



## Responding to the UK government's Acquired Brain Injury strategy call for evidence

### Overview

In December 2021, the UK government committed to developing an Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) strategy to improve services for people with ABI. The strategy has been championed by Chris Bryant MP with support from Headway and other brain injury charities.

Importantly, the government is seeking the views of brain injury survivors, carers and family members as well as charities and professionals supporting those living with ABI as part of the consultation, which is open now and will run until 6 June 2022.

We've put together this guide to help you with sharing your views in response to the government's current call for evidence.

**\*\*\*The deadline for responding is 11.45pm on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2022\*\*\***

### Where is the call for evidence?

The call for evidence can be found on the UK government's website or by clicking here: [www.gov.uk/government/consultations/acquired-brain-injury-call-for-evidence/acquired-brain-injury-call-for-evidence](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/acquired-brain-injury-call-for-evidence/acquired-brain-injury-call-for-evidence)

### How do I respond to the call for evidence?

There are three ways in which you can respond to the call for evidence. We recommend the first means of responding as the set questions will help to guide your response.

- 1. Complete an online questionnaire at the link above. You can read all the questions on the linked webpage above before completing the online questionnaire.**
2. Email a written submission of no more than 10 pages to: [abicallforevidence@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:abicallforevidence@dhsc.gov.uk)
3. Post a written submission of no more than 10 pages to:

Acquired brain injury strategy call for evidence  
Department of Health and Social Care



the brain injury association

[www.headway.org.uk](https://www.headway.org.uk)

39 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1H 0EU

### **What should I say in my response to the call for evidence?**

The call for evidence is a **request for ideas** that the government can use to start developing an ABI strategy. It is not asking for views on specific proposals.

Some questions require a **tick box** response, and others ask for an **open response** where you can write what you think.

Try to **keep your answers to under 500 words** in the open response questions.

The call for evidence asks whether you think the strategy should also consider other neurological conditions alongside ABI. **Headway's view is that the strategy should focus purely on ABI.** This is because ABI survivors' needs should be recognised as different to those living with other neurological conditions and we believe brain injury survivors deserve a strategy that meets their needs.

If other neurological conditions were included in the strategy, it would become too complex. However, we hope that this ABI strategy will form the basis for the development of strategies for other neurological conditions.

The call for evidence lists areas (themes) and will ask you to **tick which ones you think the new strategy should cover in order to improve life after brain injury for survivors, carers and families.** You can tick as many of these as you like. The list of themes includes:

- **Awareness, identification and prevention of acquired brain injury**

For example: training for GPs and other medical professionals, as well as those working within the criminal justice system, education or sport.

- **Healthcare**

For example: diagnosis, specialist neurological rehabilitation, and training for specialist and non-specialist healthcare professionals.

- **Social care**

For example: the assessment of social care needs, support for families and carers of brain injury survivors, and access to post-acute support services.

- **Employment**

For example: support in accessing employment opportunities, reasonable adjustments at Jobcentre Plus appointments, and support in the workplace for brain injury survivors.

- **Benefits**

For example: ensuring people are aware of their support entitlements via the disability benefits system, access to support in applying for disability benefits, and the assessment process and appeals processes.

- **Sport**

For example: better public awareness of the symptoms of concussion in sport, and guidance on safer sport.

- **Housing**

For example: information on available housing support, accessing home and technology adaptations to assist independent living, accessing appropriate housing including assisted living.

- **Supporting specific groups**

For example: people involved with the criminal justice system, victims of violence, people experiencing homelessness or people with drug and alcohol misuse problems.

- **Identifying and addressing disparities in care for people with shared characteristics**

For example: disparities in care due to age, gender, disability, race, religion and belief, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, sex (gender), sexual orientation and socio-economic status.

- **Research**

For example: funding for research, involving ABI survivors in research design and participation, and translation of research into practice.

- **Anything else you think should be considered**

Of these, you will then be asked to select your **three most important areas** and give further views on why you have chosen these. Here are some tips on answering this section:

- Choose the areas which are **most important to you**.
- **Use examples from your own experiences** to explain why you have chosen a particular area.
- Although you are asked for your most important three areas, if you think there should be more than three, you can state this and explain why.
- **Ask yourself the following questions** to help with choosing your three most important areas:
  - What did/do I experience to make me choose this area?
  - What aspects of my life do I struggle with most as a result of my or my loved one's brain injury?
  - Which of the areas listed above do I feel should be prioritised? For example:
    - **Access to rehabilitation:** did or do I receive neurological rehabilitation? Was it enough? Was it close to home or far away? Could my experience of rehabilitation have been better?
    - **Disability benefits:** did I receive information about the benefits I could apply for following my brain injury? Did I receive support in applying for them? Did the assessor seem to understand the effects of brain injury? How could my experience of the benefits system have been improved?
    - **Caring responsibilities:** do I receive any recognition or support in caring for a brain injury survivor? Have I had to leave employment to become a carer? What support would I like to receive?
  - What impact do my experiences and everyday struggles have on my life and the lives of those around me?

Here are some other **general tips** to help with completing your response:

- **Remember the deadline for responding is 11.45pm on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2022.**
- Make a clear note of the closing date of the consultation so that you can give yourself enough time to respond. You could write it down on a calendar or on a sticky note which you can stick in a prominent place, and also make a digital reminder on your smartphone to ensure you have plenty of time to review your response before sending it.
- Try to complete the consultation in a quiet place free from distractions.
- You will have the option at the end of the consultation to review all of your answers and make any changes if you like.
- Remember that you can submit your evidence through an email or written letter if these are your preferred methods.
- An easy read version of the consultation is available on the UK government website or by clicking here: [www.gov.uk/government/consultations/acquired-brain-injury-call-for-evidence-easy-read](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/acquired-brain-injury-call-for-evidence-easy-read).
- Remember to press the green 'submit' button on the final page of the consultation to make sure that your responses get shared.
- Please consider Tweeting to say you've submitted your response. You could tag in @HeadwayUK and #BrainInjury - this will help to raise awareness of the new ABI Strategy and encourage other brain injury survivors to have their say.