

NRH Brain Injury Programme Scope of Service

**THE '*NEXT STAGE*' Home & Community Programme
at the Rehabilitative Training Unit (RTU)**

THE HOME AND COMMUNITY PROGRAMME

Scope of Service

The Next Stage Home & Community Rehabilitative Training Programme (Next Stage) at the National Rehabilitation Hospital (NRH) provides specialised, interdisciplinary, coordinated and individualised outcomes focused rehabilitation for people with acquired brain injury (ABI). It is part of the NRH continuum of care.

NRH Brain Injury Continuum of Care

The NRH has developed a full continuum of care for people with ABI. This continuum includes:

- Brain Injury Comprehensive Integrated Inpatient Rehabilitation Programme (BI/IP)
- Brain Injury Outpatient Rehabilitation Programme (BI/OP)
- Brain Injury Home and Community Based Rehabilitation Programme (BI/HCB)
- Brain Injury Vocational Services (BI/V)
- *Next Stage* Rehabilitative Training Programme incorporating Vocational Programme and Home & Community Programme

This comprehensive interdisciplinary system of continuum of care ensures that all individuals can receive the most appropriate programme of care based on their injury and their individual rehabilitation needs. Treatment can begin anywhere in this continuum, and persons served can progress through this continuum and to other appropriate community and follow-up services.

In some instances the person served can receive services from multiple NRH programmes and services throughout their continuum of care. For example, a

person who has experienced a brain injury may also have a spinal or amputation injury. This “dual diagnosis” requires a specialised and individualised treatment plan that addresses the unique needs of the person and utilises the expertise and close working of multiple NRH programme staff and services.

Next Stage is a national rehabilitative training service provider accepting referrals of persons with an ABI residing in Ireland. The Next Stage Programme is designed to assist people with an ABI to maximise their functional abilities and achieve their individual desired training goals. Goals may be greater levels of independence and community reintegration; and/or increased personal, life, social, behavioural, and practical skills. The Next Stage Programme also refers persons served to appropriate health, support or community services to facilitate and implement these goals. The person served attending the RTU is called an RTU Trainee and these terms are used interchangeably in this document.

Main Aims of the Next Stage Home & Community Programme

- To improve functional abilities and develop personal, life, social, practical, and occupational skills
- Increase levels of independence & community re-integration
- Provide individualised and effective rehabilitative training
- Provide a safe and graded learning environment
- Retrain previous skills and to learn new skills
- Provide a structure for daily routines
- Provide educational support and computer training
- Liaison and referral with various support organisations
- Assist individuals in making informed choices regarding future options

The Next Stage Home & Community Programme, in conjunction with the persons served and their families/carers, provides individualised, goal-directed rehabilitative training designed to lessen the impact of impairment and to assist people with ABI to achieve their desired levels of functional independence, social participation and community reintegration. While trainees will have a common disability, the effects of brain injury are diverse. Therefore, the training programme is designed to meet individual needs and goals in a person-centred format by providing a high-quality and individualised training programme. The necessary qualifying factor for entry is that applicants show sufficient insight to enable attendance, ability

to identify training goals, potential and motivation to move on to their own Next Stage.

The services of the Next Stage programme are provided by an interdisciplinary team through a case-coordinated approach that also addresses:

- Ongoing access to information, referral, and transition to services available within the NRH Brain Injury Continuum of care.
- Support for information sharing, movement and access to other external brain injury community resources and stakeholders.
- Provision of education and support to persons served and their families/support systems and the community.
- Facilitation of opportunity for interaction for people with ABI within the NRH Brain Injury Continuum of care and the community.

This comprehensive interdisciplinary system of continuum of care ensures that all trainees receive the most appropriate programme of care based on their injury and their individual rehabilitation needs. Treatment can begin anywhere in this continuum, and persons served can progress through this continuum and to other appropriate community and follow-up services.

Rehabilitation Setting

The Next Stage programme facilitates up to 17 whole-time equivalent trainees. The Unit has a reception area, training resource room, computer room, conference room, kitchen, manager's office, counselling room, individual treatment room and a general office.

As Next Stage is a national programme, those living outside commutable distance may avail of accommodation in Corofin Millennium Lodge.

