



2019 Annual Conference Workshops

Introduction to Neurofeedback

Presented by Dr. Adriana Steffens, BCN

A discussion of what happens to the electrical activity in the brain during a traumatic brain injury, how this can affect functioning, and how neurofeedback training work to bring the brain back to full strength.

Navigating Traumatic Brain Injury Caregiving

Presented by Michelle Smith, MPH, CHES, and Olga Garduño-Ortega, BA

This interactive, accessible workshop will provide caregivers helpful techniques, tips and tools to avoid and to recover from burnout. Caregivers will receive comprehensive information about resources to navigate the complex healthcare and assistance programs in New York State.

Emotion Dysregulation Following Traumatic Brain Injury

Presented by Dr. Maria Kajankova, PhD & Dr. Megan Putnam, PhD

Individuals with brain injury often experience difficulties in emotional awareness and regulation, which could interfere with treatment and have an adverse impact on psychosocial functioning and community integration. Interventions targeting emotion dysregulation could help improve outcomes and have a positive effect on adjustment and well-being. Drs. Kajankova and Putnam will provide an overview of emotion dysregulation post-TBI and the impact that it can have on daily functioning. They will also review available treatments and interventions, including an introduction to an emotion regulation intervention (EmReg) developed at Mount Sinai's Brain Injury Research Center. Findings from two recent trials utilizing this EmReg treatment will also be presented.

Steady on Your Feet: Managing Dizziness & Imbalance

Presented by Lauren DiChiara

Have you ever been dizzy? Do you wonder how you can improve your balance? Then this workshop is for you! This workshop will review the components of your balance system and why they can become affected after having a brain injury. The common causes of dizziness will also be discussed, and tips will be provided on how to manage your symptoms. Our physical therapy team will review simple and safe balance exercises you can try at home.

Special Needs Estate Planning

Presented by Ed Wilcenski, Esq.

Many individuals with disabilities, including those living with brain injury, rely on various means tested entitlements to support themselves in the community. Many also need “fiduciary” assistance — help making financial decisions. One of the most effective tools for providing financial management and ensuring benefit eligibility for individuals with disabilities is the “Supplemental” or “Special” Needs Trust. In this program you will learn the difference between an Agent, Guardian, Trustee and Representative Payee, the different standards of capacity for each, the importance of having a Will, basic financial eligibility for the government benefits, and the different types of Supplemental (Special) Needs Trusts that are used to help support individuals with disabilities in the community.

Fighting the Invisible Opponent

Presented by Ray Ciancaglini

I have Counter punched the "Invisible Opponent" called Dementia for over 2 decades. My objective is to help caregivers and family members better understand Dementia through my perspective, having dealt with the progressive conditions of seclusion, depression, paranoia, anger, denial, loss of cognitive function and the guilt of being a burden on family members.

Unconventional Treatments: HBOT, Acupuncture, CBT, Marijuana

Presented by Heidi Fusco, MD, Dr. Prin Amorapanth, Emma Nally and Erika Trovado, DO, MS

People with brain injury are often presented with "scientifically proven treatments" for their injuries, for a profit. This workshop will address HBOT, acupuncture, CBT and marijuana use after brain injury, as well as how to review the literature and unconventional treatment options available. Attendees will be invited to "ask the clinician."

The Benefits of All Things Yoga for People with Brain Injury

Presented by Diane Ritters, MA, CBIS and Abigail Baglionle, LMSW, CIC PBIS

During this 75 minute session, presenters will share information and provide practical experience in breathwork, asanas (poses) and meditation. Attendees can adapt each to achieve personal comfort and maximum benefit. Attendees will be invited to take this experience home to create their own practice.

BIANYS Advocacy Update

Presented by Christina Bolton, BIANYS Director of Advocacy & Engagement

Advocacy isn't just about influencing public policy, but also about influencing public opinion. This workshop will describe the exciting things BIANYS is working on, what we have in store for the future, and what you can do to get involved.

Sleep After Brain Injury

Presented by Heidi Fusco, MD, Dr. Emma Nally and Dr. Elina Kugal

People with brain injuries often suffer from sleep disorders that can affect daytime function, mood, relationships, health and overall wellbeing. This workshop will address sleep disorders and discuss pharmacological treatments as standard sleep hygiene. Attendees will be invited to "ask the clinician."

Becoming Your Own Best Friend: Accepting all of You

Presented by Gerry Brooks

Self-Acceptance is a pre-requisite for mental health, change and self-improvement. In this workshop we will talk about how common it is for us to experience the opposite of self-acceptance, or shame, why this is so, and most importantly, how to create a regular practice to promote a more realistic, healthy, and productive relationship with that person who looks back at us in the mirror every day.

The Value of Volunteering

Presented by Jessica Wurtenberg and Theresa Brayman, OTD, OTR/L

This presentation will include a personal story from a TBI survivor and volunteer who just completed a two-week service project in Africa. The value of volunteering as a meaningful occupation will also be discussed. Opportunities for people with TBI volunteering in their own community will be explored. Barriers and supports for participating in volunteer opportunities will be identified.

Social Deficits: Theory of Mind

Presented by Oren Abramowitz, SLP

Social deficits are a pervasive problem in the traumatic brain injury community and often lead to withdrawal. Theory of Mind deficits have been offered as a cause, however research has been inconclusive. This presentation will delve into the history and current trends in research regarding TBI and Theory of Mind.

Finding Support in all The Right Places

Presented by Margo Singer, MPA, CBIS

A panel of Support Group facilitators will provide an overview of Support Group activities across the state and discuss highlights, challenges, and best practices, including BIANYS Support Group Guidelines. An examination of what's next: Online and Video-conferenced Support Groups? Support groups for Young Adults? Current Support Group leaders and those who are interested in starting up a Support Group in their community are encouraged to attend.

Conquering Compassion Fatigue & Caregiver Burnout

Presented by Mary Moller, MSW, CAS

Very often caregivers put their own needs aside as they assist their loved one. Their commitment and dedication may not leave time for self-care and fun. This workshop will provide tips and tools to help encourage caregivers to prioritize their own health and wellness. Come with an open mind to be affirmed and refreshed.