



# Brain-e-News

FALL 2018

## RESOURCES

MOSS REHABILITATION  
RESEARCH INSTITUTE  
[www.mrrl.org](http://www.mrrl.org)

MOSSREHAB RESOURCE NET  
[www.mossresourcenet.org](http://www.mossresourcenet.org)

THE CENTER FOR OUTCOME  
MEASUREMENT IN BRAIN  
INJURY  
[www.tblms.org/combl](http://www.tblms.org/combl)

BRAIN INJURY ASSOCIATION  
OF AMERICA  
[WWW.BIAUSA.ORG](http://WWW.BIAUSA.ORG)

BRAIN INJURY RESOURCE LINE  
1-800-444-6443

BRAIN INJURY ASSOCIATION OF  
PENNSYLVANIA  
[www.blapa.org](http://www.blapa.org)  
1-866-635-7097

BRAIN INJURY ALLIANCE OF  
NEW JERSEY  
[www.blanj.org](http://www.blanj.org)  
1-732-745-0200  
FAMILY HELPLINE  
1-800-669-4323

BRAIN INJURY ASSOCIATION OF  
DELAWARE  
[www.blausa.org/Delaware/bla.htm](http://www.blausa.org/Delaware/bla.htm)  
1-800-411-0505

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT  
OF HEALTH BRAIN INJURY  
HELPLINE  
1-866-412-4755  
TTY 1-877-232-7640

MODEL SYSTEM KNOWLEDGE  
TRANSLATION CENTER (MSKTC)  
[www.msktc.org](http://www.msktc.org)

[www.Brainline.org](http://www.Brainline.org)

## New Clinical Guidelines for Treating Disorders of Consciousness



In August 2018, a new practice guideline for treating patients with TBI who have persisting disorders of consciousness (DOC) was issued by the American Academy of Neurology (AAN), the American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine (ACRM), and the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR).

In a practice guideline, the evidence from high-quality research is translated into a guide for best clinical practice. The new guideline is intended to guide the diagnosis, treatment, and outcome prediction for patients who remain in a vegetative or minimally conscious state for more than 4 weeks after brain injury. Compared to a DOC guideline published in 2002, the new one recognizes that long-term outcomes can be quite positive for a substantial number of people with DOC who receive high-quality medical and rehabilitative care. Importantly, much of the evidence behind this new guideline is credited to the NIDILRR-funded TBI Model System program, which includes MossRehab/ MRRI.

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## Pennsylvania Department of Health Grants on TBI

Researchers at the Moss TBIMS are collaborating with other leading hospitals and universities in Pennsylvania on two research projects funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Health to create new scientific knowledge about TBI across the lifespan. We are excited about this opportunity for Moss to join with other institutions that are conducting cutting-edge TBI research across Pennsylvania.



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## Visiting Scholar Spurs Clinical Program Improvements

Moss Rehabilitation Research Institute and MossRehab's Drucker Brain Injury Center were pleased to host a visit from Dr. Lyn Turkstra, a renowned Speech-Language Pathologist who is an expert on cognitive rehabilitation, in June of 2018. As part of the 2017-2022 Moss TBIMS grant program, Dr. Turkstra spent several days meeting with inpatient and outpatient clinical staff and research staff to discuss how to improve our treatment protocols for individuals with memory disorders. Dr. Turkstra continues to consult via phone with the treatment teams as they modify clinical protocols and develop staff training efforts. Her visit to Moss featured a well-attended and enthusiastically received lecture for all clinical and research staff entitled, "Why Does Social Cognition Matter in Acquired Brain Injury Rehabilitation?"



## Disorders of Consciousness Guidelines (cont'd)

The guideline has 3 sections dealing with patient assessment, estimating long-term outcome, and treatment. Among the important points are how to avoid misdiagnosing patients who are in a minimally conscious state as being in a vegetative state, which occurs up 40% of the time, and the latest research on emerging tools and imaging methods for detecting consciousness. With respect to treatment, there are no 'magic bullets,' but the guideline stresses the importance of access to coordinated rehabilitation team care for patients with DOC.

A summary of the guideline can be found at [https://journals.lww.com/neurotodayonline/Fulltext/2018/08160/In\\_the\\_Clinic\\_Disorders\\_of\\_Consciousness\\_The.3.aspx](https://journals.lww.com/neurotodayonline/Fulltext/2018/08160/In_the_Clinic_Disorders_of_Consciousness_The.3.aspx)

## PA DOH (cont'd)

In one project, Dr. Douglas Smith of the University of Pennsylvania is leading the PA Consortium on TBI (PACT)—an effort that incorporates resources at Penn, Moss, University of Pittsburgh, and the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. With the goal of developing new tools for diagnosis and monitoring progress, this project involves a search for blood biomarkers of inflammation that may predict patterns of long-term recovery after TBI.

In the other project, Dr. Frank Hillary at the Pennsylvania State University is leading a collaboration involving Penn State, Hershey Medical Center, Moss, and the University of Pennsylvania. This project will examine the influences of genetics and demographic factors—including race and ethnicity—on overall health and functioning in older individuals with a history of moderate to severe TBI. This study may give us a better understanding of how TBI influences the aging process in people from diverse backgrounds.

# Save the Date!

## Moss TBIMS Consumer Conference is October 19, 2019



Once every 5-year cycle, the Moss TBIMS, together with MossRehab, sponsors a full day of workshops, lectures, and networking opportunities for people living with brain injury and their families. This cycle's conference will be held at The Pennsylvania Convention Center on October 19, 2019. Once again, we have partnered with ten other Philadelphia-area rehabilitation facilities serving people with brain injury to plan this exciting conference. All of the programming is organized jointly by professionals and people living with TBI,

both survivors and caregivers, and many sessions are facilitated by professionals and consumers working side by side. Save the date for what promises to be another successful event!

## The Faces of the TBI Model System: Julianne Wilson

The TBI Lab is delighted to introduce Julie Wilson, who joined us in January of this year as a Research Assistant for the Moss TBIMS and affiliated projects. Julie graduated from Widener University and has prior experience assisting in a mouse lab. She loves animals and shares her home in Havertown with several, in addition to her husband. Julie says the best part of her job here is meeting and getting to know people who have experienced TBI. Her compassion, high energy, and upbeat personality make her a great fit with our lab.

Welcome, Julie!



## EMPOWERMENT and SUPPORT GROUP INFORMATION

### PENNSYLVANIA EMPOWERMENT GROUP

The Elkins Park Empowerment Group meets on the second Monday of each month from 5-6:30 at 60 Township Line Road, Elkins Park, PA 19027.

For more info, contact Debbi Eisen at 215-663-6857 or Jessica Dzurinko 215-663-6785.

### NEW JERSEY SUPPORT GROUP

The New Jersey Support Group meets *most* months on the fourth Tuesday from 3:00-4:00 at 135 S. Broad Street, Woodbury NJ 08096.

For more info, contact Jazmine Toolles at 856-853-9900.

MossRehab at Elkins Park Hospital  
50 E. Township Line Road  
Elkins Park, PA 19027  
ATTN: Lauren McLaughlin



## The Moss TBI Model System

The National Institute on Disability, Independent Living and Rehabilitation Research has designated MossRehab as a Model System for traumatic brain injury since 1997. The TBI Model System program seeks to improve lives by creating and disseminating new knowledge about the course, treatment and outcomes of TBI.

**The Traumatic  
Brain Injury  
Model System  
(TBIMS)  
Centers for  
the current  
funding cycle  
(2017-2022)**

