

NEWS AND
INFORMATION FROM
THE MOSS
TRAUMATIC BRAIN
INJURY MODEL
SYSTEM

Brain-e-News



NOVEMBER 2010

RESOURCES

MossRehab Resource Net
www.mossresourcenet.org

The Center for Outcome
Measurement in Brain Injury
www.tbims.org/combi

Brain Injury Association of
America
www.biausa.org
1-800-444-6443

Brain Injury Association of
Pennsylvania
www.biapa.org
Brain Injury Resource Line
1-866-635-7097

Brain Injury Association of
New Jersey
www.bianj.org
1-732-738-1002
Family Helpline:
1-800-669-4323

Brain Injury Association of
Delaware
[www.biausa.org/Delaware/
bia.htm](http://www.biausa.org/Delaware/bia.htm)
1-800-411-0505

Pennsylvania Department of
Health Brain Injury Helpline
1-866-412-4755
TTY 1-877-232-7640

Support Group: Brain Injury
Empowerment Group
2nd Monday of each month
6:00-7:30 PM
Moss Rehab Elkins Park
60 E. Township Line Rd.
Elkins Park PA
Contact: Roberta Brooks
(215)456-9901, ext. 69209

New Concussion Center at MossRehab

There has been a tremendous increase in the awareness of the appropriate evaluation and treatment of concussions. Much of this publicity has resulted from reports of concussions in professional athletes. There is also increased interest regarding the long term effects of repeated concussions, including a serious condition known as chronic traumatic encephalopathy.

The Drucker Brain Injury Center at MossRehab has been working with several local high schools and colleges to help ensure that their athletes are receiving the most appropriate treatment for concussions. This new program utilizes the expertise of Dr. Tom Watanabe, a physiatrist and Dr. Max Shmidheiser, a neuropsychologist. Drs. Watanabe and Shmidheiser have joined the team of athletic trainers who have direct contact with local schools. The additional expertise provides for rapid evaluation of athletes with possible concussions and coordination of further treatment as needed. If an athlete returns to play too quickly, the healing from the



concussion may be slower. Also, if an athlete receives a second concussion before being fully healed from the first one, the effects of the second concussion

may be much more severe. More information is also emerging which suggests that returning to school too soon after injury may also slow the healing process. We see student athletes soon after their injuries to help determine how quickly they can return to school and sports.

Baseline testing, which means testing that is done prior to an injury, can be very helpful. It is easiest to determine whether an injury has caused a problem if we have information about how a person was performing on certain tests prior to that injury. We currently use computerized testing at many schools. More in-depth testing may be required for athletes that demonstrate significant problems or when the problems do not clear up quickly with rest. Treatment for persistent problems is offered at MossRehab's outpatient sites. In addition to cognitive rehabilitation, treatment may focus on other symptoms related to concussion, such as headache and balance problems.



Anger is a normal emotion that protects us, but it can get out of hand after damage to certain parts of the brain.

Anger Self-Management for People With Traumatic Brain Injury

Anger is a common and long-lasting problem after traumatic brain injury (TBI), one with negative effects on relationships and employment. Studies indicate that about 2/3 of people who sustain a TBI complain (or their families complain) of increased anger or irritability, and the problem often doesn't go away on its own. Anger is a normal emotion that protects us, but it can get out of hand after damage to certain parts of the brain. After TBI, irritability can also be triggered by frustrations due to other problems or limitations caused by the injury. Medications can sometimes help, but they may have side effects, and some people would prefer not to take them.



Recently a multi-center group led by Tessa Hart, PhD, Director of the Moss TBI Model System, developed a psycho-educational treatment program called "Anger Self-Management Training" (ASMT) for people with TBI. This 8-session program, which involves talking one-on-one with a therapist who uses a special workbook, is based on the idea that people can learn to deal with their anger by becoming more aware of what is causing it, when, where, and why, and learning new ways to handle anger-provoking situations. A big part of the program is learning how to "self-monitor" for increased awareness of what sets you off, and then learning new techniques to solve the problem more constructively. In a pilot study, 10 people went through the program, most joined for part of the training by a family member or close friend. Participants and their significant others filled out anger scales and other measures before, and 1-3 weeks after the training.

Almost all participants' anger scores went down after the ASMT program, and most family members agreed that there was improvement at home. Even people with significant impairments in reasoning and memory appeared to be able to benefit. Most importantly, participants said they liked the program and felt that they learned a lot. Many had creative suggestions for how to improve the program in the future.

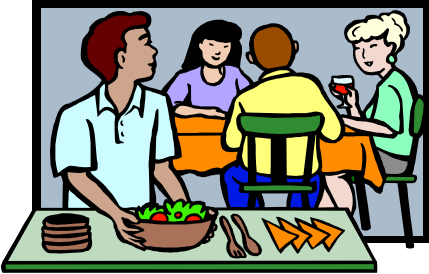
What's next? Dr. Hart and her colleagues are working to get additional funding to see whether the ASMT works for a larger number of people across the country, and whether the effects of the training are long lasting.



