



NPpsych

Neuropsychological Rehabilitation

Presents

When physical and mental trauma collide:

Current approaches to the assessment and treatment of PTSD and psychological trauma after brain injury.

Early Bird Rate:
£175 + VAT

(27th November 2026)

Standard Rate:
£225 + VAT

20% discount for NHS,
Statutory Services & Charities

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One Great George Street | **4th March 2027**

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Draft Programme

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- 08:45-09:20** **Registration, tea/coffee, networking & exhibition stands**
- 09:20-09:25** **Welcome from the sponsor**
- 09:25-09:30** **Welcome & introduction to the day conference Chair**
- 09:30-10:15** **When the Injured Brain Remembers: Neuropsychiatric Assessment and Treatment of PTSD After Traumatic Brain Injury**
Dr David Okai, Consultant Neuropsychiatrist in Neurorehabilitation, Brain & Mind
- Post-traumatic stress disorder following traumatic brain injury is rarely a simple transplant of “standard” PTSD into a neurological population. This talk will examine assessment, diagnosis and longitudinal course, including how cognitive impairment, peri-traumatic amnesia and executive dysfunction can complicate presentation.
- It will explore the bidirectional relationship between PTSD and TBI, common co-morbidities, recognised treatments and the need for phased, multidisciplinary care in complex or treatment-resistant cases.
- 10:15-11:00** **Neuro-EMDR: Adapting EMDR Therapy for Neuropsychological and Cognitive Presentations**
Dr Jonathan Hutchins, Consultant Clinical Psychologist, Specialist in Neuropsychology, EMDR Europe Accredited Trainer and Consultant Supervisor
- EMDR therapy is increasingly being explored for people with acquired brain injury, dementia, neurodiversity, and complex cognitive difficulties. This presentation introduces the emerging concept of “Neuro-EMDR” — a practical framework for adapting standard EMDR therapy for neuropsychological populations.
- Drawing on clinical practice, neuroscience, and the developing evidence base, the talk will explore adaptations for attention, memory, executive functioning, sensory processing, and communication difficulties across the eight phases of EMDR. Clinical examples from brain injury, dementia care, neurodiversity, inpatient services, and complex mental health settings will be presented, alongside discussion of broader neurobiological models relevant to trauma processing and recovery.
- 11:00-11:30** **Tea/coffee, networking & exhibition stands**



11:30-12:15

Holding Complexity: Trauma-Informed Case Management After Brain Injury

Dr Shabnam Berry-Khan, Founder, Clinical Psychologist & Case Manager, PsychWorks Associates

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Drawing on clinical and systemic experience, this talk will examine how trauma responses can interact with cognitive, emotional and behavioural changes following brain injury, often impacting engagement, risk management, family dynamics and rehabilitation progress, all of which need to be managed within the litigation context. The session will provide practical, reflective and clinically informed strategies to help case managers or other rehabilitation professionals better understand distressed or “challenging” presentations, adapt communication and rehabilitation planning, navigate complex systems and support safer, more effective multidisciplinary working. Emphasis will be placed on enhancing therapeutic engagement, reducing escalation and promoting psychologically safe rehabilitation environments that support meaningful recovery outcomes.

12:15-13:00

Making Sense of Complexity: Legal Perspectives on Trauma and Brain Injury **Sarah Griggs, Partner, Irwin Mitchell**

This session will explore the legal implications of cases in which traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder intersect. Drawing on practical experience from serious injury litigation, Sarah will look at the challenges that arise where symptoms overlap, diagnoses evolve, and issues of cognition, trauma, capacity and rehabilitation all interact. Using case examples, the session will focus on causation, expert evidence, and the importance of offering a practical perspective on how these issues translate into real-world litigation and client outcomes.

13:00-14:00

Lunch, networking & exhibition stands

14:00-14:45

Psychedelic Medicine for PTSD and Brain Injury Across Veteran and Female Populations

Dr Grace Blest-Hopley, Research Director, Heroic Hearts Project; Founder, Hystelica; Research Associate, King's College London

Post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury frequently co-occur, particularly in military and service populations, yet those affected are consistently underserved by conventional treatment - with roughly two-thirds of people with PTSD not responding to first-line care. This session examines what psychedelic-assisted approaches may offer at this intersection, drawing on real-world observational data from the Heroic Hearts Project and its research partnership with the Psychedelic Research Group at



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Imperial College London. Grace will present findings on symptom change, the mechanisms thought to underpin recovery, and the role of safety and rigorous screening, alongside the specific considerations and open questions raised when working with the brain-injured population. She will then turn to a critical and often-overlooked variable: sex. Women remain markedly underrepresented across psychedelic and trauma research, despite evidence that female physiology shapes both how trauma presents and how treatment responds. Drawing on her work at Hystelica, Grace will argue that responsible future research and clinical translation must account for both service history and sex if these therapies are to be safe and effective for everyone.

