

**Presentation by Vivienne Streeter – Director of BIBIC Cymru –  
British Institute for Brain Injured Children**

BIBIC is a national charity with its headquarters in Bridgewater. It opened a Welsh Centre in Usk in . However they found that they were not reaching many families in Wales from this base and have decided to close this centre and concentrate on providing an outreach service instead so that children from all areas of Wales can receive a service in their own area. This will however depend upon funding, most of which will require fundraising.

BIBIC offers practical help to families caring for children with conditions such as autism, cerebral palsy, Down's Syndrome, developmental delay, traumatic and acquired brain injury and specific learning disabilities such as ADHD, dyslexia and dyspraxia. A few families are referred to BIBIC's services by their local authority, in Monmouth and Ceredigion, but the majority of families self refer???? The service works closely with families at all times, and on arriving at BIBIC the therapist / key worker, sees both the child and the parents. Much of the assessment process is carried out through play and direct interaction. At Noel Hall, Centre in there is a sensory swimming pool where the child is able to control the lighting etc, thereby putting them in control. One set of parents on viewing their child's participation in the water said that they now had their little boy back!

The main aim of BIBIC is to maximise the potential of the children whose conditions can affect their social, sensory, communication, motor and learning opportunities. BIBIC also aims to work in partnership with the other services that the child is involved with locally. The Charity aims to provide ongoing support and is there for as long as is required by the child and their family. The main customers are the parents / carers, and BIBIC aims to look at the whole child. Some children may have Down's Syndrome and ASD and parents have found that some local services have eg addresses the Down's Syndrome but not the ASD. BIBIC however takes a holistic approach and also looks at issues within the home.

Transition to adulthood has become an area of concern and a one day assessment is offered for a group of teenagers. One of the 14 year olds who went through the assessment commented that "this has been the best day of my life". The assessments often offer a fresh start and an introduction to someone new who will listen to them. Strategies to help young people develop are carefully taught and can be carried out at home. Eg One young man enjoyed going to a bowling alley with his friends. However he found difficulty coping with the environment there and used to "kick off" and become disruptive. BIBIC staff assisted him to develop coping strategies and he learnt to withdraw for a period of time when he began to get up tight.

Nutrition and physical exercise is a big part of the therapy carried out by BIBIC – and the latter can include physiotherapy. The main aim is to work towards independence and staff have unsurprisingly found that children / young people can become independent more quickly if they have the support of the family. Sometimes the parents have to be encouraged to stand back

and let their child attempt to do things for themselves. Another young man used to do with his father once a week to the same shop to buy fish and chips. Over a period of time, the father was encouraged to stay outside the shop while his son went in alone to order and pay for the fish and chips for the family. This resulted in increased confidence and self esteem on the part of the young person and the parent to accept that his son could do some things independently if he was given the opportunity to.

Telephone and e mail support is provided to parents at all times and BIBIC aims to work closely with other Charities and organisations. BIBIC has recently completed some joint work with Crossroads and Contact a Family. A report has been written and will be available soon.

### **Questions and Answers**

**Q** What is the cost of providing the service?

**A** A two day assessment costs £450. If the cost is not met by the local authorities, this has to be met by the parents. However a bursary is available and the majority of families are eligible for this.

**Q** How will the outreach service work?

**A** It is envisaged that BIBIC will work with a cluster of 2/3 families in a local area. An assessment team will be sent out and local centres will be used as a base. Assessments can be made in the family home, but if this happens, only one therapist can be sent. Local therapists known to the child are also encouraged to work with the Team.