Brain Injury Canada Semi-Annual Conference
in conjunction with the
Brain Injury Association of Nova Scotia

April 14, 15, 2015
Holiday Inn Harbourview
Halifax – Dartmouth, Nova Scotia

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME
Please note that this a DRAFT PROGRAM and is subject to change.

8:30
Welcome, greetings - Minister of Health and Wellness, the Honourable Leo Glavine, MLA

8:45 - 9:30
Me and My Son and a guy named Justin McKenna
Jason Harps, RPA, FMA and Aidan Harps (aged 12)
Jason and Aidan will share their journey of transformation after their encounter with Justin McKenna. Justin's life was changed after he suffered a TBI while on his ATV at a time when he should have been enjoying his graduating year of high school.

9:30 - 9:45 Break

9:45 - 10:15 Session A
There's Nothing Mild about it:” When the OT Needs an OT - Head Injury experienced through a Dual Lens - Amy Butler
This presentation will examine the lived experience of mild traumatic brain injury (MTBI) from the perspective of a registered occupational therapist who is also a head injury survivor (secondary to a motor vehicle accident).

Session B
Unlocking the Mysteries of the Blood-Brain Barrier: Preventing and Treating Long-Term Complications due to Traumatic Brain Injuries
Alon Friedman, MD, PhD, Professor of Neuroscience, Dennis Chair in Epilepsy Research, Departments of Medical Neuroscience and Paediatrics, Faculty of Medicine, Dalhousie University-Halifax, NS
There has been an increasing awareness of the long-term disabilities and neuropsychiatric consequences of traumatic brain injury. In recent years attention has been increased to sports-related head impacts and their long-term outcome. Blood vessels’ pathology and specifically abnormal permeability through the blood-brain barrier is common in brain injuries, and may last for days, but sometimes for months and years after the insult. The blood-brain barrier is essential to maintain normal brain functions by keeping brain internal environment different from the rest of the body. Using experimental animals we have confirmed that blood-brain barrier dysfunction may play a key role in neural dysfunction and degeneration, thus suggesting the blood-brain barrier as a novel target for the treatment of brain injuries and prevention of delayed complications. We have recently established a novel diagnostic protocol using magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), to detect and quantify vessels’ pathology in the brain. We show that the new method can identify football players with a significant vascular pathology following brain concussion where other methods fail. Our research suggests that for the first time, we may diagnose players at-risk for delayed complications.

10:15 - 10:45 Break
Session A

Mind The Gap - Jonathan (Jake) K. McMurray - Author, B.A. - Georgetown, Ontario
Following a horrific car accident at the age of 22 that essentially stole his memories and his life, Jonathan (Jake) K. McMurray learned to live with a traumatic brain injury and was eventually able to graduate with a Bachelor of Arts in English from Acadia University in Wolfville, NS. The accident and his journey through his new life, taught him that life itself is a gift—and every moment a present to be enjoyed.

Session B

An Adult Learning Approach to Partner Communication Training
Riva Sorin-Peters, PhD, Reg CASLPO, SLP(c), CCC-SLP, Private Practice, Speech-Language Pathology, Toronto, Ontario, Karen Whitehead-Lye, Senior Independent Living Manager, Central Ontario, March of Dimes Canada
This presentation will provide an overview of adult education principles, the Kolb’s experiential learning model, and how this model was applied to a communication training program for four couples living with chronic communication disabilities. The concept of “transformational learning” and the methods used to promote more holistic and longer-lasting changes will be discussed. The unique benefits of individual and group sessions will also be outlined. Results will be presented and complemented by a pre- and post- training video clip of one of the couples in the study. The implications of viewing clients with brain injury as adult learners on the delivery and content of intervention will be discussed.

11:15 - 11:30  Break

Session A

Health and Healing: A Single Mother’s Brain Injury Journey and Survival Guide
Kimberley Bernard, MSW, RSW
Single motherhood varies by race/ethnicity. The presentation will explore my experience of being a single mother of African descent surviving and recovering from a brain aneurysm. The presentation will conclude with providing advice to health professionals on the role they can play in reframing the dialogue on single mothering and helping to understand the connection between the challenges of single mothering and recovery from a brain injury.

