



## RESOURCES

MossRehab Resource Net  
[www.mossresourcenet.org](http://www.mossresourcenet.org)

The Center for Outcome  
Measurement in Brain Injury  
[www.tbims.org/combi](http://www.tbims.org/combi)

Brain Injury Association of  
America  
[www.biausa.org](http://www.biausa.org)  
1-800-444-6443

Brain Injury Association of  
Pennsylvania  
[www.biapa.org](http://www.biapa.org)

Brain Injury Resource Line  
1-866-635-7097

Brain Injury Association of  
New Jersey  
[www.bianj.org](http://www.bianj.org)  
1-732-738-1002  
Family Helpline:  
1-800-669-4323

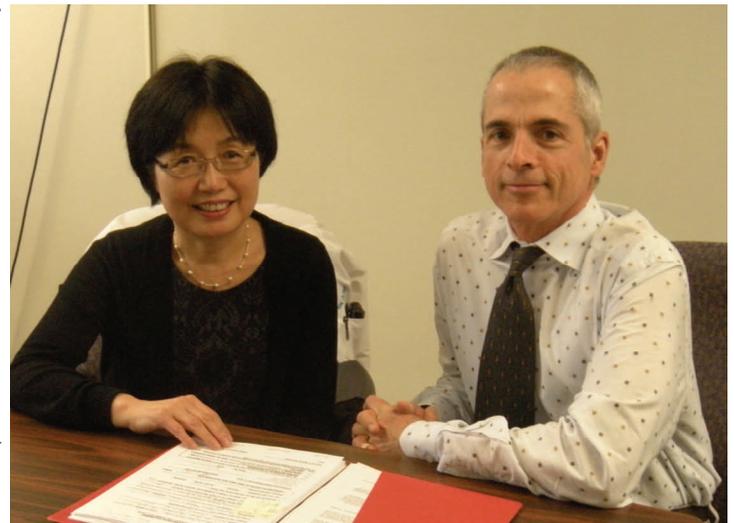
Brain Injury Association of  
Delaware  
[www.biausa.org/Delaware/  
bia.htm](http://www.biausa.org/Delaware/bia.htm)

1-800-411-0505

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

## Amantadine Accelerates Brain Recovery

After a severe traumatic brain injury (TBI), some patients suffer from disorders of consciousness (DOC), including coma, the vegetative state, and the minimally conscious state. Until recently, there have been no treatments proven to speed up or improve recovery. As a result, rehabilitation has focused on improving bodily health and preventing complications, while waiting for natural recovery to occur.



Dr. Sooja Cho & Dr. John Whyte

Physicians may attempt unproven treatments in the hopes of enhancing recovery – e.g., psychostimulants, hyperbaric oxygen, and sensory stimulation. For the first time, however, a drug called amantadine has been shown to accelerate recovery from post-traumatic DOC. An international study led by Joseph Giacino, PhD, currently at Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital and Harvard Medical School, and John Whyte, MD, PhD, at Moss Rehabilitation Research Institute, was funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research to address this topic.

The study involved 184 patients at 10 clinical sites in the United States and Europe. Dr. Sooja Cho led the study at MossRehab. Study participants had a DOC as a result of TBI and were enrolled between 1 and 4 months post-injury. About half the participants were treated with amantadine and half with an inert placebo over a 4-week period. Treatment was then stopped and patients were assessed for 2 weeks.

As reported in the New England Journal of Medicine on March 1, 2012, with extensive follow-up in the media, the group receiving amantadine made faster progress during the 4 weeks of treatment. When the drug was stopped and participants were followed for 2 more weeks, the placebo group began to “catch up” to the amantadine group. Side effects did not differ between groups.

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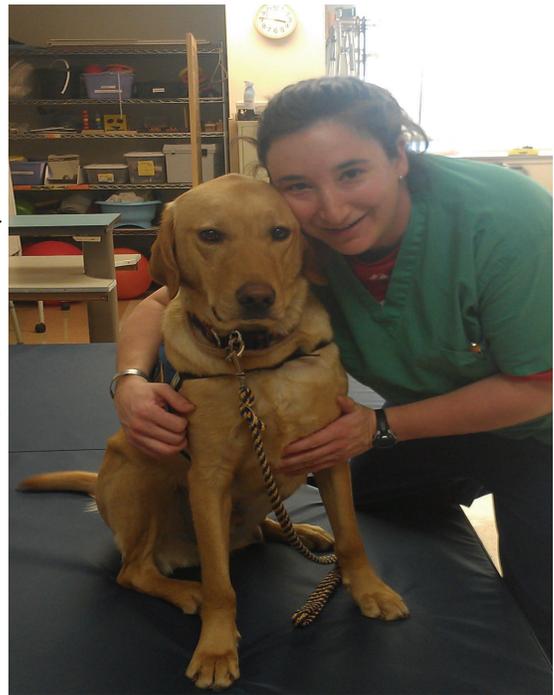
## Meet Seamus – Our Newest Therapist



Meet Seamus (pronounced “Shay-mus”), one of the newest team members on the MossRehab Drucker Brain Injury Center’s inpatient unit, and already one of the most popular! Seamus, an ultra-mellow 2-1/2-year-old Lab-golden retriever mix, came to Moss as part of the canine assisted therapy program started through the hard work and dedication of Carolyn Tassini, Drucker’s Physical Therapy Team Leader. As a “cadet” in the Canine Companions for Independence program he went through more than 6 months of advanced training on service skills, from which only 40% graduate. Seamus then trained with his

handler, Carolyn, for 2 weeks before starting daily, full-time work on the inpatient unit.

