



Brain Injury
Community Re-entry
(NIAGARA) INC.

PARTICIPANT & FAMILY HANDBOOK

MY SUPPORT TEAM

NAME	CONTACT NUMBER/INFO	NOTES

Brain Injury Community Re-entry

(Niagara) Inc.

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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.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

ALL ABOUT BICR

Purpose of the Handbook	8
Introduction to BICR	9
Mission, Vision and Statement of Philosophy	9

BICR GENERAL APPROACH TO SERVICE

Model of Support	12
Programs and Services	13
Discharge	15
Transportation	15
Virtual Services	16
French Language Services	16
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion	17
Our Staff	17
Your Relationship with BICR Staff	18
Managing Risks	19
Participant Health and Safety	20
Confidentiality	21
Competency and Substitute Decision Makers	22

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Your Rights	24
Your Responsibilities	26

CHALLENGING SUPPORT ISSUES

Mental Health and Brain Injury	28
Alcohol and Drug Use	29
Cannabis	29
Help with Problematic Substance Abuse	30
Positive Approaches for Changing Behaviours	30
Physical Support and Falls Prevention	32

REFERENCE INFORMATION

BICR Complaint Procedure	35
Community Resources	37

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Brain Injury Community Re-entry (Niagara) Inc. wishes to acknowledge the generosity of CHIRS (Community Head Injury Resources Services) of Toronto for sharing their Client and Family Handbook with us. It is an excellent document and we appreciate the permission given to adapt it to meet the needs of BICR participants and families. As an agency funded by a variety of sources including Ontario Health West, the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, third party payers, fundraising and private donations, we often share resources in order to provide the best service possible to individuals with an acquired brain injury and their families. We hope that this handbook will assist our participants by providing valuable information.

ALL ABOUT BICR

PURPOSE OF THE HANDBOOK

Often participants and family members who are new to BICR services have questions about who we are and how we approach our work with participants and families. This Handbook has been designed to address some of those questions and give you a better idea about what to expect. We hope this Handbook will give you the information that you need in order to work in partnership with BICR staff.

The Handbook is yours to keep for reference. Feel free to make any notes in it that will help you to keep track of important information. Please don't hesitate to ask questions.

For information on BICR's programs and services please see the BICR Program and Services Guide and/or the BICR website (www.bicr.org)

INTRODUCTION TO BICR

Brain Injury Community Re-entry (Niagara) Inc. (BICR) is a non-profit organization that provides support services and rehabilitation to individuals living with the effects of an acquired brain injury (ABI). Based in Thorold, BICR serves the needs of adults throughout the Niagara Region.

Our organization was founded in 1988 by a group of concerned parents and professionals who felt that specialized ABI services were needed in the region. A volunteer Board of Directors consisting of the organization's founders, rehabilitation professionals and other community partners oversees our programs. Funding is provided by a variety of sources including the Ontario West HNHB and the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, third party payers, fundraising and private donations.



MISSION STATEMENT

Brain Injury Community Re-entry (Niagara) Inc. will provide support and leadership to individuals, their families and/or caregivers within the Niagara Region 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.

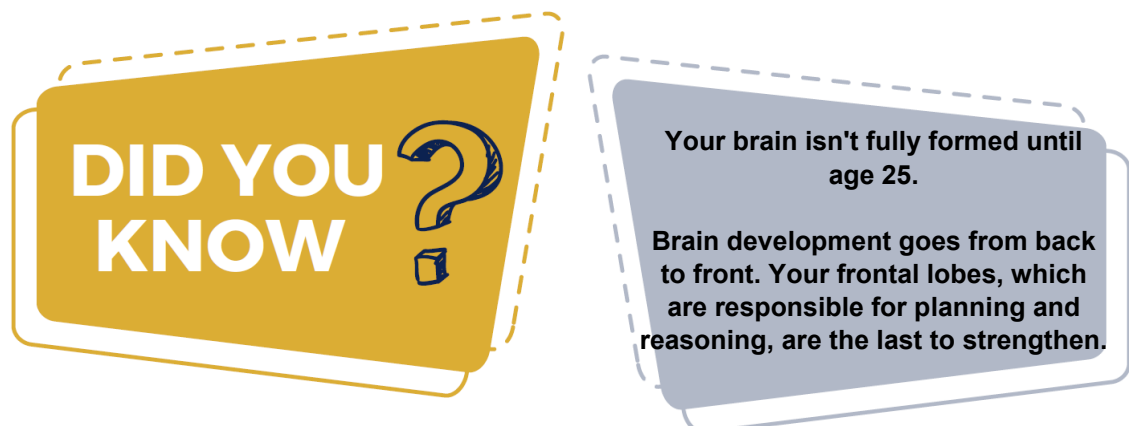
VISION STATEMENT

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.



BICR GENERAL APPROACH TO SERVICE

BICR MODEL OF SUPPORT

Brain Injury Community Re-Entry (Niagara) strives to empower participants to be involved in meaningful opportunities and to make informed choices that reflect their goals. The overall goal is to promote independence, enhance quality of life, and foster community inclusion through comprehensive, person-centered services.