Session B

Loneliness and Isolation after Brain Injury:
Factors impacting survivor and caregiver’s quality of life after injury.
Cecile Proctor
The road to recovery is not always an easy one to navigate. Acquiring a brain injury can impact the mental health and life satisfaction of both a survivor and their caregivers. Changes in leisure activities, employment, and the added burden of caregiving contribute to increased social isolation, depression, and loneliness. The startling results from this study of over 400 survivors and caregivers are critical to understanding the needs of these individuals both during and following formal rehabilitation.

12:00 - 1:00  Lunch
1:00 - 1:45

**Workshop “Families; How Best to support a relative with a Brain Injury”**

*Sally Cuddy, MSW, RSW, Nancy McCormick MSW, RSW*

Adjusting to a brain injury is a difficult and complex process. Family members are often left with a confusing landscape, uncertain about how to support their loved one, while exercising self-care. Our workshop offers a practical approach to navigating this landscape, supported by video clips, guided exercises and reading materials. Types of rehabilitation treatment approaches will be covered, with specific suggestions on how families can best assist the rehabilitative process and have their loved one reintegrate into the community.

1:45 - 2:00

**Coffee Break**

2:00 - 2:30

**‘Couldn’t Be Better’ - A Life of Survival**

*Ryan Emms* is a poet and songwriter with an incredible story of survival and love. In 1988, age seven, Ryan was in an accident where he sustained permanent brain trauma. His neuropsychological deficits impact everyday life from socialization to employability, but Ryan is a survivor! Ryan is a big country music fan, and over the past two years he put some of his poetry to music. An artist with a big heart, his love of music comes straight from his very soul. Ryan and his music open the listener's heart with pride and inspiration knowing his story of survival.

2:30 - 2:45

**Break**

2:45 - 3:15

**Session A**

**Learning Tools for Professions from a Survivors Perspective - Lose Your Tool Box**

*Jo-Ann McInnis*

This presentation is to assist professionals who work with individuals who have sustained a Traumatic Brain Injury. They will have a better understanding of the course of healing one goes through following an injury, from a survivor's perspective. They will also appreciate the feeling of what it means to return to work and meaningful time occupation.

**Session B**

**The Neuro Response Team: Improving the rehabilitation experience**

*Lisa Cicchelli RN MN, Clinical Nurse Specialist Pediatric Rehabilitation, IWK Health Centre -Halifax, NS*

Pediatric brain and spinal cord injuries are considered two of the most devastating injuries a child and their family can experience. This presentation will outline the role of the NRT and the various health professionals who provide rehabilitative care to children. The presentation will also highlight the challenges and accomplishments that have been encountered for this team.

3:15 - 3:30

**Break**

3:30 - 4:00

**Session A**

**Conductive Education**

*Brittany Jennings, BA (Hons), QCS, March of Dimes Canada (MODC)*

Halifax, Nova Scotia-Conductive Education® is a community rehabilitation program whose mission is to maximize the independence, personal empowerment, and community participation of people with neurological motor disabilities such as acquired brain injury and stroke. Participants in our Conductive Education® program work in diagnosis-specific groups towards their own clearly identified aims and are taught strategies and techniques to overcome the challenges their condition presents on a daily basis.

3:30 - 5:00

**Session B**

**Strategies of Hope**

*Alison McDonald and Coleen Lawlor*

Patients, staff and family at the Nova Scotia Rehabilitation Centre's Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) program collaborated with a filmmaker to creatively explore the impact of a stroke or brain injury, and share their strategies for recovery. A panel including these authors and two participants in the film – a survivor and a family member – will share how the making of this film provided an amazing opportunity for expression of opinions, thoughts, choice and control, regardless of current abilities.
8:30 Welcome

8:45 - 9:30 The LINC Study
Tanya Packer, Joan Versnel
How a focus on everyday living created a unique contribution to the National Population Study of Neurological Conditions - The objective of this presentation is to describe 1) the three studies that comprised the LINC study, 2) present key findings from the LINC study and how they contributed to the final Synthesis report that went to the Federal Minister of Health in the fall of 2014, and 3) report on findings about how our focus on everyday participation was received and endorsed by participants and stakeholders.

9:30 - 9:45 Break

9:45 - 10:15 Session A
Sex Differences in Clinical Profiles Among Patients with Traumatic Brain Injury Across Post-Acute Settings: Need for innovation - Dr. Angela Colantonio, University of Toronto, Toronto Rehabilitation Institute - UHN, Sandy Escobar, BFA, Dalhousie University
This study informs policy makers/clinicians of resource implications for male and female TBI patients in relation to other clinical populations. Recommendations for programming are made using examples such as the Happily Ever Active program in Halifax that brings arts programming in nursing homes.

