

Call for evidence to support people with acquired brain injuries

- New government ambition to prevent and limit the impact of acquired brain injuries
- A call for evidence will be launched to identify ways to improve services and support
- Those with experience of working with patients with injuries are invited to help collaborate

People whose lives have been affected by acquired brain injuries (ABI) are being invited to share their experiences and give ideas on how to improve the care and support available.

The government is asking people to come forward with their views on how to ensure a better quality of life for those who have experienced brain damage after birth.

Acquired brain injuries can be caused by traumas such as road traffic accidents, assaults and falls, or by medical issues like tumours or diseases, such as meningitis.

More support is needed to find ways to improve services and also increase rates of prevention and recognising symptoms.

The request for engagement is going out to those with ABI, their families, healthcare professionals and charities over the next 12 weeks.

It will provide an opportunity to hear first-hand from the people most affected to help find out what services are needed, where there may be gaps, and how the government can support services to help fill these.

Minister for Care and Mental Health Gillian Keegan said:

It is absolutely essential people living with acquired brain injury get the best possible care and treatment and that we take steps to prevent these injuries wherever possible.

Together the cross-government programme board and the call for evidence will allow us to deliver a strategy to address issues that matter most to those with acquired brain injuries and other neurological conditions.

A new programme board, jointly chaired by Minister for Care and Mental Health Gillian Keegan and Labour MP Chris Bryant MP, will look to publish a new strategy to reduce the amount of injuries sustained whilst also improving the experiences of those with acquired brain injuries.

Views are also being sought on extending the strategy to include other neurological conditions.

MP for Rhondda, and joint chair of the programme board, Chris Bryant, said:

I'm delighted that the government is starting to pull together a cross government strategy on acquired brain injury.

We need people to come forward with ideas and suggestions based on their experience of brain injury as practitioners, patients or family members so we can get this strategy right.

I urge everyone to take part if they think they have an insight to offer.

Chloe Hayward, executive director of the UK Acquired Brain Injury Forum, said:

We are very pleased the government is giving acquired brain injury the attention it deserves with the ABI Strategy.

The call for evidence will help the panel to focus and prioritise their efforts, so we need people with lived experience of brain injury – whether, survivors, carers or professionals – to participate. This will ensure the panel has the best available information to develop their strategy.

The ABI strategy will be the latest step forward in improving responses to brain injuries. It comes after the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport published its action plan for tackling concussion in sport to help reduce the risks of head injuries.

In that plan new protocols will be put in place and steps taken to improve the understanding, awareness, prevention and treatment of concussion in sport at all levels.

Those leading on the concussion protocols will also support this strategy and call for evidence as the government does all it can to reduce risks, better understand symptoms and improve treatment and services.