BICR uses the following principles to guide services:

Person-Centered: This principle places the participant at the heart of decision-making and service delivery. BICR takes an approach that fosters dignity, empowerment and collaboration between participants and staff.

Respect: Recognizing and respecting the individual's values, beliefs, and cultural background is paramount. The participant is the driver of the rehabilitation team and is actively involved in the processes of assessment, development of goals, implementation of programs, and the monitoring and evaluation of the plan.

Collaboration: This principle focuses on building strong relationships between participants, their family and staff to ensure transparent and open communication. Staff will work with participants to develop SMART goals that are **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**greed upon, **R**ealistic and **T**ime-Based. Staff adopt this collaborative approach of "doing with" not "doing for" when working with participants. To do this, staff develop an understanding of the participant in the context of their previous lifestyle, relationships, abilities, values, patterns of behaviour and personality.

Focus on Strengths: Rehabilitation efforts maximize strengths and focuses on adapting to new ways of doing thing with staff recognizing, appreciating, and educating participants on reasonable risks.

Community and Social Engagement: BICR supports an increase in community and social participation that is meaningful to the participant. An increased level of community and social participation will reduce feelings of isolation and is an important element of the rehabilitation process.

Evidence-Based Practice – BICR will implement interventions supported by current research and clinical guidelines. The agency will regularly assess program and services based on participant and family feedback.

** Social capital broadly refers to those factors of effectively functioning social groups that include such things as interpersonal relationships, a shared sense of identity, a shared understanding, shared norms, shared values, trust, cooperation, and reciprocity.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Our services are voluntary. Our approach is to work with you, other community service providers and natural supports (friends and family members) in your support network, to identify your needs and wants and translate them into a goal oriented service plan. We will use a variety of means to help understand your needs. These include:

- Discussing your pre-injury lifestyle.
- Identifying the areas in your life that have changed since your injury using functional assessment tools and interview techniques.
- Gathering information on your likes and dislikes through interest inventories.

Eventually, through a collaborative process of discussion and assessment, we come to a place of setting priority goals for our involvement with you. These goals are written down in a document called the Service Plan. The Service Plan is used to document the progress you are making toward the attainment of your goals and therefore is reviewed on a regular basis with you.

Our expertise is in assisting people with Acquired Brain Injury. Sometimes people come to us with other challenges, such as mental health and addictions, which we will look to other community agencies to assist us with. This multi-agency collaboration to assist you with your needs may be a part of a Coordinated Care Plan (CCP). If you already have a CCP we would be happy to join your support team. If you do not have a CCP, and it's determined that you would benefit from one, BICR will assist in developing one.

BICR employs para-professional staff with a post secondary education at the college or university level in the social services. When necessary, we consult with registered health professionals like Physicians, Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists and Speech Pathologists through Health and Community Care Support Services (HCCSS) who contribute their expertise to our service plans.

BICR provides an array of programs designed to address a variety of needs. These services include:

- Residential Services – 24 Support/Rehabilitation.
- Personal Effectiveness Training Program.
- Supported Living Program – Staff on site for 12 hours per day.
- Recreational Service – Community Based group recreational activities.
- Vocational Service – Vocational Assessment and Supported Employment Program.
- Community Outreach Support Service – Community Integration
- Case Management Service – Short Term Intervention
- Clinical Service – Social Work and Psychology

Scan the QR code to access the BICR website



DISCHARGE

For most participants, there will come a time when it will be appropriate to discuss discharge from BICR services. There are a number of reasons why someone may be discharged from BICR. These can include, but are not limited to:

- Medical needs exceed what BICR can realistically support
- Participant is not engaging in services in a meaningful way and is not benefiting from support
- Participant has successfully achieved their goals and is moving to a model of self-managed care

BICR recognizes that a person's situation can change and they may need additional supports in the future. Previous participants are encouraged to reapply for services if they have identified goals that fit within the framework of BICR's services.

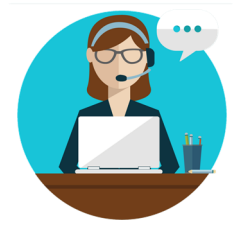
TRANSPORTATION

We recognize that transportation can sometimes be an issue. Your Case Facilitator/Case Manager will assist you with applications for transportation services and can liaise with your Ontario Works/Ontario Disability Support Program worker to arrange transportation. BICR will provide transportation on a case by case basis in consultation with the Program Manager and based on your Service Plan goals. All transportation provided by BICR, either for Recreation and Leisure groups, or individual appointments will be billed directly to the participant. For more information on billing rates, please follow up with your Case Facilitator/Case Manager.



VIRTUAL SERVICES

Virtual Services are group and/or individual support sessions that are offered through the use of internet technology such as Ontario Telehealth Network (OTN), ZOOM, cell phones, or other means of connecting that are not in person.




In situations where participants are in remote parts of the region or do not have access to transportation, but they do have access to a computer and internet access, virtual services may be helpful in getting them support from the comfort of their home.

BICR provides a variety of social/recreational activities, therapeutic groups, and counselling sessions virtually to better serve our participants and families.

FRENCH LANGUAGE SERVICES



Brain Injury Community Re-entry (Niagara) Inc. recognizes the needs and expectations of the francophone community in Niagara and will seek to comply with the FLS Act which guarantees to all persons the right to receive services in French.

