



Presentation

Dr Alice Theadom: Saturday 6th June

Title of Presentation: Post-traumatic growth after traumatic brain injury. What can we learn from a positive approach to understanding recovery?

Presenter Name: Dr Alice Theadom

Abstract:

The study of how people recover following traumatic brain injury has traditionally focused on using impairment based assessments to help us to predict those at risk of poor outcomes. However, from clinical experience we know that many people can see the accident or injury as a positive life changing experience. Yet the role of 'post-traumatic growth' as it has become known, remains relatively unexplored after brain injury. This presentation will look at how post-traumatic growth may affect recovery after a brain injury.

The presentation will draw on a recently completed longitudinal cohort study. Patients were initially recruited as part of a large epidemiological incidence study of TBI in the Hamilton and Waikato region that actively screened people to see if they had experienced a brain over a one year period (2011-2012) and covers the injury spectrum from mild to severe. More than 200 adult participants (aged >16 years) were followed up 4 years post-injury. Participants were assessed using the short form post-traumatic growth inventory, Rivermead post-concussion symptoms scale and the SF36 Medical Outcomes Study health related quality of life tool in addition to a computerised neuropsychological assessment of cognitive functioning. Associations between self –reported post-traumatic growth and other outcomes will be explored and implications for how the results may influence how we think about recovery following injury will be discussed.

Presenter Biography:

Alice is a NZ Registered Psychologist and Deputy Director of the *National Institute for Stroke and Applied Neuroscience*. Alice leads a research programme in traumatic brain injury and has

research interests in how people adjust after illness and injury. Alice trained and worked in the UK as a Chartered Health Psychologist before moving to NZ in 2009.