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MARCH IS BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS MONTH

MARCH 2026



07 572 4547 | 027 926 1881 | liaison.headwaybop@brain-injury.org.nz
www.braininjurybop.org.nz

NEWSLETTER

Quality of Life

According to the Oxford Dictionary, quality of life means "The degree to which an individual is healthy, comfortable and able to participate in or enjoy life events".

One of the most important aspects is finding meaning in our relationships. Our relationships provide us with a sense of emotional support, belonging, of identity and provide practical support and comfort, especially in challenging times.

Our Relationships

Family

Pets

Friends

**Colleagues
Neighbours
Health professionals
Strangers you meet every day**

However we view our relationships, when you are living with a brain injury, support, flexibility and understanding is what is needed most. Relationships can change in order for us to accommodate the changes we experience. Some changes can be empowering – if you feel unheard or dismissed by your doctor or other professionals, feel free to investigate alternatives. Other relationships may fall by the wayside due to the challenges experienced by either/both parties. Taking a break and connecting with new people or groups is ok. This is the time in your life to be your own best friend and make sure the people around you are supporting you in a way that you find beneficial – that's part of your recovery.

Living with brain injury can mean every day is different. Some days are good and some are bad. I have been listening to many of you and have made a list that I think many of you will recognise as you all experience the ups and downs of daily life and the often slow, frustrating path of recovery.

LESS OF THIS:



On a good day I:

- Enjoy exercise
- Enjoy socialising
- Love playing scrabble
- Cook a meal
- Go swimming
- I can take on the world

MORE OF THIS:



On a bad day I:

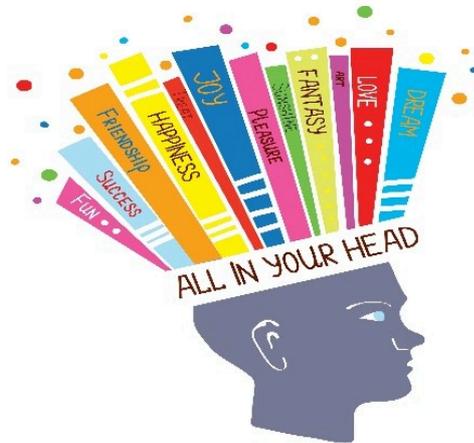
- Feel depressed
- Want to be left alone
- Can't find the words
- Am too fatigued to care
- Can't get out of bed
- Am in so much pain

Don't try to push through a bad day, your brain will only push back and your symptoms will often get worse. Take a bad day as your brain's time to rest.

Respect your injury and take kind care of yourself. Are you giving yourself enough credit for all that you achieve – when you have a positive interaction

with someone, when you achieve something on your own – a bus trip or attending a social event, navigating a health appointment – how are you speaking to yourself?

Positive affirmations



Go Girl! **I'm amazing!** Good job! **Wow, I did it!**
That was tricky – go me! **Yep, now I deserve a cupcake!**
I was so afraid, and then I did it anyway – so proud of me!
Well today was rubbish, but I can try again tomorrow!

March Awareness and Fundraiser Month

Papamoa Plaza – Thursday 26 March

Gate Pa NW – Friday 27 March

Mount NW – Friday 27 March

Katikati & Bethlehem Woolworths will take place early April.

If you are keen to volunteer for any of the above venues, please contact Gill
– coordinator.wbop.dst@gmail.com or text 021 333 900

Mary Stewart QSM Memorial Service



One of the co-founders of Brain Injury New Zealand, (and the Stewart Centres), Mary Stewart QSM, passed away on 2 February 2026.

Before the work of the Stewarts, there was a stark gap in support systems for brain injury, and for whānau. Decades later, while many of us are on a new and evolving, challenging path for brain injury services, We would like to acknowledge her transformative work, which impacted so many families, communities and associations, and which changed the landscape for brain injury understanding and support so profoundly. Her tireless dedication, empathy, and fundraising made a lasting difference to many lives, and she was honoured with the Queen's Service Medal (QSM) in recognition of her service.

Above all else, Mary will be remembered for her kindness, warmth, and generosity of spirit. She gave freely of herself, always thinking of others, and leaves behind a legacy of care, courage, and love.

The Memorial Service for Mary will be held at

Ruawai Bowling Club, 2 Reeves St, Ruawai

At 1.30pm Sunday 8th March

All welcome.

RSVP vegray45@gmail.com

Memorial Service link:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/916203107669150/?ref=share&mibextid=NSMWBT>

BRAIN INJURY MYTHS & FACTS

Brain injury is always visible.
Myth! Many effects are invisible.

Brain injury only affects memory and thinking.

Myth: Brain injury can affect every part of life—physical movement, emotions, sleep, speech, and relationships. Every person's experience is unique.

Only sports cause brain injury.

Myth! It can happen in many ways.

COFFEE GROUPS – COME AND JOIN US



Eileen and Daniel- success



Alan and Sheryn figuring Alan's Puzzle

Tauranga – Coffee Group

every fortnight, Senior Citz Hall at the end of Maitland Street.

