB or the Government of Ontario.



Brain Injury Community Re-Entry (Niagara) Inc.
STRATEGIC PLANNING FORUM 2022

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Mission Statement

Brain Injury Community Re-entry will provide support and leadership to individuals, their families and/or caregivers within the Niagara Region who are living with the effects of an acquired brain injury. We promote self-direction, facilitate opportunities for meaningful adaptation, and contribute to the development of the agency and its people. We participate in advancements in the field of rehabilitation, and participate in partnerships that foster ongoing dialogue with the individual and their support network.

Vision Statement

To lead in the field of acquired brain injury rehabilitation, providing advocacy for successful re-entry into the community.

Statement of Philosophy

The provision of support services is based on the following beliefs:

- Each individual is a unique adult and is deserving of respect and dignity.
- Support should be flexible, individualized and reflective of choices, abilities and existing support networks.
- Choice often involves some elements of risk. Where possible, individuals will be permitted to experience the result of their choices to the extent that they are able.
- Independence is a dynamic process of accessing people and services as challenges and successes change.

We rigorously promote the rights of the individual and promote recognition of acquired brain injury and how it affects individuals and families through ongoing advocacy and public education.

Executive Summary

Since 1988, Brain Injury Community Re-entry (Niagara) Inc. (BICR) has provided dedicated services to individuals and their families living with the effects of an acquired brain injury. Participants, family members, staff and other professionals work as an integrated team in order to provide a holistic approach to rehabilitation and support services.

BICR is again embarking upon a planning process that will map out future service and organizational objectives for the next four years. The invaluable input derived from the community in 2004, 2007, 2010, 2013 and 2016 was instrumental in establishing future visions and strategic directions. Frank Greco, Chief Executive Officer and the Board of Directors have once again sought input from the community for BICR's 2022-2025 Strategic Plan. Community agencies, families of persons with an acquired brain injury, participants in the services of BICR, and staff members were invited to attend a community consultation process.

The Strategic Planning Forum was held at the Holiday Inn and Suites Parkway Conference Centre, St. Catharines, Ontario on Wednesday, September 28, 2022. The facilitators chosen for this community meeting were Christine Williams and Jeff Spelier of Brain Injury Community Re-entry (Niagara) Inc. Following the introductions, the attendees were invited to participate in sessions from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm.

A total of 44 individuals registered for the Strategic Planning Forum with 13 Community Partners, 2 BICR Board of Directors, 10 Participants, 5 Family Members and 14 BICR Staff.

SUMMARY OF TOPICS

Twelve topics were identified and discussed throughout the morning. A representative of the discussion group entered a report for each topic into a computer. These reports, unedited, are included in this Book of Proceedings.

During the closing circle attendees were given ‘four votes’ each and asked to indicate with their votes which of the topics generated during their session time they individually had the most energy for. A person could use all four votes on one topic or spread the voting amongst topics. The facilitators mentioned that although all topics were noteworthy for the fact that each one directly mattered to an attendee, the voting would give additional data to the Board for their strategic planning day.

The topics are listed in the table below, along with a column of the number of votes given to that topic. Please note also that this data is still in relatively unprocessed form. Common themes are not yet combined and key areas are not yet discerned from amongst the possibilities. This will be done by the Board using the input from these meetings during a Board Strategic Planning Day in the near future.

TOPIC	VOTES	%
Additional Residential Home	7	6%
Affordable Housing	16	15%
Aging	22	21%
Community Outreach	7	6%
Community Programs lead by BICR for BICR Tenants and All	8	7%
Designated Smoking Area	4	4%
Learning & Leisure Guide	12	11%
Managing Crisis in the Community	6	5%
Online Payment System	4	4%
Overnight stays in the Community	14	13%
Staff Recruitment, Retention, Supports & Incentives	4	4%
Transportation	4	4%
(44 ATTENDED) 27 PEOPLE VOTED	108	100%

The topics with the highest number of votes will be considered. They are as follows:

- Affordable Housing
- Aging
- Overnight stay in the Community

A standing Strategic Direction directed by Accreditation Canada is: Patient Safety

Next Steps

The Board of Directors will meet to develop the Strategic Plan for BICR. The Board will use this Book of Proceedings as the database from which to develop the Strategic Plan, along with data from the past achievements of BICR.

This Book of Proceedings will be available by contacting our office at 905-687-6788 or on our website at www.bicr.org. The strategic plan, once developed and approved, will also be circulated to participants in order for them to see how their input was incorporated into the plan.

Community partners who have an interest in the topics identified at the Forum on September 28, 2022 are encouraged to keep the lines of communication open in order to see what can be done to move opportunities forward.