 As such, BICR is committed to offering applicants, participants and families timely and competent service in French. Although the agency's internal working language is English, it will endeavour to make appropriate resources and materials available in French to facilitate the provision of services.

During the Intake process, the Intake Coordinator will ask applicants their language of preference. If an individual or family member is identified as someone who requires services to be delivered in French, the agency will work to coordinate service delivery options.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

BICR is committed to non-discrimination and aims to provide a diverse, equitable and inclusive experience in which everyone feels valued and respected, regardless of ethnicity, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or socioeconomic background.

Diversity enriches and strengthens us, and we aim to foster a sense of inclusivity and belonging in all services that we provide.

OUR STAFF

Each staff member has a university degree or college diploma. Many are educated in areas such as recreation, psychology, social work/social service worker, and behavioural science and technology. Staff are required to complete CPR/First Aid Training prior to being hired.

BICR staff members receive extensive on-site training where they learn about participant support, and agency systems and procedures. Employees attend a variety of orientation training sessions where they are introduced to the agency's philosophy and approach to service.

People come to work for BICR from varied educational backgrounds and experiences. Since our participants present with physical, cognitive, social/emotional and sometimes behavioural challenges, our staff need to have a basic understanding of how the brain effects these areas of functioning.



YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH BICR STAFF

The people who work at BICR are here because we have a desire to help others.

Developing **Therapeutic Rapport** is a process that is necessary for helping and it includes elements of empathy, trust collaboration, genuineness and understanding of the participant's needs and desires. Studies have shown that when a participant feels accepted, safe and respected by staff, the outcome of engagement is often more positive.

In our work at BICR we strive to balance our participant's need to be accepted and trusted with the need to maintain healthy boundaries so as not to compromise the therapeutic relationship. We do this by maintaining professional boundaries.

Professional Boundaries

A professional boundary is a limit placed on the helping relationship that makes it therapeutic in nature. A therapeutic relationship is different from a friendship in the following ways:

1. In a friendship, two friends support each other with the challenges they each experience and give each other advice. In a therapeutic relationship the focus is solely on you. Your challenges and goals are the reason for the relationship and helping you to overcome and grow is the primary purpose.
2. In a friendship, two friends may make plans to engage in social activities together, go to a concert or a baseball game. In a therapeutic relationship, the primary goal of engaging in these types of recreational activities would be to increase your independence and comfort with re-engaging in pre-injury interests and to help you find friends to participate with.
3. In a friendship, two friends might invite each other to their homes, celebrate special events together and give each other gifts. In a therapeutic relationship, this level of personal involvement may create a dependency that in the long run would not be in the participant's best interest.

Occasionally boundaries can be blurred leading to a breakdown in the therapeutic relationship. If this happens, depending on the nature and severity of the situation, like any relationship, we seek to bring about reconciliation in an attempt to restore the trust in the relationship.

In conclusion, we seek to be friendly within the context of a therapeutic relationship, and in the process we facilitate meaningful relationships between participants and the people in your personal support network that will allow for the maximum level of recovery and adjustment after an acquired brain injury.

1. Crits-Christoph P, Rieger A, Gaines A, Gibbons MBC. Trust and respect in the patient-clinician relationship: preliminary development of a new scale. *BMC Psychol*. 2019;7(1):91. doi:10.1186/s40359-019-0347-3

MANAGING RISKS

Risk-taking is a necessary part of life for everyone. We all take risks to reach new goals, experience new things, and reach new levels of independence. However, it is important to recognize that although some risk-taking is necessary for growth, other risks may create problems or safety concerns that you may want to avoid. After a brain injury, some people may experience physical, emotional or thinking challenges that can place them in potentially risky situations.



At BICR, we believe that our participants should have the opportunity to make their own decisions, take risks, make their own mistakes, and take responsibility for the consequences. When possible, BICR staff will problem-solve with you regarding risky situations to prevent or reduce the chance of something negative from happening.

BICR will respect your rights and support you to make decisions about your life and will also be looking out for your safety and well-being. We deal with risky situations on an individual basis. Some risk-taking is necessary to achieve your goals and grow. BICR will support you to take reasonable risks to reach your goals.

PARTICIPANT HEALTH AND SAFETY

BICR is committed to a process of continual assessment and improvement of a participant's health and safety during the course of their rehabilitation/support.

In order to accomplish this task, BICR employs an Incident Accident Recording process that documents situations that present a risk to participants. In some cases, a situation may exist that presents a risk to a participant but did not reach them. This is defined as a "Near Miss". Near Misses need to be reviewed with the view of reducing or removing future risk to the participant.

In other cases, a safety incident may reach the participant but not result in any discernable injury. This is called a "No Harm" incident.

If a safety incident reaches the participant and it results in an injury, this is called a "Harm" incident. There are different degrees of harm incidents ranging from an injury that requires first aid treatment to an injury that requires immediate medical treatment and/or ongoing monitoring. Finally, a safety incident is identified as a "Critical Harm" incident when it results in very significant injury or prolonged loss of function. In these cases, BICR follows up with a full investigation of the safety incident to determine possible root causes and recommendations for risk reduction.