Next meeting Friday 13th March 2026 – 10am.

Katikati –Coffee Group

every month

Next meeting: Friday 6th March at 10am.

Phone Diane for details: 027 926 1881

KFC Picnic – Kulim Park Friday

20th March – 12 noon:

Diane will bring KFC, bring \$10 each on the day.

Please phone, email or Txt Diane so I know how much to order. BYO drinks.

USEFUL LINKS

WINZ (MSD) OBLIGATIONS & COMMITMENTS and EMERGENCY HOUSING

Information provided Aotearoa Disability Law

<https://www.braininjurybop.org.nz/images/advocating-for-yourself-at-winz.pdf>

NOTICEBOARD

Mt New World \$15.00 Voucher February 2026

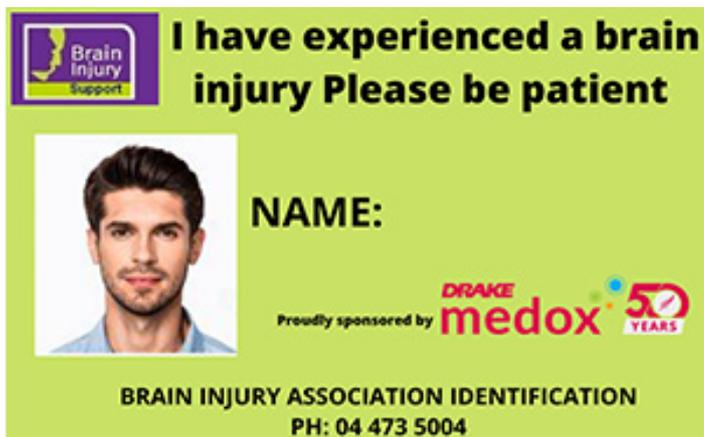
The lucky winner was Margaret McLean

Big thanks to owner Alan Rudkin for supporting Headway.

Brain Injury ID Card

Our Brain Injury ID cards help explain your condition in situations where others may not understand. Carry one for a discreet way to communicate your needs and ensure better support.

This card is free thanks to Drake Meddox!



Brain Injury Support

I have experienced a brain injury Please be patient



NAME:

Proudly sponsored by **DRAKE medox 50 YEARS**

BRAIN INJURY ASSOCIATION IDENTIFICATION
PH: 04 473 5004



I may have -

- Cognitive difficulties - e.g. difficulty with thinking clearly, maintaining concentration, tiredness, solving problems, planning and completing a project, short-term memory problems
- Physical problems - e.g. reduced balance, slower reflexes, headaches and reduced stamina
- Sensory difficulties - e.g. impaired sight, smell, hearing, and taste
- Difficulty with expressing oneself or understanding others
- Personality changes - e.g. irritability, intolerance, depression, anxiety, socially inappropriate behaviour, mood swings.
- Difficulty in learning and remembering new information

Proudly sponsored by **DRAKE medox 50 YEARS**

HOW TO APPLY

If you would like a card please contact
Diane at liaison.headwaybop@brain-injury.org.nz

HAVE YOUR CONTACT DETAILS CHANGED?

Please let us know if your address, email or phone number have changed by emailing admin.headwaybop@brain-injury.org.nz with your new details.

SUBS & DONATIONS

MEMBERSHIP SUBS

1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026

Headway bank account number: 03-0445-0195410-00

Please include your name as reference.

THE MORE FINANCIAL MEMBERS WE HAVE, THE MORE GRANTS WE RECEIVE FROM FUNDING TRUSTS, AND THE MORE WE CAN DO. SO IF YOU ARE NOT ALREADY A MEMBER, WHY NOT JOIN TODAY!

To become a member of Headway BOP please complete the form below and send back to admin.headwaybop@brain-injury.org.nz or mail to 53 Fraser St, Tauranga 3112.

Name/s

Address

Phone

Email/s

Subscription: Individual \$5 or \$10 Family (please circle one)

I consent to the collection and retention of the above information by Headway Brain Injury Assn BOP Inc for purpose of membership records in accordance with the Privacy Act 2020.

Signed: Date:

**Headway gratefully accepts donations direct to our
Account 030445 0195410 00**

Contact Headway office on 07 572 4547 or Gill 021 333 900 or click below to donate via our Give a Little page.

[DONATE](#)

Headway acknowledges support and funding assistance from Lottery Grants, COGS, Lion Foundation, NZ Community Trust, Pub Charity, WBOP Disability Support Trust, Mt RSA, and Ministry of Health. Lions Papamoa, Lions Greerton, Lions Harbour City, Lions Katikati, Tauranga Rotary Trust; Good OP Shop Presbyterian, TECT, St George Centrepont, Endeavour, Legacy Trust.

Thank you to the many retailers allowing donation boxes on their counters.

COMMITTEE

S. Rutherford, P. Taylor, J. Simpson
A. Anderson, G. Gardner, M. Bindon,
L. Martin

PERSONNEL

Liaison Officer - Diane Hurdsfield
Services Coordinator - Gill Gardner
Admin Officer - Jan Simpson



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