

# **BRAIN INJURY CHECKLIST FOR PSYCHIATRISTS**

This is an aide-mémoire for psychiatrists assessing a patient with acquired brain injury. It assumes a standard psychiatric assessment. Use the list below to check any additional information required.

## **HISTORY OF INJURY**

- Date, cause, nature and severity
- Associated injuries
- Intoxication at injury
- Lowest Glasgow Coma Scale
- Length of coma (ventilated?)
- Length of hospitalisation
- Retrograde & post traumatic amnesia
- Death or injuries of others from accident
- Investigations
  - CT/MRI/EEG
- Neurosurgical intervention (eg. shunt)
- Treatments, rehabilitation and advice received
- Previous brain injury?

## **SYMPTOMS AND SIGNS**

### **Physical**

- Smell
- Vision
- Hearing
- Speech / Intelligibility
- Swallowing (choking)
- Pain
  - Neck and back symptoms
  - Headaches
  - Other
- Gait
- Weakness / Spasticity
- Dizziness / Balance
- Epilepsy (type, frequency and time post injury)
- Other disturbances of consciousness
- Adverse effects of medication, movement disorder
- Skin / Autonomic

### **Cognitive**

- MMSE
- Conscious level (? fluctuating)
- Perceptual neglect

### **Cognitive (cont.)**

- Dysexecutive - organisational ability
- Mental capacity  
(consent to treatment/ Management of property & affairs)

### **Communication / Thinking**

- Verbal, non-verbal and social skills
- Confabulation
- Perseveration

### **Behavioural**

- Drive / motivation / fatigue
- Compliance
- Disinhibition
- Perseverative behaviour
- Wandering / Absconding
- Irritability / Aggression
- Disruptive / Noisy

### **Emotional**

- Dysphoria
- Lability / emotionalism
- Catastrophic reaction
- PTSD symptoms

## **ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING**

### **Personal**

- Mobility
- Eating and drinking
- Continence
- Washing and dressing

### **Community**

- Ability to use transport
- Fitness to drive
- Leisure

### **Domestic**

- Cooking
- Laundry
- Shopping
- Money management

### **Available support**

- Relatives/friends
- Headway
- Day centres
- Social worker / benefits / legal representation

## **RISK IDENTIFICATION**

- Self-harm
- Assault / violence / threat to others
- Criminal behaviour / fire risk
- Sexually inappropriate behaviour
- Alcohol / drug misuse
- Potential for exploitation by others
- Wandering, falling or choking
- Awareness of danger / Road safety
- Family cohesion
- Able to self medicate