OPEN SPACE MEETING REPORTS

TOPIC: ADDITIONAL RESIDENTIAL HOME

CONVENER: Fran

PARTICIPANTS: Dale, Jeff, Grant, Fran

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE TOPIC/ISSUE OR OPPORTUNITY:

- Long wait list for residential placement; time to add another?

DISCUSSION:

- Ontario Health Team
- Strong advocacy needed for Ministry of Health and Ministry of Children Community & Social Services
- Covered under National Housing, Strategy?
- Advocate: Regional Support Housing, need feedback from BI community as to needs
- Need staff to support (supplied by BICR?)
- Buckley Model is ideal model
- “Housing medical hub”
- Housing – surrounding a center where agencies / pharmacy / doctor. etc. are available

RECOMMENDATIONS:

FUTURE ACTION/NEXT STEPS:

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

COMMENTS:

Brain Injury Community Re-Entry (Niagara) Inc.

OPEN SPACE MEETING REPORTS

TOPIC: AFFORDABLE HOUSING

CONVENER: Dale Clowater

PARTICIPANTS: Dale Clowater, Patrick Boucher (Jean Harte), Becky Porter, Jennifer Bailey, Melissa Colitti, Grant Fairchild, Julia Chikomben,

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE TOPIC/ISSUE OR OPPORTUNITY:

DISCUSSION:

- ODSP doesn't cover rents in Niagara, St. Catharines rents \$1700 but ODSP income supports is between \$1100 - \$1200
- Good to make sure that you are on the Region's Centralized Housing waitlist
- Portable rent supplements may be available to someone on the waitlist
- Need a phone to be your lifeline
- To get enough money for bus pass one person also collects beer cans for recycling
- Some members paying \$950.00 in Fort Erie for motel room – some situations have too many people per bathroom
- Lots of affordable housing being developed in Niagara (often with Federal Rapid Housing Funding). Make sure there are opportunities for people with ABI that they can access (as priority for singles).
- Big priority at Region / NRH in new affordable units for singles (bachelors 1 bedroom units)
- Region has a new Master Plan for housing with targets out to 2045. This plan makes opportunities for partnerships on new affordable housing development.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

FUTURE ACTION/NEXT STEPS:

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

COMMENTS:

Brain Injury Community Re-Entry (Niagara) Inc.

OPEN SPACE MEETING REPORTS

TOPIC: AGING

CONVENER: Dr. Alkenbrach & Dr. Robb, Cathy Livingston,

PARTICIPANTS: John Ross, Emily, Susie, Kelly, Cathy Livingston

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE TOPIC/ISSUE OR OPPORTUNITY:

DISCUSSION:

- Important to be able to age in the community instead of LTC setting which requires supports and resources
- Concerns about funding sources
- Greenhouse Senior Homes – model of small home with 2-3 regular staff and a few senior residents, more like a family
- BICR could look at a residential home with a focus on seniors in that home
- Senior Outreach program collaboration to support seniors with ABI, mutually beneficial knowledge with dementia and ABI, best ways to service ABI in this population determined together
- Need to stimulate the brains of this population, lately less social interaction and activity harmful efforts
- Collaborating with senior outreach program to ensure BICR clients know about their available opportunities

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Collaborating with Senior Outreach Program on multiple opportunities

FUTURE ACTION/NEXT STEPS:

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

COMMENTS:

Brain Injury Community Re-Entry (Niagara) Inc.

OPEN SPACE MEETING REPORTS

TOPIC: COMMUNITY OUTREACH

CONVENER: Catherine Livingston

PARTICIPANTS: Sean, Kaleigh, Catherine, Emily, Joseph, Juanita, Jennifer, Claire, Silver Lyn

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE TOPIC/ISSUE OR OPPORTUNITY:

DISCUSSION:

1. Awareness / Education about brain injury
Example given: Behaviour / about the condition
2. Proper Referral: - Screening tool (ABI) available online
- How to identify
3. Eligibility – History taking but not diagnosing
4. Who should we target in education – frontlines?
5. Communicating right away the condition
Basic level: ex. going to grocery / pharmacy

RECOMMENDATIONS:

FUTURE ACTION/NEXT STEPS:

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

COMMENTS:

Brain Injury Community Re-Entry (Niagara) Inc.