Session B
From School to Home
Ruth McDonald- National Manager - Fee for Service - March of Dimes Canada, Jason Lye, National Director Independent Living, March of Dimes Canada
In 2010, after 4 years of planning, March of Dimes opened a 10 person accessible ABI congregate care home in Northern Ontario. This modern facility has 2 individual apartments as well as an 8 person congregate care area. Service funding sources include government as well as fee based services. This presentation will explore models of Assistive Living as well as provide highlights of this setting built to support individuals that have experienced moderate to severe brain injury.

10:15 - 10:45 Nutrition and Networking Break

10:45-11:15 Session A
eRehabilitation™ - The Future of Rehabilitation
Arden McGregor, MA, CPsych, CBIST and Dennis Radman, HBSc, RRP, CBIST
eRehabilitation™ is a comprehensive web based treatment platform using interactive audio, video, and/or data streaming to deliver quality rehabilitation services at a distance. eRehabilitation™ integrates today’s technologies with long standing, evidence-based face-to-face practices maximizing service quality and efficacy of treatment delivery. This presentation explores the use of eRehabilitation™ and discusses the changing service requirements of traditional rehabilitation services.

Session B
Female Students’ with Acquired Brain Injury: Experiences in University
Kendra Gottschall B.A. (Hons), B.S.W, M.S.W, R.S.W, Clinical Social Worker-Antigonish, N.S
Brain injury has become a more topical issue over the past decade, however limited research has been done on experiences of university students and few are specific to female students. As a person who acquired a brain injury at the age of sixteen, Kendra has lived experience with navigating the postsecondary system, in addition to the research findings of her study. This Master of Social Work research answers the question: “How has having an acquired brain injury impacted the experience of female students within postsecondary education?”
**11:15 - 11:30**  
Break

**11:30 - 12:15**  
*A whole-person, neuroplasticity-based approach to brain injury rehabilitation*  
*Tatiana Reymarova*  
This interactive, hands-on workshop will present the basics of a brain injury rehabilitation program the author has been developing over the past three years. Participants will be introduced to the “rules” governing neuroplasticity—the conditions that provide the optimal environment for our brain to notice, accept, and integrate new information, and thereby have a crucial bearing on rehabilitation outcomes in all spheres: physical, emotional, cognitive, or social. Participants will take away concrete techniques for creating these conditions in their life.

**12:15 - 1:15**  
Lunch, Speaker Peter Stoffer

**1:15-2:00**  
*Hand in Hand in Halifax*  
*Randi Monroe, Director, Capital Health and Bill Bean, CEO, QEII Foundation*  
Randi and Bill will highlight how two important projects will impact neurological care – from the OR to the road to recovery. The *Neuroscience Alliance* will create Atlantic Canada’s first academic neuroscience program, focusing on preventing, and treating, neuro and sensory system disorders and conditions. The *Revitalizing Rehab* campaign is restoring aquatic therapy and two new state of the art independent living apartments for patients and their families at the Nova Scotia Rehabilitation Centre. This session will demonstrate how the Neuroscience Alliance and Revitalizing Rehab go hand in hand when it comes to improving patient care here in Halifax.

**2:00 - 2:15**  
Break

**2:15- 2:45**  
*How to Apply the Research in Neuroplasticity to Heal Concussions*  
*Dr. Joanny Liu, TCMD, RAc, PEng Calgary, Alberta*  

**2:45 - 3:15**  
*Session A*  
*All age helmet legislation for skiing and snowboarding; a multifaceted approach for the prevention of brain injury in Nova Scotia*  
*Lynne Fenerty, RN, BN, CNCC(c), DO(MP) Research Manager / Parachute Coordinator, Neuro-Trauma & Injury Prevention Programs Capital Health, Division of Neurosurgery-Halifax, Nova Scotia*  
Public policy is an effective strategy for behavior change and promoting health and safety. Nova Scotia is the first jurisdiction in the world to mandate ski and snowboard helmet use for all ages at ski hills in the province. This study represents a longitudinal examination of helmet use in skiers and snowboarders before and after snow sport helmet legislation.
3:15- 3:30 Break

3:30- 4:30 Panel on Concussion

A panel format will be used to cover the continuum of concussion management. Current definitions will be explored through an anatomical and management review. Complex concussion and models of care will be discussed as well as the challenges faced in achieving effective return to school, work and play. The patient perspective on concussion will be presented with a survivor’s story and current concussion resources put forth during the open audience panel discussion.