Empowerment Group Holiday Plans Underway

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The annual Holiday Gathering of the Drucker Brain Injury Support Group will be held on Monday, December 13, 2010 from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm at MossRehab at Elkins Park, 60 Township Line Road, Elkins Park, PA 19027.



Our holiday Pot Luck gathering is a great time to catch up with people and celebrate the season--we hope you can join us! Entrées and beverages are provided by MossRehab, so plan to bring a side dish or dessert to share. We are also planning a "holiday exchange." If you would like to participate bring a gift wrapped item from home that you would like to exchange. Or write down a strategy that you have found helpful or an inspirational thought you would like to share and place it in an envelope for the exchange.

For more information or to RSVP with the number of people in your party, please call Roberta Brooks at 215-456-9901, ext. 69209, or Katie Soreth-Harman at 215-663-6757.

New Traumatic Brain Injury Fact Sheets

The Model System Knowledge Translation Center, housed at the University of Washington in Seattle, was created in 2007 to help "get the word out" from all of the Model System projects, including the Moss Traumatic Brain Injury Model System (TBIMS) and the other 15 funded TBIMS projects around the country.

The Knowledge Translation Center has produced Fact Sheets on traumatic brain injury that are available free to everyone with an internet connection. Personnel from the Moss TBIMS, including Project Director Tessa Hart, PhD and Clinical Director Thomas Watanabe, MD, have had a hand in creating these documents. Topics include Understanding TBI, Sleep, Driving, Cognitive Problems, Emotional Problems, Fatigue, Seizures, Returning to School, Headaches, and more. You can find and download these fact sheets from <http://msktc.washington.edu/tbi/factsheets/index.asp>



The Faces of the Moss TBI Model System: Dr. Eileen Fitzpatrick

Eileen Fitzpatrick, PhD is the Neuropsychology Supervisor for the inpatient unit of the Drucker Brain Injury Center, MossRehab. Dr. Fitzpatrick has worked in Neuropsychology for nearly 30 years, 19 of which have been spent at Moss Rehab. Her interest in neuropsychology began after taking a course on the subject while attending graduate school in Developmental Psychology. Her passion for her work is evident in the care and attention she gives to patients and families on the unit. Meeting new people and interacting with patients are among Dr. Fitzpatrick's favorite work activities, and she gets to do much more of both at MossRehab than at her previous job in an acute care hospital. "In rehab, people are getting better and that is extremely satisfying," she said. While patient care is always on the forefront of Dr. Fitzpatrick's mind, the staff and the program here at the Drucker Brain Injury Center at MossRehab also hold a special place in her heart. "I've really enjoyed the people I work with and the philosophy of the program. You feel quite valued and your work has value...I feel confident in the ability of my coworkers, and I enjoy working for a place that deserves its reputation." Dr. Fitzpatrick has also helped to supply data for numerous research projects. Eileen, thank you for being a valued member of our team!

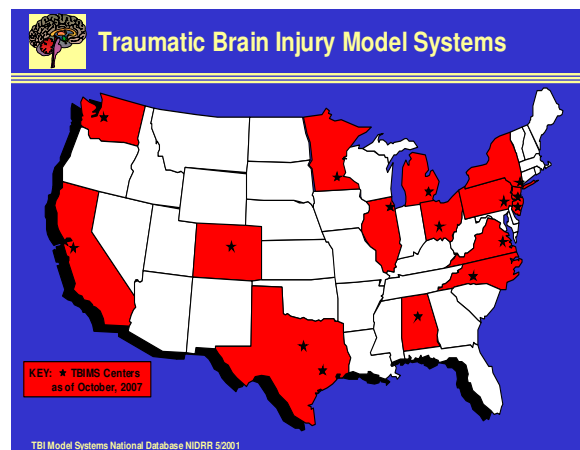


MossRehab at Elkins Park Hospital
60 E. Township Line Road
2nd Floor West - MRRI
Elkins Park, PA 19027
ATTN: Kelly Bogner



Study of a Drug For Disorders of Consciousness (DOCs)

Recently, there have been several reports of individuals with DOCs (vegetative state, minimally conscious state, sometimes referred to as “long-term coma”) regaining consciousness in response to receiving the common sleeping drug zolpidem (Ambien). John Whyte, MD, PhD, and Robin Myers, PT, DPT, NCS, published a placebo controlled pilot study of this phenomenon which has recently won the American Journal of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation’s “Best Paper” award. The Moss Rehabilitation Research Institute is now conducting a nationwide clinical study, funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, to see how often this type of positive response occurs. If your family member was diagnosed with a DOC more than 4 months ago, is at least 18 years of age, and is medically stable, he/she may be eligible to participate in this study. Participants will be provided study medication, screenings, and testing at no cost. For more information, please contact Riya Rajan, the study coordinator, at 215-663-6456 or participants@einstein.edu.



The Moss TBI Model System

- ◆ The National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research has designated MossRehab as a Model System of Care for traumatic brain injury since 1997.
- ◆ The TBI Model System program seeks to improve lives by creating and disseminating new knowledge about the course, treatment and out-