

Brain-e-News

SPRING 2021

RESOURCES

MOSS REHABILITATION
RESEARCH INSTITUTE
www.mrrl.org

MOSSREHAB RESOURCE NET
www.mossresourcenet.org

THE CENTER FOR OUTCOME
MEASUREMENT IN BRAIN
INJURY
www.tblms.org/combl

BRAIN INJURY ASSOCIATION
OF AMERICA
WWW.BIAUSA.ORG

BRAIN INJURY RESOURCE LINE
1-800-444-6443

BRAIN INJURY ASSOCIATION OF
PENNSYLVANIA
www.blapa.org
1-866-635-7097

BRAIN INJURY ALLIANCE OF
NEW JERSEY
www.blanj.org
1-732-745-0200
FAMILY HELPLINE
1-800-669-4323

BRAIN INJURY ASSOCIATION OF
DELAWARE
www.blausa.org/Delaware/bla.htm
1-800-411-0505

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT
OF HEALTH BRAIN INJURY
HELPLINE
1-866-412-4755
TTY **1-877-232-7640**

MODEL SYSTEM KNOWLEDGE
TRANSLATION CENTER (MSKTC)
www.msktc.org

www.Brainline.org

A Collaboration to Transform Treatment of Chronic TBI



We have come to understand that traumatic brain injury (TBI) can often have lasting and changing effects on a person's life. Many of those with TBI experience health issues that persist for many years after the event. For a subset of people, decline occurs over time and must be proactively managed to max-

imize health, independent function, and participation in society.

Director the of the Moss TBI Model Systems, Amanda Rabinowitz, PhD and Drucker Brain Injury Center Clinical Director Tom Watanabe, MD, are part of a group of researchers led by Flora Hammond, MD of Indiana University that are working to address this need by developing a comprehensive model for the long-term management of TBI. A chronic disease approach to TBI combines multiple pathways of care. Managing chronic diseases, such as diabetes and heart disease, differs from medical management of acute conditions. Care must be coordinated across primary and specialty care providers, and patients themselves must take an active role in day-to-day decisions about the management of their illness. When patients are more informed, involved, and empowered, they interact more effectively with the healthcare system and make lifestyle choices to promote better health.

Drs. Hammond, Watanabe, Rabinowitz, and their colleagues want to extend this chronic disease approach to people living with TBI. The model they are developing is called "BeHEALTHY," which aims to transform treatment of chronic TBI by optimizing diagnosis, evaluation, and management of patients with TBI. The project will take 5 years to complete and is supported by funding from the National Institute of Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR).

Moss is proud to be one of the TBI Model Systems sites that is participating in this important project. Dr. Watanabe lends his expertise on clinical management as part of the work group that is developing guidelines for clinical care. Dr. Rabinowitz is overseeing all research activities at Moss and contributing to the effort to develop self-management approaches.

The Faces of the TBI Model System: Kelsey Grass



The TBI lab is happy to introduce Kelsey Grass, the Care Manager of the Brain Injury Rehabilitation: Improving the Transition Experience (BRITE) research study. Kelsey has a master's degree in Mental Health Counseling from Villanova University and previously worked as a private practice counselor and a child advocate within a domestic violence agency. In her spare time, Kelsey enjoys hiking, camping, and gardening.

Kelsey's role as Care Manager in the BRITE study is to provide emotional support, resource facilitation, and to help coordinate care for persons with TBI during the first 6 months after they leave inpatient rehabilitation. When asked what she likes most about her job, Kelsey said, "creating meaningful connections with patients and their families" and expressed a sense of fulfillment she receives by acting as a consistent source of emotional and practical support for patients during this transitional time in their lives.

We're happy Kelsey is part of our team!

