



# Acquired Brain Injury & Work

Accommodations and Best Practices for Employment

Presented by: Adult and Child Staff: Carla Orr, Jane Wiles, April Hunt  
September 19, 2017

# Focus of Today's Training

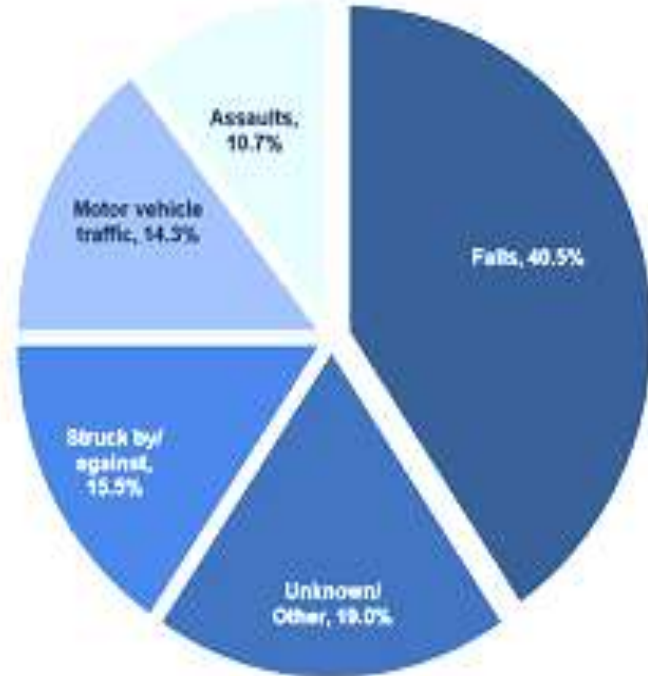
- ★ Identify best practices for working with individuals with ABI
- ★ Explore accommodations to assist individuals with ABI
- ★ Resources



# Any ONE, Any time, Any where...



Leading Causes of TBI



# 7 Functional Limitations

**7. Work Tolerance:** The physical, cognitive, sensory and psychological ability to display concentration, strength and stamina to work a full-work day or full work week.

**6. Work Skills:** The physical, cognitive, sensory and psychological ability to work at his or her own full capacity.

**5. Self Direction:** The physical, cognitive, sensory and psychological ability to manage their own affairs.

**4. Self Care:** of data: The physical, cognitive, sensory and psychological ability to plan and or perform daily living activities.



**1. Communication:** The physical, cognitive, sensory and psychological ability to use, give and/or receive information.

**2. Interpersonal Skills:** The physical, cognitive, sensory and psychological ability to appropriately engage others in social situations and in relationships.

**3. Mobility:** The physical, cognitive, sensory and psychological ability to move from place to place both inside and outside the home.

# Tips for VR, Employment Specialist, Job coaches, etc.

Some areas to assess and look for:

- Concentration
- Relating to others
- Organization
- Stress
- Problem solving



## Tips continued:

Some things to assess and look for(continued):

- Punctuality
- Memory
- Gross Motor Impairment
- Fatigue/ Weakness

# Community Resource Providers receive referrals from VR

- VR provides information and collateral (should provide copy of client's recent NeuroVocational evaluation (NVE) Report
- Collaboration with Resource Facilitation Team at RHI
- NeuroVocational evaluation (NVE) provides information and recommendations for client that will impact and improve vocational success.
- Use many skills to determine other needs when we meet with clients.

# Employee Needs

## Questions to Consider:

- What limitations is the employee with a ABI experiencing?
- How do these limitations affect the employee and the employee's job performance?
- What specific job tasks are problematic as a result of these limitations?
- What accommodations are available to reduce or eliminate these problems? Are all possible resources being used to determine possible accommodations?

**\*Make sure to review NVE report for useful guidance and information.**



# Employee Needs

- Has the employee with an ABI been consulted regarding possible accommodations?
- Once accommodations are in place, would it be useful to meet with the employee with an ABI to evaluate the effectiveness of the accommodations and to determine whether additional accommodations are needed?
- Do supervisory personnel and employees need training regarding ABIs?

\*The Resource Facilitator and Local Support Network Leader can educate personnel/employers.

# Accommodation Ideas (JAN)

## → Physical Limitations:

- ◆ Install ramps, handrails, and provide handicap parking spaces
- ◆ Install lever style door handles
- ◆ Clear pathways of travel of any unnecessary equipment and furniture

# Accommodation Ideas (JAN)

## → Visual Problems:

- ◆ Provide written information in large print
- ◆ Change fluorescent lights to high intensity, white lights
- ◆ Increase natural lighting
- ◆ Provide a glare guard for computer monitors
- ◆ Consult a vision specialist particularly with someone who has lost part of or all of their vision

# Accommodation Ideas (JAN)

→ Maintaining Stamina During the Workday:

- ◆ Permit flexible scheduling, allow longer or more frequent work breaks
- ◆ Provide additional time to learn new responsibilities
- ◆ Provide self-paced workload
- ◆ Provide backup coverage for when the employee needs to take breaks
- ◆ Allow employee to work from home during part of the day
- ◆ Provide for job sharing opportunities
- ◆ Allow part-time work schedules and time off when needed.