Whenever a participant safety incident occurs, the staff involved are required to inform a Manager immediately. Additionally, staff will complete a written Incident Accident Report detailing the circumstances surrounding the safety incident and the actions taken to support the participant and submit it to their Manager within 24 hours of the incident.

Despite BICR's dedication to providing the best support possible, an unanticipated event may arise. When this occurs, BICR is committed to ensuring that participant safety processes are transparent and will employ a formal disclosure process to ensure participants, families and support persons are informed of relevant information, while protecting participant privacy and honouring consent documentation.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality means keeping your personal information private. Information about you will only be shared under the following circumstances:

WITHIN YOUR BICR SUPPORT TEAM

The staff at BICR work as a team. Team members may share relevant information with each other to make sure that you get the support you need.

WITH THE CONSENT OF YOU OR YOUR SUBSTITUTE DECISION MAKER

If BICR staff are asked to release verbal or written information about you or your support to anyone outside of BICR, they will need permission from you or your substitute decision-maker. BICR will only share information that is relevant to the specific request.

IN EXCEPTIONAL SITUATIONS

BICR's employees may be required to share confidential information (possible without your consent) in the following situations:

- If required to do so by a court of law (e.g. a subpoena).
- If you require emergency medical attention.
- If you are in a situation that results in police involvement (e.g. missing person).
- If BICR believes that you or someone else might be in danger, for example, if the situation involves abuse or potential self-harm.

Please refer to the BICR Privacy Statement and Policy on personal information for further information.



COMPETENCY AND SUBSTITUTE DECISION MAKERS

Since your brain injury, you might have heard the terms ‘competency’ or ‘capacity’. You may have also heard the terms ‘power of attorney’, ‘substitute decision maker’ or ‘legal guardian’. This is a complicated legal topic and everyone’s situation is different.

Competency and capacity are words that basically mean the same thing. They refer to your ability to understand the information that you need to make a decision, including the positive and negative consequences of your decision.

Generally, any decision will fit into one of two categories: decisions about property and decisions about personal care. Decisions about property include decisions relating to the day to day management of finances, banking, investing and the treatment of personal property. Decisions about personal care include decisions about where to live, what to eat, what clothing to wear, hygiene, safety and health.

If you understand the relevant information related to the decision you have to make, you are considered competent or capable. Occasionally after an ABI, a person may experience a change in their ability to make decisions for themselves. When this happens, often another person who is capable, usually a close family member, will assist the incapable person with decision-making. Sometimes there is a formal assessment that is performed (by someone called a ‘capacity assessor’) that assists in determining whether a person is capable of making sound decisions. This assessment process may result in another person being assigned as a power of attorney, legal guardian, or public trustee, and who is given the power to make decisions for you. By law, your substitute decision maker is expected to make decisions that they think you would have made for yourself if you were competent.

When you receive services from BICR, you will have a number of things to make decisions about or give consent for, such as deciding what kind of support you wish to receive, deciding what programs you would like to attend and signing your Service Plan. Upon entering BICR services, we will request information about your substitute decision maker, if you have one, to ensure that we are getting consent from the right person. If there are questions and/or conflicts about who is legally capable of making decisions for an individual, BICR will assume that the person with the ABI is capable, unless we are in receipt of legal documentation that informs us otherwise.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As a participant with BICR you have certain rights as outlined in the Connecting Care Act, 2019. This is a set of rules about how people who receive services in the home and community should be treated. You also have certain responsibilities as a participant engaging with our organization. Knowing your rights and responsibilities will help you, as well as us, make sure that you get the best possible service.

YOUR RIGHTS

The Province of Ontario has established laws and regulations that govern how individuals are to receive treatment and support in their homes and communities when they are accessing services funded by the Ministry of Health.

As a participant, a family member or a substitute decision maker, you have the right to expect that every BICR employee will respect and promote your rights. This means that you will:

1. Be treated with courtesy and respect and be free from mental, physical, sexual, emotional, verbal and financial abuse.
- **Mental Abuse** – You have the right to have services provided to you without feeling criticized, threatened, uncomfortable or fearful.
- **Physical Abuse** – You have the right to receive support in a way that feels comfortable and in a way that you do not experience pain or injury.
- **Sexual Abuse** – This is a very serious kind of abuse. It is your right to choose whether you want to have a sexual relationship with someone. You have a right to choose your own way of being sexual at a time that feels right to you.
- **Emotional Abuse** – You have a right to interact with others in a way that does not involve hurtful language and actions. A hurtful action could be someone giving you the silent treatment, or any behaviour that makes you feel insecure or even question your reality.
- **Verbal Abuse** – Verbal abuse is a type of emotional abuse with the focus on someone using harmful language directed towards you. You have a right to be involved in interactions that are free from others yelling at you, calling you names or using words that undermine your confidence and self-esteem.
- **Financial Abuse** – You have the right to choose how you will manage your money and what you do with your money including deciding who you will ask to help you with your money (unless you have an assigned Power of Attorney for finances).

