

BRAINLINK PRIVACY STATEMENT:

All personal and health information will be treated confidentially by BrainLink. No directly identifying information, such as your name or other personal details, will be provided to other agencies without your consent. BrainLink are required to release certain anonymous statistical information about our service users to the Department of Human Services (DHS). This assists in ongoing service planning and enables the continuation of government funding which will be used to plan for improved service provision for people with ABI or neurological conditions.

EASTERN REGION ABI FLEXIBLE RESPITE SERVICE GUIDELINES

ELIGIBILITY and CRITERIA:

Eligible to apply

1. Family members caring for a client who has a **primary** disability of an acquired brain injury as defined by the Department of Human Services: "*an injury to the brain which results in deterioration of cognitive, physical, emotional or independent functions. It can occur as a result of trauma, hypoxia, infection, substance abuse, degenerative neurological disease or stroke. These impairments to cognitive abilities, sensory or physical functioning can be either temporary or permanent and cause partial or total disability or psycho social maladjustment*". (Department of Human Services, Acquired Brain Injury Strategic Plan, 2001)
2. Referrals where the clients have a neurological disability should in the first instance go to their retrospective Neurological Support Agency.
3. Clients must be in the age group of birth to 64 years.
4. Clients must live in the Eastern Metro Region and both reside at the same address
 - Primarily provides support for a short-term period (12 weeks), however timeframes based on each referral considered where appropriate.
 - High priority exists where the caring relationship is a risk of breakdown.
 - Takes a holistic view in that the support needs of the client includes that of the carer and the family as a whole.

Not eligible to apply

- Clients over the age of 65 years, as the aged care sector should be able to respond to these needs.
- Palliative Care clients as the palliative care and hospital services are responsible for the ongoing needs of these clients

AIMS:

Aims of the Flexible Respite Service:

- Overall aim is to consider the needs of the primary carer to maintain and sustain the caring relationship for the long term.
- Improve the wellbeing of the carer/family and the person being cared for.
- Support the caring relationship and attend to short term support needs.
- Provide immediate or preventative measures where necessary.
- Provide practical support to carers (ie funding Carer Retreats).

Reducing the impact of acquired brain disorders in our community.

- Provide access to social and recreational activities for the carer/family.

EXAMPLES:

Examples of what can be funded

- Additional one off carer respite, to suit the client and carer.
- Additional short-term personal care/home help as client's or carer's needs change.
- Funding for family/relationship counselling.
- Funding to attend Carer Retreats as organised by **BrainLink** and held in partnership with other service agencies.
- Funding to attend community integrated activities for either the carer, the client or as a family (ie children to attend a school holiday programme with assistance).
- Funding for a client/carer/family holiday.
- Funding a community service that improves that quality of life for the client/carer/family.

INITIATIVE

- Adding value to existing funding/resources, for example if a service agency organises a camp, and seeks funding from various sources to cover all the costs.
- Organise a school holiday programme for children using joint funding.

MAKING A REFERRAL

Applications can be made by your respective case management service or ABI associated agencies, or other health professional. These include:

- Melbourne City Mission (ABI Service)
- ARBIAS
- Care Connect
- Eastern Access Community Health Centre
- Boroondara Council/HACC
- Association for Children with a Disability
- Your local GP

All referrals must be completed on the "Eastern Region ABI Flexible Respite Referral Form". If you do not already have a copy of this referral form, please contact BrainLink Services and these can be posted or faxed to you. Alternatively, you can download the referral form from the BrainLink website- <http://www.brainlink.org.au/emr-flexible-respite.htm>

The referral form asks the referrer to outline the client's general day to day support needs as well as the detailing the support requested in the application. Supporting letters may be required where appropriate, i.e. to demonstrate the need for the support requested.

Once the referral has been completed, please fax (9845 2882), email or post to **BrainLink Services**. **BrainLink's** intention is to respond within two - five working days as to the outcome of the application. A written response will be forwarded to the Referrer and Client/Carer advising of the outcome of the application.

If you have any queries regarding these guidelines or the eligibility criteria please contact:

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BrainLink Services

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Email: clientservices@brainlink.org.au