# Accommodation Ideas (JAN)

## → Problem Solving Deficits:

- ◆ Provide picture diagrams of problem solving techniques, e.g., flow charts
- ◆ Restructure the job to include only essential functions
- ◆ Assign a supervisor, manager, or mentor when the employee has questions

# Accommodation Ideas (JAN)

## → Attendance Issues:

- ◆ Provide flexible leave for health problems
- ◆ Provide a self-paced workload and flexible hours
- ◆ Allow employee to work from home
- ◆ Provide part-time work schedule

# Accommodation Ideas (JAN)

## → Maintaining Concentration:

- ◆ Reduce distractions in the work area
- ◆ Provide space enclosures or a private office
- ◆ Allow for use of white noise or environmental sound machines
- ◆ Allow the employee to play soothing music using a cassette player and headset

# Accommodation Ideas (JAN)

→ Maintaining Concentration continued:

- ◆ Increase natural lighting or provide full spectrum lighting
- ◆ Reduce clutter in the employee's work environment
- ◆ Plan for uninterrupted work time
- ◆ Divide large assignments into smaller tasks and steps
- ◆ Restructure job to include only essential functions



# Accommodation Ideas (JAN)

- Difficulty Staying Organized and Meeting Deadlines:
  - ◆ Make daily TO-DO lists and check items off as they are completed
  - ◆ Use several calendars to mark meetings and deadlines
  - ◆ Remind employee of important deadlines via memos or e-mail or weekly supervision
  - ◆ Use a watch or pager with timer capability
  - ◆ Use electronic organizers
  - ◆ Divide large assignments into smaller tasks and steps
  - ◆ Assign a mentor to assist employee in determining goals and provide daily guidance
  - ◆ Schedule weekly meetings with supervisor, manager, or mentor to determine if goals are being met

# Accommodation Ideas (JAN)

## → Memory Deficits:

- ◆ Allow the employee to tape record meetings
- ◆ Provide typewritten minutes of each meeting
- ◆ Use notebooks, calendars, or sticky notes to record information
- ◆ Provide written as well as verbal instructions
- ◆ Allow additional training time
- ◆ Provide written checklists and use color-coding
- ◆ Post instructions close to frequently used equipment

# Accommodation Ideas (JAN)

## → Difficulty Handling Stress and Emotions:

- ◆ Provide praise and positive reinforcement
- ◆ Refer to counseling and employee assistance programs
- ◆ Allow telephone calls during work hours to doctors and others for needed support
- ◆ Provide sensitivity training to coworkers
- ◆ Allow the employee to take a break as a part of a stress management plan

# Accommodation Ideas (JAN)

## → Working Effectively with Supervisors:

- ◆ Provide positive praise and reinforcement
- ◆ Write clear expectations of responsibilities and the consequences of not meeting them
- ◆ Allow for open communication with managers and supervisors
- ◆ Establish written long term and short term goals
- ◆ Develop strategies to deal with problems before they arise
- ◆ Provide written work agreements
- ◆ Develop a procedure to evaluate the effectiveness of the accommodation

# Accommodation Ideas (JAN)

## → Issues of Change:

- ◆ Recognize that a change in the office environment or of supervisors may be difficult for a person with a brain injury
- ◆ Maintain open channels of communication between the employee and the new and old supervisor in order to ensure an effective transition
- ◆ Provide weekly or monthly meetings with the employee to discuss workplace issues and productions levels
- ◆ Consult with the RF team to assist with changes on the job.

\*Remember, the client's NeuroVocational Evaluation (NVE) report provides information & recommendations for:

- Cognitive deficits and strengths
- Neurobehavioral Problems
- Psychological Issues
- Social and family dynamics and functioning
- Activities of daily living abilities
- Substance abuse issues
- Overall Brain injury disability
- Vocational barriers, preferences and values

# Talk Topics

## ❖ Open Discussion / Stories

## ❖ Consider...

- How do *you* manage
- How are *you* helped
- Who do you help



# References

- [Job Accommodation Network: JAN https://askjan.org/](https://askjan.org/)
- <http://www.headinjury.com/tbiglossary.htm>



# Thank YOU!!

Adult & Child Health Presenters and contact information:

Carla Orr [corr@adultandchild.org](mailto:corr@adultandchild.org)

Jane Wiles [jwiles@adultandchild.org](mailto:jwiles@adultandchild.org)

April Hunt [ahunt@adultandchild.org](mailto:ahunt@adultandchild.org)



I WAS WHO I WAS,  
I AM WHO I AM  
AND I'M COOL  
WITH BOTH  
OF THEM

STEVE HARVEY