2. Be treated in a manner that respects your dignity and privacy and that promotes your autonomy and participation in decision-making.
3. Be treated in a manner that recognizes your individuality and that is sensitive to and responds to your needs and preferences including preferences based on ethnic, spiritual, linguistic, familial and cultural factors.
4. Receive services free from discrimination on any ground of discrimination prohibited by the Human Rights Code or the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.
5. Have the right to receive residential and community services in a culturally safe manner, if you identify as a participant who is First Nations, Metis or Inuk.
6. Receive clear and accessible information about the services that you are receiving.
7. Participate in the assessment and reassessment of your needs and development of a Service Plan.
8. Have the opportunity to designate someone to be present with you during assessments and during the development, evaluation and revision of your Service Plan.
9. Have the right to receive assistance in coordinating services, if you are receiving more than one community care service.
10. Have the right to give or refuse consent to the provision of services.
11. Have the right to raise concerns or recommend changes relating to the services you are receiving. In connection with policies and decisions that affect your interests, you may raise concerns to BICR, government officials, or any other person without fear of interference, coercion, discrimination or reprisals.
12. Be informed of the laws, rules and policies affecting the operation of BICR (including the Bill of Rights) and be informed, in writing, of the procedures for initiating complaints.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Treat all BICR staff, students and contractors with courtesy and respect. Discrimination and harassment will not be tolerated.
2. Provide a safe working environment for BICR staff. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. A smoke free environment. This includes cigarettes, vapes and cannabis.
 - b. To refrain from substance use prior to and during all appointments, outings and meetings with BICR staff.
 - c. Ensure there is safe entry into your home, free from snow and ice.
 - d. Ensure all pets are properly secured during visits.
3. Participate in the development and implementation of your service plan. BICR provides support to help you achieve your goals. Your participation in the process is paramount to your success and a requirement of all BICR programs.
4. To ensure you provide regular updates to your Case Facilitator/Case Manager where there is a change in your health status, contact information, or a change with your POA. Please self screen and tell us when you're sick or unwell.



CHALLENGING SUPPORT ISSUES



Many BICR participants face support issues that can be complicated and sensitive. These challenging support issues can be further complicated by the fact that they involve personal rights, risk, values and morals. Often participants and families may have questions about these challenging issues. This section will describe how BICR will support you in dealing with these issues.

MENTAL HEALTH AND BRAIN INJURY

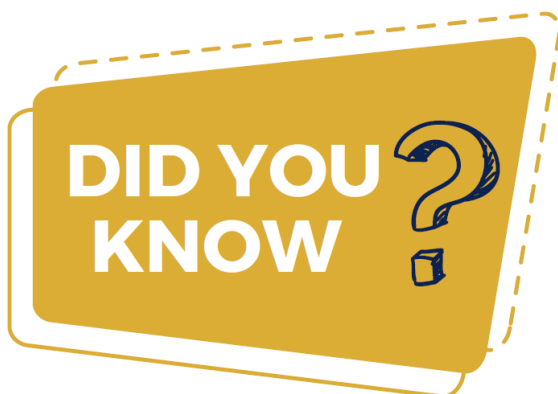
BICR recognizes that brain injuries are complex and can include challenges with mental health. Adjusting to life after brain injury can be stressful as individuals may be coping with many losses which can include loss of self-identity, their job, their friends, their community and sometimes their family. Participants may have a greater chance of developing a diagnosable mental health condition after sustaining a brain injury.



Or mental health challenges may have been present prior to the brain injury and now have been made worse. Symptoms of brain injury and mental health can overlap and it can be difficult to determine whether the issues are the result of a brain injury or mental health. Mental health problems can hinder rehabilitation

outcomes which makes it very important to get these symptoms well managed as soon as possible.

We are able to provide support within the agency through our Social Work and Psychology departments. BICR can also work with your family doctor or specialist to ensure your mental health needs are being addressed. In the event that more specialized support is required, referrals to community mental health partners can be made.



Physical activity can improve your long-term memory and short-term memory. People who exercise a few times a week can better recall things they read and learn.

ALCOHOL AND DRUG USE

The goal at BICR is to provide a safe place for all participants, including those who are interested in changing their substance use patterns. For that reason, we seek to maintain a substance-free environment. We ask that you avoid bringing alcohol, cannabis, or other non-prescription drugs to BICR. We also ask you to understand that many participants at BICR are at a high risk for medical problems if they use certain drugs or alcohol. We ask that you never provide or share substances or other medications with other BICR participants.

CANNABIS

Cannabis is often a substance of concern for our participants. We know that some participants have been prescribed cannabis to treat certain symptoms or conditions. We also know that cannabis can have an impact on behavior and thinking. We strongly recommend that participants avoid using cannabis at times that would result in more difficult learning and interacting in BICR programs. Recreational cannabis use is not permitted on BICR property or near programs, as our goal at BICR is to be a safe place that offers an alternative to substance use for those who require it. If a concern arises about cannabis use prior to programming, we will work with you to create a plan that is safe and helps you to get the best benefit from our programming.