Panel participants will include:
Moderator- Dr. Erica Baker,
Lynne Fenerty, RN,
Dr. Tina Atkinson,
Dr. Joan Backman, Ph.D.,
Isabelle Germain,
Natalie Thornley, OT, Acquired Brain Injury Program, NS Rehab Centre and Dr. Joanny Liu

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Speakers

**Kimberley Nadine Bernard**

Kimberley Nadine Bernard is a Clinical Social Worker, educator, trainer, facilitator and a community activist and advocate in Halifax, Nova Scotia where she was born and raised. She received a Bachelor of Arts degree from St. Mary’s University in 1987, a Bachelor of Social Work degree from Dalhousie University in 1991 and a Masters of Social Work degree from the Maritime School of Social Work at Dalhousie University in 2000. Kimberley has worked as a Clinical Therapist with Capital Health Addiction and Mental Health Program in Halifax. She is highly regarded for addressing racial and cultural diversity in social work and in the community. Kimberley has a musical background as a singer, vocal arranger and musical director from her involvement with the former internationally acclaimed acapella quartet “Four the Moment”.

**Dr. Tina Atkinson, M.D., CCPP, Diploma in Sport Medicine**

Dr. Atkinson graduated from Acadia University in 1991 and went on to graduate from Dalhousie University School of Medicine in 1995. She completed a family medicine residency from the University of Calgary in 1995. Since moving back to Nova Scotia, she has worked as a part-time ER physician at Cobeguid Community Health Centre since 2001 as well as a Family Medicine Practitioner. In 2007, Dr. Atkinson obtained certification from the Canadian Association of Sport Medicine. Dr. Atkinson has experience in working with athletes at all levels and has been part of the Medical Team for various national and international events including Canada Games and the World Women’s Hockey Championships.

**Bill Bean, President and CEO, QEII Health Sciences Centre Foundation**

Bill Bean has 35 years of experience in fundraising and non-profit management. Bill has held senior leadership positions with Langara Community College, BC’s Children’s Hospital, Simon Fraser University and since 1996, has been the President & CEO of the QEII Health Sciences Centre Foundation in Halifax. Bill has also provided consulting services for more than 45 non-profit organizations.

**Amy L. Butler**

Amy L. Butler is currently a registered occupational therapist within the province of Nova Scotia. She graduated from Dalhousie University in 2006 with a BScOT and has primarily worked in the private sector for the last 9 years. Most of her professional experience has been with Veterans Affairs Canada and various insurance companies located throughout Nova Scotia and southern New Brunswick. She has also worked as an occupational therapist for Worksafe NB focusing on work conditioning and mental health, and in hand therapy, and school-based sensory integration approaches for children with disabilities. Ms. Butler is currently working toward fulfilling the requirements of a Post Professional Master of Science program in Occupational Therapy at Dalhousie University focusing on MTBI. She is a survivor of MTBI which offers her a unique approach to exploring life as a health care professional and survivor.

**Lisa Cichelli**

Lisa completed her Bachelor of Science of Nursing from the University of Ottawa in 1993. She has had a career in pediatric and adult care, clinical trials and health services research and interprofessional education. Lisa is the Clinical Nurse Specialist in Pediatric Rehabilitation at the IWK Health Centre. She is the team leader for the Neuromotor Team, a team working with children who have experienced a brain or spinal cord injury and their families. Lisa completed her Master of Nursing in 2010. Lisa has certificates in Adult Education and Interprofessional Education. Lisa enjoys a physically active lifestyle.

