



Action for Brain Injury Week: Dealing with the Effects of Memory Loss

It is Day 4 of Action for Brain Injury Week. Today we are highlighting some of the common consequences of memory loss for brain injury survivors and where they, or their family and friends, can look to for help and support.

A recent survey conducted by Headway (the brain injury association), revealed that of the 2,150 participants, 85% of them experienced a negative impact on their lives due to memory problems. This can be due to a number of factors, but here are some tips for dealing with the effect of memory loss in day-to-day life, relationships and in the community.

Understanding Your Memory Problems

Many survivors of brain injuries found that the lack of understanding they had for their memory problems had a negative impact on their life, with 81% of the participants feeling that understanding their problems would improve their lives.

If you or a family member is struggling to understand a brain injury and its effects, Headway provides a huge variety of fact sheets, which are available to download in PDF or in the form of e-booklets, which are available to purchase on their online shop. They also have online communities and telephone lines available to discuss any concerns.

Headway also runs a number of support groups across the country designed as drop-in groups or organised activities such as walking football sessions, sailing and cinema visits. These support networks can help you to find others who are facing similar problems, who can help you to understand your own. To find out more about befriending services, email your queries to buddy@headway.org.uk.

Personal Relationships

Memory loss for brain injury survivors can also have a detrimental impact on personal relationships, which may already be experiencing significant strain following the stress of an accident or injury. The study showed that *"70% of brain injury survivors struggle to recall personal memories, such as their wedding or the birth of their child"*.

If you are struggling to remember key dates, you may be assisted by using external aids such as diaries, lists, alarm clocks and calendars. Mnemonics can also be a fun aid to assist you in remembering and retaining information, which can help you to maintain a bond with family members and friends.

Keeping family members or friends up to date, following an injury can be an uncomfortable and exhausting experience, and failing to update people may create distance or hostility in some personal relationships. The website [I'm Calling About Chris](#) eases this burden by allowing people to set up a page (free of charge) which helps you to communicate with friends and family and provide updates on your loved one's (or your own) condition.

Maintaining Independence

If you are concerned about a loved one who has memory problems but is keen to maintain their independence, the Headway Brain Injury Identity Card is a great way to support them in avoiding difficult conversations, should they find themselves in need of support in the community. The personalised card can be used to help Police Officers and other professionals to identify the individual and respond appropriately to their needs, based on the specific information and effects of their brain injury written on the card. You can apply for a card on the [Headway Website](#).

Many NHS Hospitals also promote the use of "Patient Passports". These have been developed for people with learning disabilities and memory loss, and are an effective way to provide personalised information about the individual's preferences, personal life, hobbies or anxieties, which they may not be able to recall. This is designed to travel with the patient during any Hospital stay and assists staff to give them the most appropriate care for their needs.

How can we help?

Our specialist Personal Injury and Medical Negligence team at Lester Aldridge have experience in dealing with claims relating to Brain Injuries. We are also Head Injury Solicitors and a Corporate Supporter of [Headway](#).

If one of your friends or family has suffered a Brain Injury, and you are concerned about the events that caused the injury or the treatment they received, our [Personal Injury team](#) can assist on 0344 967 0793 or online.enquiries@la-law.com.