THE EFFECTS OF SUBSTANCE USE AFTER A BRAIN INJURY

A brain injury damages and / or disconnects brain cells. Because of this, the injured brain reacts differently to alcohol and drugs and this interferes with healing. To recover well, the brain needs all of its resources. There are some good reasons to avoid drugs and alcohol after a brain injury:

- a. People who use alcohol and other drugs do not recover as completely or as quickly.
- b. Problems with balance, walking, and talking are made worse by alcohol and drugs.
- c. Difficulty with problem-solving, memory, and other thinking skills are made worse by alcohol and drugs.
- d. Alcohol and drugs have a quicker and more powerful effect on a person after a brain injury.

- e. Alcohol increases depression.
- f. Alcohol and drugs often interfere with medications prescribed after a brain injury.
- g. Alcohol and drugs can increase the risk of having a seizure after a brain injury.
- h. Alcohol and drugs can increase the risk of having another brain injury.

HELP WITH PROBLEMATIC SUBSTANCE USE

The misuse of drugs and alcohol can get in the way of you progressing toward your goals. BICR strives to take a **harm reduction** approach to substance abuse problems. This means that you don't have to start out saying that you want to stop your substance use. If you are noticing that there are some problems occurring in your life that come with drinking or drug use – or if you find that others are concerned about your substance use and you want to learn more about it, BICR will work with you to set goals and help you access the services you need or want that can help you with your substance use.

POSITIVE APPROACHES FOR CHANGING BEHAVIOURS

Since your brain injury, you may feel or act differently than you did before the injury. Dealing with these changes can be distressing for you and the people who care about you. However, a positive approach can make all the difference.

At BICR, we embrace the use of positive behavioural supports and focus our efforts on preventing the problems that we can prevent. This means having a good working relationship so that we can get through the difficult times in a collaborative way. Sometimes this means working to understand what triggers a problem and then working with you to make changes that help things go better. It might mean changing things in the environment or changing how your staff work with you. Sometimes it means providing support to you and/or your family for developing new ways of managing strong emotions or difficult situations. Sometimes medication is helpful.

The bottom line is that many people feel that issues with their behaviour stand in the way of them achieving some of their goals, such as getting and keeping a job, getting along with family, and making friends. If you feel there are areas related to your behaviour or emotions that you want to work on, speak with us about them and we can tackle them together.

Our approach endeavors to be holistic and, as much as possible, our team collaborates with participants, family members and other healthcare providers. We want to take into consideration the biological, psychological and social aspects of each individual participant, within their environment. We try to use evidence-based practices where they exist. These are interventions that have been researched and shown to be effective. As much as possible we like to use data. Data is information that we gather about behaviour by observing, asking questions, or having a person fill out a questionnaire. This information helps us to figure out what we need to do and whether or not what we are doing is actually making the desired difference.

You may be experiencing periods of frustration and anger. BICR staff can work with you to create positive daily routines. These routines will take into consideration your personal preferences and perhaps things like how your environment is set up. Changes like rearranging your room or your schedule may decrease stress in your life. You may find that since your brain injury you have less control over your life. BICR staff will provide opportunities for you to make choices and decisions. BICR believes that if we are able to work together and compromise, many difficult situations can be avoided.

You may be feeling worried, anxious or sad. We will problem-solve together. Sometimes a simple suggestion by you or a family member may help us to figure some things out. Other people who can help include the BICR Program Managers, BICR Social Worker or BICR Psychologist. You may choose to work with one or more of these people, and options for creating a supportive team of BICR staff will be reviewed with you. Helping you to learn and consistently utilize effective coping tools may assist in making difficult emotions feel more manageable.

There may be times that your behaviour becomes dysregulated and you require additional support to assist you to calm down. All BICR staff are trained in Safe Management crisis intervention and will treat you with respect and dignity. They will listen to what you have to say and will try to support you to gain control again. BICR staff will use physical intervention only after all other approaches fail and it is absolutely necessary for the protection of individuals who may be at risk of immediate harm.

PHYSICAL SUPPORT AND FALLS PREVENTION

Many people experience physical challenges after brain injury, such as weakness or paralysis, poor balance and reduced ability to move independently. You may need to use a wheelchair, walker, cane or other adaptive aid to help you get around and complete your daily activities more safely.

BICR strives to provide physical support in a way that minimizes the chance that you or BICR employees will get hurt. Physical support refers to hands-on support for guiding, cueing or positioning part or all of your body, such as positioning your feet before a transfer or guiding your hand to an appropriate place to grab a transfer pole. BICR also focuses on supporting the use of environmental set up and modification, the use of assistive devices, and strategies and routines to support individuals in their daily tasks. Our focus is on implementing safe routines and falls prevention and enabling clients to complete daily tasks in a way that safely promotes maintenance of function, independence and dignity.

To ensure safety of all involved, BICR workers will only provide physical support that has been designed by a qualified professional. If you require physical support, we may ask that you complete an assessment with an Occupational Therapist or Physiotherapist during your initial assessment period to ensure that the physical support is safe for you. If support needs change during the time that you are with us, BICR may ask for a new assessment.

Evidence shows that when a person lifts or moves another person, the risk of injury to both increases. BICR will make every effort to find other ways to meet your physical needs for your essential daily activities. BICR reserves the right to refuse to provide physical support during an activity if the staff member believes that it presents a risk to you or to the staff member providing the support. Physical support for participation in optional recreational or vocational activities may be discontinued if the activity is felt to be unsafe for you or BICR staff.