**Angela Colantonio, PhD, OT, Reg. (Ont). FACRM**

Dr. Colantonio is a Professor at the University of Toronto in the Department of Occupational Science & Occupational Therapy with cross appointments in the Dalla Lana School of Public Health and the Graduate Department of Rehabilitation Sciences, and holds a CIHR Chair in Gender, Work and Health. Dr. Colantonio is also a Senior Scientist at Toronto Rehabilitation Institute, UHN. She received her PhD in Epidemiology and Public Health from Yale University, and an MSc in Community Health and a BSc in Occupational Therapy from the University of Toronto. Dr. Colantonio is a Fellow of the American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine and the American College of Epidemiology. She leads a broad, internationally recognized program of research on acquired brain injury (ABI) examining ABI in the population, targeting injury prevention and post-acute care with a special focus on vulnerable populations. Other areas of Dr. Colantonio’s research program include work-related TBI, long term outcomes, impact of sex/gender on outcomes, and innovative approaches to intervention, such as the use of theatre as a knowledge mobilization strategy.

**Sally Cuddy, MSW, RSW**

Sally is a clinical social worker at the Robin Easay Centre (a transitional living program affiliated with the Ottawa Hospital Rehabilitation Centre, Acquired Brain Injury service). Ms. Cuddy has had extensive experience in supporting families with adjustment to illness, having worked for the Ottawa hospital for over 33 years. She initially began working in the mental health area, later becoming a clinical practice leader and then transitioned to working in the area of acquired brain injury.


**Ryan Emms**  
Ryan Emms is a poet and songwriter with an incredible story of survival and love. In 1988, age seven, Ryan was in an accident where he sustained permanent brain trauma. His neuropsychological deficits impact everyday life from socialization to employability, but Ryan is a survivor! Ryan is a big Country Music fan, and over the past two years he put some of his poetry to music. An artist with a big heart, his love of music comes straight from his very soul. Ryan and his music open the listener's heart with pride and inspiration knowing his story of survival.

**Sandy Escobar**  
Sandy Escobar is a community artist who does projects with individuals with disabilities and mental illnesses in order to promote community, health, and wellbeing. She is a freelance artist/illustrator with a BFA from NSCAD University and is now studying biology at Dalhousie University. Projects include a community mural project currently underway with Yeith Street Gallery (for artists with disabilities), and art workshops at nursing homes and psychiatric institutions through Outsider Insight.

**Lynne Fenerty**  
Lynne graduated from Dalhousie University School of Nursing. While spending the majority of her early career in intensive care, she was profoundly affected by the devastation of traumatic brain injury. Since 2001, she has worked with the Neurosurgeons in Halifax, as a research Nurse. Some key research projects she has worked on are; improving times to tertiary care for brain injury patients, prevention programs for skating, skiing, snowboarding and wheeled activities and concussion management. Lynne remains a passionate advocate for neurotrauma and injury prevention, education and research requiring varying levels of support.

**Dr. Alon Friedman**  
Dr. Alon Friedman was born in Yaffo, Israel and graduated (MD-PhD) at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. He specialized in Neurosurgery at Soroka University Medical Center (1996-2001) and in 2002 he moved to Berlin, Germany to fill the position of a guest scientist at the Charité Medical University under the prestigious fellowship from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. Since 2009 Dr. Friedman is a Professor at the Departments of Physiology and Cell Biology at the Ben-Gurion University of the Negev Faculty of Health Sciences. Between 2011-2014 Dr. Friedman was also acting as the director of the Zlotowski Center for Neuroscience and was leading the establishment of the new Interfaculty School for Brain Sciences, at Ben-Gurion University. In 2014 Dr. Friedman was appointed as the Dennis Chair in Epilepsy Research in the Medical Faculty at Dalhousie University in Canada. His research focuses on the pathophysiology of brain disorders, specifically the role of vascular pathology and blood-brain barrier dysfunction on the outcome of brain injury patients, including post-traumatic epilepsy, cognitive and emotional deficits. In 2007 Dr. Friedman won the prestigious International Michael Prize for Epilepsy Research for his discoveries on the role of blood-brain barrier pathology in epileptogenesis.

**Kendra Gottschall**  
Kendra Gottschall was involved in a serious car accident when she was sixteen years old. She was comatose for two weeks and suffered a traumatic brain injury. She has completed a Bachelor of Arts with First Class Honours degree at St. Francis Xavier University, Bachelor of Social Work and Masters of Social Work degrees at Dalhousie University and is currently pursuing her Doctorate of Education degree at St. Francis Xavier University. She currently resides in Antigonish, Nova Scotia where she is employed as a clinical therapist. She co-facilitates the local chapter of the Brain Injury Association of Nova Scotia.

