



brain injury AUSTRALIA

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**BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS WEEK 2013
CELEBRATES DISABILITYCARE AUSTRALIA. BUT
PEOPLE WITH A BRAIN INJURY RISK MISSING OUT ON
ITS BENEFITS. BRAIN INJURY AUSTRALIA IS BUILDING
THE SERVICES THAT WILL ENABLE ALL PEOPLE WITH
A BRAIN INJURY TO ACCESS AUSTRALIA'S
NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME.**

BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS WEEK BEGINS MONDAY 12TH AUGUST

Brain Injury Australia - the peak advocacy organisation representing the needs of the over 600,000 Australians with an acquired brain injury - welcomes the launch of the national disability insurance scheme, DisabilityCare Australia. But Brain Injury Australia fears people with a brain injury will be significantly disadvantaged due to their disability.

Acquired brain injury (ABI) refers to any damage to the brain that occurs after birth. The main causes of ABI are stroke - where blood supply to brain is stopped by a clot or bleeding - and trauma such as motor vehicle accidents, assaults and falls. **ABI is the leading cause of death and disability in young Australians.**

The majority of people with an ABI – around three in every four – make a good *physical* recovery but will often sustain debilitating and ongoing *cognitive* disability. This includes difficulties with their memory and concentration, resulting in a reduced ability to learn, to plan and to solve problems. "These are the exact same abilities necessary to exercise the kind of choice and control over individualised funding that's at the heart of DisabilityCare Australia", says Nick Rushworth, Executive Officer of Brain Injury Australia.

"Many people with an ABI will be able to navigate the new world of DisabilityCare Australia as easily as the old disability services system", says Rushworth. "But some will not." **Brain Injury Australia has responded by helping its Member organisations prepare to deliver what DisabilityCare Australia calls 'Plan Management Provider' and 'Support Coordination' services - to help people with an ABI develop and manage their own individualised plan, identify and then choose from those services and supports best qualified to meet their needs.**

"I doubt whether everyone with an ABI is going to be able to transform themselves from relatively passive customers of disability services into active retailers of the funding in their plan without an enabling infrastructure", says Rushworth. "Brain Injury Australia's Members are building that infrastructure."

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