OPEN SPACE MEETING REPORTS

TOPIC: COMMUNITY PROGRAMS LEAD BY BICR FOR BICR TENANTS AND ALL

CONVENER: Jennifer Bailey

PARTICIPANTS: Julia Chikombero, Becky Porter, Melissa Colitti, Clair, Brad M, Lorraine

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE TOPIC/ISSUE OR OPPORTUNITY:

How can the community partners (NRH, MOD, etc) support BICR and encourage programs in residential (Supported Living) buildings.

DISCUSSION:

- Someone from BICR can come and do an info session (What is a Brain Injury) open to all tenants in the NRH building. Make it fun. Provide Food.
- Some participants don't want others to know they have a brain injury. Privacy is important.
- Bowden building runs really well. BICR does a great job. Lots of great programs.
- There are activities in common room @ Ridley Terrace and the participants enjoys the programming.
- NRH should invite BICR to do an info session @ our buildings that have BICR participants.
- Not much cross connection between agencies like Native Centre, OMOD, BICR→is there a way to support each other and participate in each other programs
- Who will fund programs? Possibly opportunities for joint funding with partners.
- Challenges with limitations (ex OMOD can't support someone that is not registered with them)

RECOMMENDATIONS:

FUTURE ACTION/NEXT STEPS:

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

- Access to physical space? NRH buildings are no issue but what about other space?
- Are the physical spaces accessible and barrier free?

COMMENTS:

OPEN SPACE MEETING REPORTS

TOPIC: DESIGNATED SMOKING AREA

CONVENER: Tammy Sherwood

PARTICIPANTS: Tammy Sherwood, Patrick Boucher, Jean Harte, Samantha R., Wayne D.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE TOPIC/ISSUE OR OPPORTUNITY:

DISCUSSION:

- We are asking for better smoking area conditions
- Would like overhead shelter from rain and snow
- Bylaws and fire codes stipulate that the designated smoking area be away from the house
- Would like more room to accommodate people and keep dry
- Would like better seating
- If possible, 4 walls
- Better ash trays
- More accessible – especially in the winter
- Safe lighting

RECOMMENDATIONS:

FUTURE ACTION/NEXT STEPS:

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

COMMENTS:

Brain Injury Community Re-Entry (Niagara) Inc.

OPEN SPACE MEETING REPORTS

TOPIC: LEARNING & LEISURE GUIDE

CONVENER: Fran

PARTICIPANTS:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE TOPIC/ISSUE OR OPPORTUNITY:

DISCUSSION:

- Feedback is the “old L&L Guide” was well used and people would like a return to the paper hard copy format
- Solicit ideas from participants for new ideas (either on-line or a suggestion box)
- Streamline mailing list
- Facilitate integrating community partners ie: Community Living, cerebral palsy, etc.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

FUTURE ACTION/NEXT STEPS:

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

COMMENTS:

OPEN SPACE MEETING REPORTS

TOPIC: MANAGING CRISIS IN THE COMMUNITY

CONVENER: Veronica Pepper

PARTICIPANTS: Dr. Sean Robb, Dr. Alkenbrack, Jeffrey Sinclair, Cathy Livingston, Jen Butera, Gabe Beckerman, Mrs. Beckerman, Melissa Colitti, Jennifer Bailey, Julia Chikomben

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE TOPIC/ISSUE OR OPPORTUNITY:

Common calls in community involve behavioural challenges

DISCUSSION:

- Limited resources to manage
- Young individuals ending up in LTC setting with ABI
- LTC staff unprepared / unaware of brain injury
- Limited crisis beds
- Complex co-morbid mental health challenges
- Precarious housing

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Behavioural Support team for community
- BSO (training predominantly around dementia – expanding BSO to include ABI)
- Behavioural Analyst
- Consider looking at Ontario Autism Program as a model
- Identification cards / bracelets for ABI
- MCERT- mental health response
- Multi-disciplinary team
- Geriatric Complex Case Resolution table meetings – case presentation
- Multi-organization collaboration
- Coordinated Care Planning – shared information

FUTURE ACTION/NEXT STEPS:

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

COMMENTS:

OPEN SPACE MEETING REPORTS

TOPIC: ON LINE PAYMENT SYSTEM

CONVENER: Christine Baillie

PARTICIPANTS: David Costiniuk, Wayne Degaust, Brad Main

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE TOPIC/ISSUE OR OPPORTUNITY:

- Instead of handling cash or using cheques, pay for activities on line on the BICR website

DISCUSSION:

- Better track of finances and accountability
- Cheques are almost nonexistent or you have to pay for them
- Text request-company
- Using texting; program called STRIPE
- Credit card based (can you use a prepaid credit card?)
- Set up before
- E-transfer; traceable, could have a charge
- Check out school board; they have a program that does this.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- E-transfer with receipt
- Must write down what it is for
- Email or text NOT mailed (ecofriendly, traceable)