EMPOWERMENT GROUP



The Elkins Park Empowerment Group meets on the second Monday of each month from 5-6:30 virtually. Please contact Debbi Eisen at 215-663-6857 or eisend@einstein.edu

Chronic Pain

We've all experienced pain in our daily lives, if you burn your finger on a hot pan or pull a muscle during a workout, pain is your body's way of telling you that something is wrong. Chronic pain is different. The body keeps hurting even after an injury has healed. When pain lasts for three months or more, it is considered chronic, and can have a profound impact on almost every area of life, including sleep, mobility, concentration, and mood. Craig Hospital is leading an effort with Moss and other TBI Model System sites to learn more about the experience with chronic pain after moderate to severe TBI. The goal of the study is to learn more about how common chronic pain is after TBI, what different pain treatments are used, and what are the common conditions that co-occur with pain. The goal of this study is to gain a better understanding of chronic pain in this population to inform the development of treatments to improve health and function for those living with chronic pain after TBI.

Exploring How Life Before Injury Matters to Recovery

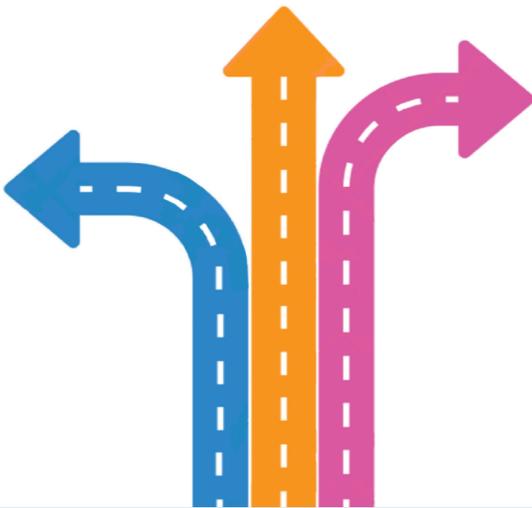
Umi Venkatesan, PhD, who directs the Brain Trauma and Behavior (BraTBehavior) Laboratory, recently launched a project examining social factors that may affect the recovery of adults with traumatic brain injury (TBI). This work is funded by the Albert Einstein Society, and it focuses on early life experiences that may shape how individuals recover from TBI sustained in adulthood.

Attempts to measure the impact of a TBI on an individual's health and function are not just capturing effects of injury, but also all of the life experiences that individual has brought with them to their TBI. For example, social experiences early in life may affect a person's daily habits and routines, or how they cope with stress. In fact, studies in the general population have shown that adverse experiences in childhood have negative health effects later in life.

Dr. Venkatesan is interested in better understanding how early life experiences influence recovery from TBI. In this study, researchers will ask participants about negative childhood family and social experiences, as well as questions about their current health and emotional function. The long-range goal of Dr. Venkatesan's work is to gain a more holistic understanding of each patient, allowing clinicians to

personalize treatment to reflect individual life perspectives. While some recovery factors are not easily changed, we can better understand and modify attitudes and behaviors that could influence recovery potential. This approach may help improve the quality of life of those affected by TBI.

Recruitment for the study is underway, and the project will run through 2021. This project has already spurred connections with other TBI researchers across the country who are studying topics in the broad area of life before brain injury. The BraTBehavior Laboratory is fortunate to be able to conduct this work within the diverse population of the Delaware Valley and looks forward to expanding its scientific mission with future research partnerships.



The Brain Injury Ambassador Program

Representatives from our state Brain Injury Association (BIA-PA), Monica Vaccaro and Dr. Drew Nagele, joined Candace Gantt from the Mind Your Brain Foundation for a podcast about the Pennsylvania Brain Injury Ambassador Program. The goal of this program is to connect with families and caregivers of those affected by a brain injury soon after the injury, deliver a message of hope and help, and provide a packet of resources for the future. Volunteer Brain Injury Ambassadors are trained to work with families referred by liaisons at acute care brain injury rehabilitation facilities. MossRehab is one of five facilities collaborating in this program; the BIA-PA is hoping to expand this network in the upcoming months.



Please click [HERE](#) to learn more about this program.



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



The Moss TBI Model System

The National Institute on Disability, Independent Living and Rehabilitation Research has designated MossRehab as a Model System 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.

**The Traumatic
Brain Injury
Model System
(TBIMS)
Centers for
the current
funding cycle
(2017-2022)**