**Jason Harps, RPA, FMA and Aidan Harps aged 12**  
Jason is Vice President of Bona Building and Management Co. Ltd. based in Ottawa, ON. He has been employed in the Property Management/Construction field for nearly 20 years. Jason is also the father of three wonderful children who have helped him in his journey of understanding and acceptance. A volunteer on various sports fields, Church committees, motivational speaker, and a member of the Brain Matters Committee, Jason has always seen the need to give to those around. Jason has received the Employer of The Year Award from the City of Ottawa’s Celebration of People Awards in 2014 and the 2013 winner of the BUC Employer Award which he proudly accepted alongside his dear friend Justin McKenna.

Aidan is definitely not your usual 11 year old boy. Sure he plays football, hockey, and pretty much every other sport, but what drives him is his genuine concern for those around him: especially Justin McKenna. At the age of 9, Aidan created a fund raising ice fishing tournament in support of Justin McKenna. As fate would have it, shortly after the event, Aidan would suffer a serious concussion himself. Justin was there every step of the way offering support and prayers. In two years, the event has raised $4500.00, but more importantly, Aidan has help to educate his peer group concerning Concussions. At age 11, Aidan has been the recipient of several awards, including a Bravo Award, and multiple Christian Leadership Awards. Aidan is destined to make a difference.

**Brittany Jennings**  
Brittany Jennings has been a conductor with the MODC Conductive Education® program for four years. She received her training in Conductive Education® in Birmingham, UK and has worked as a conductor in Toronto, Montreal and Halifax. She runs Conductive Education classes at the March of Dimes office in Halifax year round as well as provides off-site consultations and overnight camp programs throughout Nova Scotia.

**Colleen Lawlor**  
Colleen is a Recreation Therapist, who currently works on the Acquired Brain Injury Rehabilitation Service at the NS Rehabilitation Centre, Capital Health in Halifax. She graduated from Dalhousie University with a Bachelor’s degree in Therapeutic Recreation and obtained her Certification in 1998 through the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification. She has been an active board member with the Nova Scotia Recreation professionals in Health since 1999. In 2012 she was co-chair of the Canadian Therapeutic Recreation Association National Conference, which was held in Halifax. She has presented both nationally and internationally in the field of Therapeutic Recreation.
Dr. Joanny Liu

DR. JOANNY LIIU is the author of 3 books, Knock OUT Concussions, Rapid Injury Recovery: How Elite Athletes Use Brain Plasticity to Heal FAST and Have a Long Stable Career and Brain Plasticity: 10 Steps and 21 Days to Heal Your Concussion. As founder of Harmony Health, she helps elite athletes with Extraordinary Sports Medicine For Extraordinary Results, using non-invasive and non-traditional methods based on Chinese Sports Medicine and Chinese Sports Psychology. She became interested in concussions when her son went blind as a result of a concussion. She has appeared across the continent on NBC, FOX, CTV and Global.

Jason Lye

Jason Lye joined Ontario March of Dimes in 1994 as a part time attendant. During his tenure he has served in almost every capacity within the Independent Living sector and in July 2014 Jason became the National Director for March of Dimes Canada. Jason began his career within the developmental disabilities sector and has worked in the physical disabilities and acquired brain injury field for 25 years. In his capacity as Director Jason has projected the development of Non Profit Housing initiatives specifically focusing on the ABI population. Jason is a graduate of York University and the Executive Management Program from Schulich School of Business. Jason has presented on a disability issues throughout Canada and the United States. Jason resides in Coldwater, Ontario.

Nancy McCormick

Nancy McCormick is a Clinical Social Worker on The Acquired Brain Injury Service at The Ottawa Hospital Rehabilitation Centre. She has experience in supporting individuals and families in their adjustment to disability. Ms. McCormick has been employed at The Ottawa Hospital for the past 11 years. Her interests include Compassion Fatigue and Addictions. She also facilitates Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy sessions for Persons with Brain Injury. Ms. McCormick received her Bachelors of Social Work from Carleton University and her Masters of Social Work from University of McGill.

Alison McDonald

Alison McDonald is a physiotherapist who currently works on the Acquired Brain Injury Rehabilitation Service at the NS Rehabilitation Centre, Capital Health in Halifax. In 2012, Alison achieved her Clinical Specialist (Neurosciences) certification with the Canadian Physiotherapy Association. She is also Adjunct Professor (Clinical) with the School of Physiotherapy, Dalhousie University and is involved in clinical teaching with the School. In 2001-2008, Alison was co-chair of the Canadian Stroke Strategy Best Practice Working Group as part of a national endeavor to create and promote best practices in stroke care and develop provincial stroke strategies.