The Corofin Millennium Lodge is an 8-bedded facility located in the RTU building. It has single en-suite rooms and can offer accommodation to various levels of ability (PA required for trainees who require assistance with their activities of daily living/ personal care). It also has common and quiet areas. All areas including bathrooms and lifts cater for trainees in wheelchairs or with mobility difficulties. The lodge is open Sunday evening to Thursday morning.

For trainees who reside in the Lodge there is a €15 /night fee. This fee may be reimbursed from either the HSE or Department of Social and Family Affairs depending on eligibility requirements.

Programme Duration and Hours

Trainees attend up to five days/week (max 30-hour week)

Hours: 9.30 am to 5.00 pm; Monday to Thursday
9.30 am to 1.00 pm; Friday
Closed Saturday
Corofin Lodge opens Sunday evenings (6.00 pm)

The average programme duration is currently 12 months, ranging from 3 months to 18 months. However, this duration can vary to meet the individual needs and goals of the trainees. Some trainees may not need to avail of all the modules in the programme, or some might require extra training to meet their particular needs and goals. Some trainees will attend on a part-time or graduated basis due to the constraints of their disability or to accommodate engagement with other services. During 2022 the programme was delivered on -line on two platforms, MS Teams and Attend Anywhere. Attendance was both in-person and online, using a hybrid training programme.

Admission Criteria:

To be admitted into the Next Stage programme at the NRH, the individual must:

1. Have one of the following:
 - a. Acquired brain injury (ABI) is an inclusive category that embraces acute (rapid onset) brain injury of any cause, including:
 - i. trauma – due to head injury or post-surgical damage
 - ii. vascular accident (stroke or subarachnoid haemorrhage)
 - iii. cerebral anoxia
 - iv. other toxic or metabolic insult (e.g. hypoglycaemia)
 - v. Infection (e.g. meningitis, encephalitis) or other inflammation (e.g. vasculitis).

- b. Have medical, cognitive, physical, communicative and/or behavioural needs related to the neurological injury or disease process.
2. Be aged 18 years at time of admission.
3. Have the potential, and level of insight, to develop greater functional independence and to actively participate in group training.
4. Be able to arrange own transportation to/from the RTU
5. Be independent in their personal activities of daily living, or have carer/ PA.
6. Be able to co-operate and work with staff and other trainees.

Admission to the Next Stage programme is based on the referral information, meeting admission criteria, and outcome of the initial intake interview. The timing of admission to the programme is approximately 9 months from receipt of referral but may be influenced by delays in discharge and limited availability of Lodge accommodation.

Exclusion Criteria:

Persons with ABI are excluded from the Next Stage programme where other needs (e.g. medical/psychiatric/behavioural/drug and substance misuse), predominate over the potential to benefit from specialised rehabilitation training and the cognitive, physical and psycho-social needs of the person. In these cases, recommendations may be made to the referring agent regarding other more appropriate services. Additionally, if the person is not independent in their self-care and medication management, they are required to have appropriate supports e.g. a PA or Carer.

Discharge Criteria:

To be discharged from the Next Stage programme at the NRH, one or more of the following must be true:

1. The person has achieved their identified training goals and is deemed to have received maximum benefit from the rehabilitative training programme.
2. The person has improved to the projected functional level that will allow discharge to another specified environment or service.

3. The person experiences major intervening surgical, medical and/or psychological problems that precludes further benefit from a continuing the training programme.
4. The person's ongoing rehabilitation needs can best be met in an alternative environment or service. Relevant services have been contacted and informed and the details provided to the person.
5. The person is no longer willing to be an active participant in the inpatient programme. (The Next Stage programme is strictly voluntary, and persons can request to discontinue their programme at any stage)
6. The person is in breach of or non-compliant with programme services and policies.

The Services Provided for Trainees:

Following appropriate referral to the RTU, the person served will receive an initial assessment to identify their unique medical, physical, cognitive, communicative, psychological, social, behavioural, vocational, educational, cultural, family, spiritual and leisure needs. This is also an opportunity for persons referred to receive information about the RTU including characteristics of persons served, types of services offered, outcomes, and any other programme information. Following this assessment and if the person meets the RTU admission criteria, they may be offered admission to the programme.