14:45-15:15

Tea/coffee, networking & exhibition stands

15:15-16:00

The Ripple effect: Providing trauma-informed therapy beyond the individual
Lucilla Carlacci De Mattia, Chartered Clinical Psychologist, Specialist in neuropsychology, EMDR Therapist & Dr Kate FitzGerald, Chartered Clinical Psychologist, Specialist in Neuropsychology, EMDR Therapist, NPpsych

This presentation explores psychological trauma after brain injury through a systemic and trauma-informed lens. It considers how traumatic and acquired brain injury can affect not only the injured person, but also partners, parents, children, friends and rehabilitation teams. The session will examine the role of pre-injury trauma, attachment patterns, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and previous adversity in shaping vulnerability, coping and recovery after a critical incident.

Using the concept of the “family nervous system”, the presentation will consider how families can become either regulating or dysregulating environments during rehabilitation, and why untreated family trauma may affect engagement, independence, emotional adjustment and functional recovery. It will also explore how trauma-focused approaches can be integrated within neurorehabilitation in a phased, systemic and clinically safe way.

16:00-16:45

Unconventional approaches to PTSD after brain injury
Dr Giles Yeates, Consultant Clinical Neuropsychologist, Rippling Minds & Oxford Brookes University

This talk will explore approaches to trauma following brain injury, informed by the dimensions of relationship, embodiment and spirituality. Couples therapy, mind-body interventions and examples of liaison with faith leaders will be presented, covering both relevant literature and key case studies.

16:45

Close



Biographies

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Dr David Okai

Consultant Neuropsychiatrist in Neurorehabilitation, Brain & Mind

Dr David Okai is a Consultant Neuropsychiatrist with specialist interests in movement disorders; traumatic and acquired brain injury; and severe and complex functional neurological disorders requiring interdisciplinary rehabilitation.

- Consultant Neuropsychiatrist at The Maudsley Hospital, Department of Neuropsychiatry.
- Consultant Neuropsychiatrist in Orpington Neurorehabilitation Unit, King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
- Faculty of Neuropsychiatry, Royal College of Psychiatrists
- Associate Medical Director for National and Specialist Services, Maudsley Hospital
- Previous Honorary Senior Lecturer, University of Oxford (Neurosciences)

In his NHS practice, Dr Okai provides expertise across the entire integrated care pathway for patients requiring neurorehabilitation at King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust. This includes a wide range of disorders, including neuropsychiatric needs associated with brain injury, functional neurological disorder, and Parkinson's disease. Dr Okai often supports a patient's entire recovery journey from acute care to community integration.

He has 12 years of post-qualification clinical experience, with specific expertise in the subspecialty of Neuropsychiatry, and Liaison Psychiatry, including work in several National Specialist NHS services at both The Maudsley Hospital and The National Hospital for Neurology & Neurosurgery, London.

He has an MD(Res) in psychology (PhD equivalent), based on study of the assessment and management of complex neuropsychiatric illness.



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Dr Jonathan Hutchins

Consultant Clinical Psychologist, Specialist in Neuropsychology, EMDR Europe Accredited Trainer and Consultant Supervisor

Dr Jonathan Hutchins is a Consultant Clinical Psychologist, Specialist in Neuropsychology, EMDR Consultant, and EMDR Europe Accredited Trainer with specialist interests in trauma, neuropsychology, and complex mental health presentations. He has worked across a range of NHS inpatient, community, crisis, and forensic settings and currently provides specialist consultation, supervision, and training in EMDR and trauma-focused approaches.

Jonathan has developed particular expertise in adapting EMDR therapy for individuals with cognitive, neuropsychological, and neurodivergent presentations, including acquired brain injury, dementia, ADHD, and complex trauma. He is actively involved in research and service development relating to intensive EMDR approaches, veterans' mental health, and Neuro-EMDR adaptations.

He currently serves as Veterans Lead on the Scientific and Research Committee for the EMDR Association UK and has published and presented nationally on EMDR, neuropsychology, PTSD, and trauma therapy innovation.



Dr Shabnam Berry-Khan

Founder, Clinical Psychologist & Case Manager, PsychWorks Associates

Dr Shabnam Berry-Khan is a Clinical Psychologist, MCA Assessor, Advanced BABICM Case Manager, and Founder of PsychWorks Associates, a specialist service working with catastrophically injured people and families to improve quality of life and rehabilitation outcomes with trauma-informed case management and treating psychology.



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Sarah Griggs, Partner

Partner, Irwin Mitchell

Sarah is a Partner in the London office of the Serious Injury team and the National Brain Injury Coordination Group Lead for Irwin Mitchell. She specialises in complex cases supporting adults and children who have sustained life changing brain injuries and is known for recovering substantial settlements to provide for her client's lifelong needs.

Sarah is passionate about using the legal process to ensure her clients have access to the absolute best rehabilitation to live life to the full and is committed to raising awareness of Brain Injury in London. In addition to her case work, Sarah has close links with Headway, the brain injury charity and is a very proud former Trustee of Headway East London.

She is also the Chair of the Acquired Brain Injury Forum for London (ABIL) as well as a Fellow and Accredited Brain Injury Specialist with the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers.