BICR assesses each new participant coming into service with respect to falls risk. If a risk is identified, we will work with you and your family to reduce these risks and develop a Falls Prevention Plan. These plans are reviewed annually. BICR has also developed an agency-wide Falls Prevention Strategy in order to: educate BICR participants and staff of the health risks associated with falls and to provide prevention strategies to reduce the risk; to eliminate the number of serious falls at BICR; and to create a culture of safety within BICR.

REFERENCE INFORMATION

BICR COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

BICR works hard to provide the best possible service and always strives to improve. You can help us do that by letting BICR know how you are feeling about your support.

TALK TO ANY STAFF MEMBER

BICR requires its staff to respect your rights and treat you with dignity. If you feel that you are not being treated respectfully, or if you have questions or concerns about your support, please talk to a staff member. Often the best place to start is to speak directly with your Case Facilitator or another front-line worker that you feel comfortable talking with. You may also speak with another representative of BICR, such as a Manager, Team Coordinator, Psychologist or Social Worker. All staff members have a responsibility to report your concerns to their supervisors so you know your concerns will be heard. Your main BICR contact people are listed on your “MY SUPPORT TEAM-CONTACT SHEET”.

YOUR CONCERNS MAY BE BROUGHT TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER (CEO)

If you are not satisfied with the way your questions or concerns have been addressed so far, you may bring your concern to the CEO, Frank Greco. Frank can be reached at 905-687-6788 ext. 624 or by e-mail at fgreco@bicr.org. You can also write him a letter addressed to 3340 Schmon Parkway, Unit 2, Thorold ON L2V 4Y6.

YOUR CONCERN MAY BE BROUGHT TO THE BICR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BICR has a Board of Directors, which is made up of volunteer community members. If you are not satisfied with the CEO's response, you may lodge your complaint with the chairperson of the BICR Board of Directors. They can be contacted in writing at 3340 Schmon Parkway, Unit 2, Thorold ON L2V 4Y6.

THE HEALTH SERVICES APPEAL AND REVIEW BOARD (HSARB)

If you are still not satisfied after receiving a response from the BICR Board of Directors, you have a legal right to take your complaint to the HSARB. The HSARB is an independent body made up of members of the general public. For general information on the appeal process, you can contact the HSARB at 416-327-8512 or visit their website at www.hsarb.on.ca. To start the appeal process, you must write to the HSARB and ask for a hearing. The HSARB will tell you when your hearing is scheduled and what you need to do to prepare. After the hearing, the HSARB will send you a letter about its decision.

WILL ANYTHING NEGATIVE HAPPEN TO ME IF I COMPLAIN?

No. The Bill of Rights states that you have the right to raise concerns or recommend changes about your services. BICR takes all complaints very seriously.



COMMUNITY RESOURCES

CRISIS

Crisis Outreach and Support Team (COAST)	1-866-550-5205
Distress Centre Niagara	
St. Catharines/Niagara Falls	905-688-3711
Port Colborne/Wainfleet	905-734-1212
Fort Erie	905-382-0689
Grimsby/West Lincoln	905-563-6674
Gillian's Place	905-685-8331
(French Language services)	877-336-2433
Niagara Region Sexual Assault Centre	905-682-4584
ONTX Ontario Online & Text Crisis Services	
Victim Services Niagara-Victim Crisis	905-682-2626
Assistance Ontario - Office	905-688-4111 X5084

HEALTH

Bridges Community Health Centre	
Port Colborne	289-479-5017
Fort Erie	905-871-7621
Centre de Sante Communautaire	905-734-1141
Outreach Assistance	905-401-8649
	289-241-4231
Niagara Falls Community Health Centre	905-356-4222
Niagara Region Public Health	905-688-8248
	888-505-6074
Quest Community Health Centre	905-688-2558

Telehealth	866-797-0000
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COUNSELLING AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Canadian Mental Health Association	905-641-5222
Community Support Services of Niagara	866-283-1931
Consumer Survivor Initiative	905-732-4498
Family Counselling Centre Niagara	905-937-7731 X3345
Family Support Network of Niagara	905-894-6808
Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre	905-871-8931
Gateway	905-735-4445
Mental Health & Addictions Access	866-550-5205
Niagara Chapter-Native Women Inc.	905-871-8770
Niagara Gatekeepers	905-684-0968
Niagara Life Centre	
St Catharines	905-934-0021
Fort Erie	905-871-0236
Niagara Region Mental Health Early Intervention in Psychosis Program	905-688-2854 X7262
Niagara Region Public Health Community Programs	905-984-2621 877-212-3922
Niagara Region Mental Health	905-688-2854 X7262
Niagara Regional Native Centre	905-688-6484
Oak Centre	905-788-3010
Start Me Up Niagara	905-984-5310

ALCOHOL, DRUGS, TOBACCO AND GAMBLING

Addiction Recovery Services

Withdrawal Management	905-682-7211
Newport Treatment Centre	905-378-4647 X32500
Out & About Niagara Addiction Services	289-479-5090
Community Addiction Services of Niagara	905 684 1183