Following admission, the Trainee embarks on a Trial Programme, during which is the induction period. During the induction period, a caseworker will be assigned to the person served that will liaise with the client/family and establish foundation goals and outcomes with the person served. After this induction period, the interdisciplinary team members, in collaboration with the person served and their family/support network, will develop a comprehensive Individual Training Plan (ITP) that addresses the identified goals of the person served and their family/support network. This ITP is reviewed with the person served every 6-8 weeks, and caseworker meetings are scheduled on a regular basis to support goal attainment. The person served and their family/support network are offered appropriate information and opportunity for feedback at every stage of the rehabilitation process and are actively involved in decisions regarding their training programme. Clients and their family/support network are also offered education on ABI and strategies to aid their rehabilitation.

Types of services offered by the Next Stage programme to meet identified needs could include:

- Brain Injury Awareness & Management
- Education and Project support
- Information Technology
- Life Skills Management
- Personal and Social Development
- Discharge Planning

Furthermore, if additional services are required and not available on-site, the Next Stage programme can facilitate referral to certain ancillary services.

Examples of these ancillary services that the Next Stage programme can refer to include:

- Advanced assistive technology assessment
- Physiotherapy Services (incl. Hydrotherapy)
- Medical assessment and management
- Speech & Language Therapy
- Medical speciality consulting including Psychiatry, Neuro-ophthalmology, Neuropsychiatry.
- Occupational Therapy
- Substance abuse counselling

People with ABI in the RTU frequently have complex disabilities and needs which require specialist intervention by professionals with knowledge and experience in the management of brain injury. This is taken into consideration when an individual case worker is being assigned to each trainee. The composition of the NRH/RTU interdisciplinary team for each person served is determined by the assessment of the person's individual medical and rehabilitation needs. These team members could include:

- Counselling psychologist
- Education support facilitator
- Occupational therapist
- Rehabilitation medicine specialist
- Training facilitator
- Training manager

The Services provided For the Families, Carers and support systems of Person Served:

Families and carers are partners in the rehabilitation process and are encouraged to participate in all phases of the programme. Information, counselling, emotional and psychological support can reduce the emotional sequelae experienced by the family/carer. This support may help them to adapt and come to terms with life changes, and so result in better long-term outcomes for both the patient and the family. Rehabilitation is a continuous and lifelong process. The carrying over of new skills gained in treatment into daily activities and into discharge environments is critical to the success of any rehabilitation programme.

Many services are available within the Next Stage programme to meet the needs of the patient's family/carers including:

- Education/training about management of ABI related issues (e.g. Family Conferences, printed resource material, informal instruction and practical skills training in preparation for discharge).
- Psychological support services
- Peer support through interaction with other families and various community support groups (e.g. ABI and Headway Ireland).
- Information about community support, Trainee progress within the service, advocacy, accommodation and assistive technology resources.
- Annual events for families, including Family Information Day (for families on the waiting list) and Family Education Day (for families of current trainees).
- Trial of supported living on site in our short stay independent living facility

- Each trainee is assigned their own case worker during the trial period. Caseworker is the primary point of contact for family/carers and will attend medical reviews with the family and facilitate family meetings with RTU team and/or community service providers.

Discharge Outcomes and Environments

The Next Stage programme aims to discharge all trainees after they have achieved their rehabilitation training goals and received maximum benefit from the programme. The Next Stage programme strives to discharge patients to their most appropriate and desired discharge environment, taking into consideration the patient's and families wishes, their clinical and functional status, legal restrictions and availability of community and home supports. The trainees are encouraged to avail of any further support services that we identify for them in their locality e.g. community rehabilitation network team(CNRT), HSE ABI case coordinator, Headway, Acquired Brain Injury Ireland, Irish Heart Foundation/ Stroke supports, Irish Kidney Association etc.

The RTU has continued over the years to secure excellent outcomes for the trainees of the Home & Community Programme. Acceptable outcomes for our Next Stage Programme include community programmes, volunteering, health gain and/or social gain, community reintegration. Outcomes for RTU trainees are measured using the Mayo Portland Adaptability Inventory; where gains are measured in terms of ability, adjustment and participation.