Ruth McDonald

Ruth McDonald, completed her BA is Psychology from Laurentian University in 1991. Since that time she has spent all of her career providing services to brain injury survivors. For the past 19 years, she has worked at March of Dimes Canada. During her time with the organization, Ruth worked diligently to expand government funded, ABI Outreach services to communities across the Northern Ontario. Ruth has gained a great deal of experience providing a wide range of services to both government as well as fee based ABI services to individuals requiring varying levels of support. Ruth currently is in the role of National Manager, Independent Living, Fee for Service.

Arden McGregor, MA, CPsych, CBIST

Arden is a registered psychologist who has worked full time in brain injury rehabilitation since 1991. She is licensed to practice psychology in both Ontario and Newfoundland, and also provides telepsychology services throughout the Atlantic provinces.

Jo-Ann McInnis

Jo-Ann is a graduation of Early Childhood Education Supervisor (1994) and Human Service Graduate Diploma 2000 as a Community Living Worker from Holland College at Charlottetown N.S. She also trained in Applied Behavioral Analysis for individual with Autism Spectrum Disorder. She worked as an Advocate for individuals in the field of intellectual and physical disabilities on Prince Edward Island. She is also a past board member of Atlantic Province Special Education Authority (APSEA) Halifax, N.S. Jo-Ann was employed with individual’s 1:1 ratio as a Community Living Worker when she sustained a work place injury in January 2006 which resulted in a Traumatic Brain Injury. She is currently involved with the Woman Task Force Group and has served as Prince Edward Island representative, Brain Injury Canada, along with serving a term as a board member of Brain Injury Canada. Interests include painting, travelling, music, gardening, advocacy and now gaining knowledge and educating others on the effect brain injuries have, of not only survivors and caregivers but society in general. Jo-Ann also has a great interest in equine therapy and PTSD survivors and has been involved over the past year in learning about strategies for PTSD survivors. Jo-Ann is an island girl and a parent of a young lady with a variety of disabilities. She has dedicated the past twenty years doing advocacy work for individuals with a wide range of disabilities.

Jonathan (Jake) K. McMurray

Following a horrific car accident at the age of 22 that essentially stole his memories and his life, Jonathan (Jake) K. McMurray learned to live with a traumatic brain injury and was eventually able to graduate with a Bachelor of Arts in English from Acadia University in Wolfville, NS. The accident and his journey through his new life, taught him that life itself is a gift—and every moment a present to be enjoyed. Jake revisits his story in his autobiography, Mind the Gap. Jake currently lives in Georgetown, ON with his wife and two young boys.

Randi Monroe

Bio needed
Dennis Radman

Dennis has a PhD in Cognitive Studies/Educational Psychology from Queens University. He is cross appointed to the Department of Pediatrics, Faculty of Medicine and the School of Nursing at Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. He works with people living with neurogenic communication difficulties and their families in her private practice in Toronto. Riva completed her doctoral degree at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education and has published journal articles on the benefits of using an adult learning approach in interventions for adults and families living with communication disabilities as well as in communication training programs for nurses.

Tanya Packer

An occupational therapist, Dr. Packer’s interest and expertise has always been on the everyday experience of living with and managing life with a disability or long term condition. Her international career has seen her teaching and conducting research in many continents: developing the first occupational therapy education program in Russia, undertaking community based rehabilitation in China and India, studying accessible tourism in Hong Kong, conducting research into the way people manage chronic and long term conditions in Western Australia.

Dr. Joan Versnel

Dr. Joan Versnel is an Associate Professor in the School of Occupational Therapy. She is cross appointed to the Department of Pediatrics, Faculty of Medicine and the School of Nursing at Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. She is currently the co-principal investigator of the LINC study. Together with Dr. Joan Versnel she was the co-principal investigator of the LINC study.

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Dr. Joan Versnel is an Associate Professor in the School of Occupational Therapy. She is cross appointed to the Department of Pediatrics, Faculty of Medicine and the School of Nursing at Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. She is currently the co-principal investigator of the LINC study. Together with Dr. Joan Versnel she was the co-principal investigator of the LINC study.

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