FUTURE ACTION/NEXT STEPS:

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

COMMENTS:

OPEN SPACE MEETING REPORTS

TOPIC: OVERNIGHT STAYS IN THE COMMUNITY

CONVENER: Tammy S & Joseph V

PARTICIPANTS: Wayne, Pat, Jean, Sam, Tammy, Juanita, Joseph, Tricia

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE TOPIC/ISSUE OR OPPORTUNITY:

- Family travels from far away to visit and stays locally in a hotel; Tammy can't stay with them

DISCUSSION:

- Can't stay at the residence due to fire code laws
- If the participant stays out overnight, they are forced to self-isolate when they return
- What is the curfew? Can it be extended?
- We should be allowed to do overnights so we can travel (ie. Quebec, Toronto)
- Can't go home for the weekend
- Can spend time with people who are un-vaccinated in high populated areas, "exposure", but no overnights?
- Staff feel they can handle the risk of exposure
- Are there any "loop holes" we can take advantage of?

RECOMMENDATIONS:

FUTURE ACTION/NEXT STEPS:

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

COMMENTS:

Brain Injury Community Re-Entry (Niagara) Inc.

OPEN SPACE MEETING REPORTS

TOPIC: STAFF RECRUITMENT, RETENTION AND SUPPORTS, INCENTIVES

CONVENER: Dale Clowater

PARTICIPANTS: Grant Fairchild, Jennifer Bailey, John Ross

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE TOPIC/ISSUE OR OPPORTUNITY:

DISCUSSION:

- Happy with support, what can be done to keep the workers
- Being able to have the same worker for a long period of time
- Better communication between staff and participants. From higher level of staff to lower level staff and participants.
- Changes in advance when possible
- Helping front line workers to get to participants who need help; not on phone, in person
- Bigger issue: lack of trained people in the workforce (Government incentives for young people?)
- Sometimes organizations policies prevent a suitable worker from being hired (ex. must have university degree)
- Competitive compensation for work

RECOMMENDATIONS:

FUTURE ACTION/NEXT STEPS:

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

COMMENTS:

OPEN SPACE MEETING REPORTS

TOPIC: TRANSPORTATION – THINKING ABOUT THIS WHEN PLANNING AN EVENT SO SURVIVORS CAN ACCESS IT

CONVENER: Christine Baillie

PARTICIPANTS: Fran Main, Joe VanGelder, Dr. Tricia Pailing, Brad Main, Juanita Holub, Lorraine

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE TOPIC/ISSUE OR OPPORTUNITY:

- The Niagara Region has a good system to get around that survivors can use to get to events.

DISCUSSION:

- In Hamilton:
 - ⇒ Cab rides for a brain injury survivor cheap
 - ⇒ They are given tickets
- Is there information on how to use a bus system (Regional or local); it is very individual specific
- NST Program
 - ⇒ Doctor signature required; need help to get survivors to fill in form
 - ⇒ Not always on time; issues you share the ride with someone else
- Access to vans – restricted right now due to COVID regulations
- Check – March of Dimes – Accessible Van
- Issue – who could drive? Is it still available?
- When planning an event think about changing locations not just in St. Catharines
- When planning an event think about how the survivors will get there, using the cheapest transportation.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- All of the above!!

FUTURE ACTION/NEXT STEPS:

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

COMMENTS:

Open Space Technology

APPENDIX A

A Process That Achieves Results and when used frequently, fosters an Interconnected Learning Organization.

"Open Space Technology" is the name given to a meeting without a predetermined agenda. Developed in the late eighties by Harrison Owen of Maryland, U.S.A., this meeting methodology is now used around the world as an effective process for facilitating change in both organizational and community settings.

Open Space Technology meetings are simple to organize, require very little lead time, are effective for any sized group from five to six hundred, are effective for established groups such as corporations, private sector and public sector organizations, government and non-government organizations, coalitions, teams or communities. They enable the building of energy and participation in ways that few other processes do. Open Space Technology meetings create the conditions for interactive processes that allow leadership to surface naturally.

Open Space Technology is best used when there is an important issue to be addressed; there is a diversity of people involved; there is complexity; and when decisions need to be made quickly.

Open Space Technology operates on four principles and one law:

Those principles are:

1. Whoever comes are the right people. This reinforces that the wisdom to achieve solutions is present in the room and the group is not to worry about who is not present nor to panic about who is.
2. Whatever happens is the only thing that could have. This keeps the attention on the best possible effort in the present, not worrying about "what we should have done".
3. Whenever it starts is the right time. This reminds people that creativity cannot be controlled.
4. When its over, its over. This encourages people to continue their discussion so long as there is energy for it. Some sessions will finish well within the anticipated time. Others will run longer than the time allotted.