Seamus accompanies Carolyn to therapy sessions and follows various combinations of service commands to work with patients. For example, by following the “tug” command, he can deliver balance challenges to patients who are kneeling, sitting, or standing on foam. Patients who help groom Seamus, dress him in his special vest, or attach one of his three different collars get “painless” lessons in sequencing, persistence, and fine motor skills. Seamus also walks with patients, both indoors and out. Whatever the task, Seamus’ friendly and responsive presence helps patients to focus attention and improve their interaction with the environment.



When not working, Seamus is a running partner for Carolyn. He also likes to wrestle with a ball, eat carrots, play with his squeaky toys, and hop in the lake with his brother, Finn, a Portugese water dog.

Welcome, Seamus! You’re “top dog” at Moss, and (last time we checked) the only employee who’s never complained about a long day at work.

## Activities to Support Brain Injury Awareness

### Walk, Run, Roll Events

Two local Walk, Run, Roll events are held annually in the greater Philadelphia area to promote awareness about brain injury and raise funds.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Walk, Roll, Run for Brain Injury, a partnership between the Brain Injury Association of Pennsylvania and Camp Cranium, was held on April 14<sup>th</sup> at Tyler State Park in Newtown, PA. The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Walk, Run, Roll for Thought: Race for Recovery will be held on **May 26th** at East Goshen Park in West Chester, PA.

To learn more about these and other events across Pennsylvania, go to [www.biapa.org](http://www.biapa.org).

### Brain Safety Fairs

This year, the Brain Injury Association of Pennsylvania is having Brain Safety Fairs at the Franklin Institute Science Museum, both on Community Nights when admission to the museum is free of charge. They're scheduled for **Wednesday May 23<sup>rd</sup>** and **Wednesday June 20<sup>th</sup>** from 5:00 – 8:00 PM.

Come and learn about how the brain works, how to keep it safe, and get fitted with a free bicycle helmet! For more information about Brain Safety Fairs being held throughout Pennsylvania, go to [www.biapa.org/BSF](http://www.biapa.org/BSF).

### Annual Conference

The Brain Injury Association of Pennsylvania's annual conference is coming up! It will be held on **Monday, June 25 – Tuesday, June 26**, in Lancaster at the Lancaster (PA) Marriott. The program is intended for survivors, caregivers and professionals.

The theme for this year's conference is Improving Quality of Life: Practical Approaches and Cutting Edge Strategies.

To learn more about the conference, go to [www.biapa.org/annual\\_conference](http://www.biapa.org/annual_conference).

## Amantadine Speeds Recovery (con't)

### From Page 1:

What we know from this study is that amantadine can speed up recovery for patients with traumatic DOC, and that it does so without any obvious side effects. What we can't tell from this study is whether amantadine improves an individual's long-term outcome, or simply achieves that outcome more rapidly. Future research can help clarify this question. In the meantime, amantadine may be a drug of choice since it seems fair to say that both family members and health professionals would favor faster recovery, even if the long-term result is the same.

### March 21st was Blue Jean Day



Blue Jean Day is an annual effort of the Drucker Brain Injury Center (DBIC) to raise awareness about brain injury in the local community, and to raise funds. Blue Jean Day works through several entities within the Albert Einstein Medical Center, with DBIC at the lead, to sell Blue Jean Day Buttons to local schools and businesses. Wearers of the buttons can dress in jeans on Blue Jean Day.

This year, over 1,400 buttons were sold and more than \$2,600 will support the MossRehab DBIC Clubhouse Programs.

MossRehab at Elkins Park Hospital  
50 E. Township Line Road  
Elkins Park, PA 19027  
ATTN: Kelly Bognar



## EMPOWERMENT and SUPPORT GROUP INFO:

### PENNSYLVANIA EMPOWERMENT GROUP

The Elkins Park Empowerment Group meets on the second Monday of each month from 6-7:30 at 60 Township Line Road, Elkins Park, PA 19027.

### Summer Gathering on June 11th, 6-8pm.

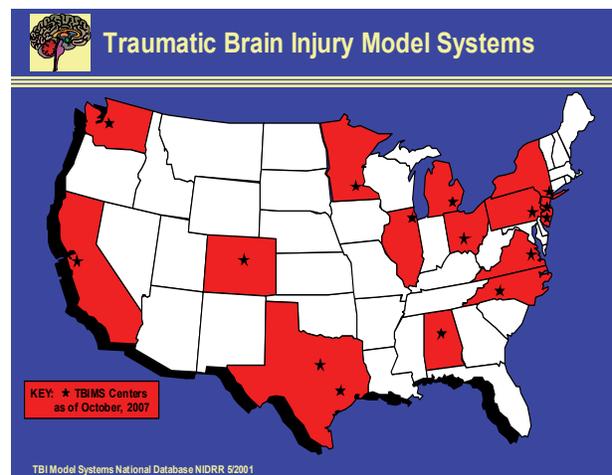
Please bring a side dish or dessert to share.

For more information, contact Debbi Eisen at 215-663-6857 OR Katie Soreth-Harman at 215-663-6757.

### NEW JERSEY SUPPORT GROUP

The New Jersey Support Group meets on the **Fourth Monday** of each month from 5:30-6:30 at 135 S. Broad Street, Woodbury NJ 08096.

For more information, contact Dayna Scott at 856-853-9900 ext. 102.



## 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 outcomes of TBI.