Dr Grace Blest-Hopley

Research Director, Heroic Hearts Project; Founder, Hystelica; Research Associate, King's College London

Dr Grace Blest-Hopley is a neuroscientist with 12 years of research into cannabinoids and psychedelics. She holds a PhD in Neuroscience from King's College London, where she remains a Research Associate, and serves as a reservist in the British Army.

As Research Director at the Heroic Hearts Project, she leads work supporting military veterans living with trauma, focusing on the neurofunctional effects and ethical implementation of psychedelic-assisted care for veteran and service-connected populations. She is also the founder of Hystelica, a research and education organisation dedicated to understanding female biology for safer, more effective psychedelic use, and Chief Scientific Officer at NWPharmaTech.

Grace has spoken internationally on psychedelic science, women's representation in research, and the future of trauma treatment.



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Lucilla Carlacci De Mattia

**Chartered Clinical Psychologist, Specialist in neuropsychology, EMDR
Therapist, NPpsych**

Lucilla is a Chartered Clinical Psychologist registered with the HCPC, and a member of the BPS and EMDR UK. She has worked in cognitive and clinical neuropsychology since 2011, with interests in neuropsychology, EEG studies and trauma therapy, developed during her university studies in Italy. She has received multiple awards for academic excellence and research, including a Course of Excellence Award at La Sapienza, University of Rome, following specialist training in stress-related disorders and neural plasticity. This informed her interest in the impact of trauma on the brain and her integration of EMDR and trauma-focused approaches within neuropsychological rehabilitation.

Lucilla is currently a Visiting Research Fellow at Goldsmiths, University of London, and remains involved in research, teaching and professional knowledge-sharing alongside her clinical practice. She provides neuropsychological rehabilitation across specialist ABI services and community settings, working with adults, children and families affected by brain injury and other neurological conditions. She specialises in cognitive and mental capacity assessments, psychological therapy, behavioural intervention, multidisciplinary rehabilitation planning and clinical leadership.

Her therapeutic practice draws on CBT, systemic therapy, EMDR, trauma- and attachment-focused approaches, and psychodynamic therapy, with a particular focus on supporting individuals and families as they navigate the psychological, cognitive and relational changes resulting from brain injury.



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Dr Kate FitzGerald

**Chartered Clinical Psychologist, Specialist in Neuropsychology, EMDR
Therapist, NPpsych**

Kate is a chartered Clinical Psychologist registered with the HCPC, ACP-UK, BPS and the EMDR Association UK. Kate qualified for Clinical Psychologist registration in Australia in August 2018, and converted her professional qualifications to the UK in 2020. She completed her undergraduate degree in Psychology and Zoology at the University of Melbourne before going on to complete her Postgraduate Diploma and Doctorate in Clinical Psychology

at Swinburne University of Technology. Kate is currently completing a Masters in Clinical Neuropsychology at the University of Glasgow.

She has worked and studied in the field of Psychology since 2005, initially focusing on mental health with a special interest in Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD). Before moving into the field of Neuropsychological Rehabilitation where she has worked across the NHS and private sectors, including Enable Care, the NHS Royal Free Trust, Re:Cognition Health, and the Hospital of St John and St Elizabeth. She has worked across inpatient and community settings and with a wide range of neurological conditions.

She is experienced with cognitive assessment and intervention, mental capacity assessments, family support and education, staff training, multidisciplinary team working, behaviour that is challenging, mental health, research and audit, report writing, and individual and group therapy. This includes working with reduced insight, adjustment, boundaries, psychological flexibility, and EMDR.



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Dr Giles Yeates

Consultant Clinical Neuropsychologist, Rippling Minds & Oxford Brookes University

Dr Giles Yeates is a Consultant Clinical Neuropsychologist dedicated to pioneering interventions and initiatives within community settings that support the mental health, relationships and communication with people with neurological conditions and their significant others (www.ripplingminds.com). He is the author of several books, chapters, articles and is an editor of two book series and a past journal editor.

Dr Yeates has over 20 years' experience in community neuro-rehabilitation, vocational rehabilitation and neuropsychotherapy, and has worked in internationally-renowned and pioneering NHS services such as the Community Head Injury Service, Aylesbury and the Oliver Zangwill Centre, Cambridgeshire. Within these services, Dr Yeates has developed the integration of family work within community neuro-rehabilitation service models, and pioneered the adaptation and use of a couples therapy approach (Emotionally Focused Couples Therapy, EFT) in the rehabilitation of love and relationship closeness for people with neurological conditions. Finally, Dr Yeates has continued established traditions within neuropsychological rehabilitation on the use of psychotherapy groups and individual psychodynamic interventions.

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Our team of qualified and skilled clinicians provide professional and tailored interventions for our clients

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What if you can get the right help, right now?

Liam, our client

When your patient's world is turned upside down by a traumatic brain injury, they may be left with more questions than answers.

They deserve the **UK's number one serious injury legal experts*** by their side to help them find a way forward.

*Based on Legal 500 ranking