How to Hold Successful Meetings with Clients Who Have an Acquired Brain Injury

ABI JUSTICE

Create an ABI-Friendly Office Space:

Make sure there is enough space for accessibility devices such as wheelchairs, canes or scooters in your office.

Sit next to your client, sitting behind a desk can be imposing or intimidating.

Ask your client if they have any additional accessibility needs such as: physical, mental, emotional triggers or sensitivities.

Many people have allergies or are sensitive to fragrances, because of this scent-free spaces are preferable.

If curtains or blinds are open, ask the individual if they prefer them to be closed.

Fluorescent lighting can be harsh on the eyes and can trigger headaches. Clients may need to wear sunglasses or a hat. Offer to turn off the lights.

For individuals with PTSD, loud sounds may be triggering. If you work in an area which is prone to EMS sirens, let the client know beforehand.

Investigate adding smart technology where possible (motion lighting, automatic access – door operators etc.)

Help Prepare Your Client:

Ask your client what time of day works best for them in terms of fatigue.

Give a summary of the meeting beforehand so your client knows what to expect.

Learn More:

www.abijustice.org/legal-professionals/challenges-strategies

I Care Soothing Kit:

Find out about simple, low cost items you can have in your office to help clients with anxiety & stress.

Cognitive Communication Strategies:

Learn tips on how to communicate with people living with ABI

www.abijustice.org

During the Meeting:

Limit distractions: silence your phone, turn off background music, ask co-workers not to interrupt the meeting.

Make sure your client can see your face and mouth throughout the meeting.

Encourage breaks throughout the meeting, invite your client to stand up and move around if needed.

Offer water to encourage hydration. Offer candy or mints to reduce anxiety or agitation. Have snacks available.

Keep the meeting brief and focus on pertinent information only.

Ask the client throughout the meeting if they understand and can repeat back the information.

Provide a written or recorded log of information for the client to take with them.

Mark keywords with a highlighter so that the client can understand the information more clearly.

Try printing information on coloured pastel paper and make the font big and clear on documents.

Ask if there is anyone else in their circle of care who should have this information.

Assist in setting up a reminder or calendar prompt for the next scheduled meeting or court date AND a reminder about what is required before or at the next meeting.

Ask if they have access to an electronic method of storing data (google drive, email, etc.) and offer to help them upload this information onto their device.

BIST
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