The one law or rule is called The Law of Mobility, also known as The Law of Two Feet. This indicates that people can enter or leave an open space session as they choose. If the session you are in is not meeting your needs for either contributing or learning, go to another one.

So how does it work?

An Open Space meeting is announced. Duration is most commonly between one and three days, though they can be shorter.

The venue is a large conference room with lots of "break-out" or session rooms or areas adjacent. When people arrive for the Open Space Technology meeting, they initially come to the plenary room and find a venue in which there is an empty room, except for a large circle of chairs. The circle is an invitation to communication with no barriers.

Open Space Technology Continued

The workshop begins with a welcome by the sponsor that is brief, highlighting the theme and the “givens” and then a facilitator who explains how the Open Space Technology workshop will operate. The broad purpose of the workshop is stated again, as are the “givens” or constraints. An example of a broader theme might be “Issues and Opportunities for the Future of the Organization”. Sometimes the broad purpose is quite focused such as “Issues and Opportunities for reworking the assembly line”. In the middle of the circle is a collection of newsprint paper, masking tape, and felt pens. Participants are then invited to create the agenda for the workshop. It works like this:

- (i) Anyone who has any ideas at all that relate to this broad topic are invited to take a sheet of butcher's paper and along the top write their topic of interest or passion. People are asked for ideas for which they have passion and for which they are prepared to take the responsibility of leading a discussion group on that idea (they do not need to have had previous experience in leading a discussion group but simply to get their topic started and to be sure that everyone who comes to their discussion has a chance to speak), and to make sure a record of the discussion is recorded (report forms are provided). The sheets announcing each of the ideas, along with the name of the person who put up the idea and a note of when the topic will be addressed and which breakout area it will be in) are affixed to a blank wall. Participants can put up ideas for which they have a lot of information including having handouts that they have brought to the meeting for the purpose of sharing the information, or they might know nothing more about the idea than to have a question.
- (ii) The next step involves a “market-place”. All workshop participants go to the market wall to look at the ideas outlined on each sheet. When they find the topic of most interest to them, they sign up, by writing their name on the sheet beneath the topic.
- (iii) The next step involves participants going to the break out spaces to participate in the topics of their choice. As far as possible, each session is defined by a circle of chairs and no other furniture, though it may have flip charts, post-its, felt pens, etc. The person who posted the idea is responsible for leading the session in whatever way s/he chooses. The facilitator has no involvement whatsoever. The only requirement is that, at the end of the session, the session leader brings back to a central point a summary of session ideas, and who has agreed to do what. This is to be provided in a somewhat standardized format, usually noted on a pro-forma given to the session leader at the start of their session. It is important to record the highlights of the discussion in such a way that they can be understood by people who were not part of the discussion.
- (iv) A bank of computers is available and session leaders or a representative from the group enters the report into a computer. As soon as a report is entered, the facilitator prints a copy of it for a newswall and posts it so that all participants of the broader meeting can read about what has happened in each session. As well, a copy of the report is made to be entered into a “book of proceedings”, a book that is comprised of all of the reports and contact information of the participants so that they can reach each other for further networking. This book is available to each participant of the meeting. In a multi-day meeting, the “book of proceedings” is handed to each person prior to a time of converging the various topics and getting further input from the collective about next step actions. In a meeting that is one day or less, the “book of proceedings” is available to participant within the week, either through a pick up or mailing. Often, the “book of proceedings” is available electronically as well on a website or by e-mail.

Open Space Technology Continued

- (v) In meetings where the intention is to move topics to action steps, the facilitator conducts a summarizing session for convergence, prioritizing and action
- (vi) Planning, including seeking input on next steps and follow-up. This is a feature of Open Space Technology meetings that are longer than one day.

Open Space Technology has one outstanding characteristic - the generation of energy and commitment. It also has one outstanding enemy - control. It will not work where the energy and commitment generated are not permitted to bear fruit. This is not to suggest that OST is an invitation to anarchy. Far from it. Provided the constraints - economic, political, legislative - are recognized and spelled out very clearly at the start, and the areas where discretion and freedom to be creative ('defining the space") are also made clear, Open Space Technology is proving itself to be a powerful tool for harnessing commitment and responsibility. Several organization-wide Open Space Technology meetings within a short time frame will start to shift an organizational culture from something that might be de-energized into a more vibrant organic networked community that is effectively producing results.