SHELTERS

Niagara Assertive Street Outreach Team (NASO) Dial 211

Boys & Girls club of Niagara	905-358-3678
Nightlight Youth Services	

Casa El Norte	905-871-4483
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Matthew House	905-871-6059
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Start Me Up Niagara	289-302-6682
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St Andrews Church, Niagara Falls or
Westminster United, St. Catharines

Salvation Army Booth Centre	905-684-7813
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Southridge Shelter	905-682-2477
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The Hope Centre	905-788-0744
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The RAFT	905-984-4365
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YWCA Niagara – Women’s shelter

Niagara Falls or St. Catharines	905-988-3528
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YMCA Niagara- Men’s shelter	289-686-4466
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YWCA Niagara – Family Shelter	289-668-4962
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FOOD RESOURCES

Fort Erie

Community Outreach Program Erie	905-871-2526
Meals on Wheels - Ridgeway Lions Club	905-871-9366
St. Andrews Church	905-871-3450
St. George Catholic Church	905-894-8592
St. Joseph's Church	905-353-2224
St. Michael's Church	905-394-0203
St. Paul's Kitchen	905-394-0203
The Salvation Army	905-871-1592

Grimsby

Support Services of Niagara Meals on Wheels	905-563-9501 X21
Grimsby Benevolent Fund	905-309-5664

Lincoln

Community Care of West Niagara Beamsville or Vineland	905-563-5822
Support Services of Niagara Meals on Wheels	905-563-9501 X21
Village of Hope	905-562-3003

Niagara on the Lake

Meals on Wheels	905-356-7548
Newark Neighbours	905-405-3519

Niagara Region

Community Crew	289-273-0859
Community Support Services of Niagara Salvation Army, Niagara Mobile Outreach Program	905-682-3800 X706

FOOD RESOURCES (CONT'D)

Pelham

Community Support Services of Niagara

Meals on Wheels (Seaway Mall) 905-788-3181 X25

Pelham Cares 905-892-5300

Port Colborne

Meals on Wheels 905-835-1581

Port Cares 905-834-3629

St. James and St. Brendan Church 905-834-3184

St. Catharines

Community Care St. Catharines 905-685-1349

Meals on Wheels St. Catharines

Northend Church 905-934-3398

Open Arms of Jesus Outreach Ministry 289-271-1281

Ozanam Centre-Knights of Columbus 905-687-8089

Salvation Army 905-935-4311

St. Alfred's Roman Catholic Church 905-934-9703

St. George's Anglican Church 905-682-9232

Silver Spire United Church 905-682-8328

Start Me Up Niagara 905-984-5310

The RAFT 905-984-4365

Westview Centre4Women 905-687-4848

Youth Unlimited 905-988-1331

Thorold

Community Care Thorold 905-227-9240

Living Water Community Church 905-227-1922

St. John's Church 905-227-5431

Trinity United Church 905-227-4644

Wainfleet

Meals on Wheels 905-835-1581

Port Cares 905-834-3629

Welland

Community Support Services of Niagara

Meals on Wheels (Seaway Mall)	905-788-3181 X25
Holy Trinity Anglican Church	905-734-3543
Open Arms Mission	905-788-3800
Southridge Community Church	905-682-9901
St. Kevin's Roman Parish	905-735-5885
St. Vincent de Paul	905-734-2340
The Hope Centre	905-788-0744
Salvation Army	905-735-5700
Welland Harvest Kitchen	905-734-3543

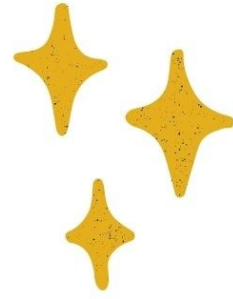
West Lincoln

Community Support Services of Niagara

Meals on Wheels	905-563-9501 X21
West Lincoln Community Care	

“Did You Know” References:

1. Northwestern Medicine, “11 Fun Facts About Your Brain”. October, 2019.
2. Dana Foundation, “Explore the Brain with Us Fact Sheet”.
3. Mayo Clinic Health System, “6 Tips to Keep Your Brain Healthy”. December 29, 2022.



YOUR VOICE MATTERS

PARTICIPANTS AND THEIR FAMILIES ARE AT THE CENTER OF THEIR DECISION MAKING, ALLOWING FOR MORE CONSIDERATION TOWARDS THEIR VALUES, DESIRES, AND LIFESTYLES.

YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH ABI, FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF BEING A PARTICIPANT, A FAMILY MEMBER, OR A CAREGIVER, CAN HELP BICR! WE WANT YOUR INPUT ON HOW OUR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES ARE DEVELOPED, AND HOW OUR SERVICES CAN BEST MEET YOUR NEEDS.

CONTACT CHRISTINE WILLIAMS (CWilliams@BICr.org) TO RECEIVE MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OUR YOUR VOICE MATTER COMMITTEE.



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Brain Injury Community Re-entry (NIAGARA) INC.

Turning the Key to Opportunity in Niagara since 1988

Brain Injury Community Re-entry (Niagara) Inc.
3340 Schmon Parkway, Unit 2
Thorold, Ontario L2V 4Y6

Phone: 905-687-6788 or 1-800-996-8796
Fax: 905-641-2785
Email: staff@bicr.org
Website: www.bicr.org



SCAN ME