

## Family Peer Support Opportunities



Peer Support groups are offered via Zoom. Families and caregivers of a loved one with brain injury are welcome to attend.

### “Been There, Done That” Group

Inpatient families and extended family meet in the 2nd floor Shepherd conference room with peer support staff sharing their experience in brain injury recovery. Informal discussion.

*Tuesdays • 10-11a.m. EST*

### Pathways “The Journey Continues”

Weekly support for outpatient and community families. Topic-based discussion for preparation to transition to home and community via Zoom.

*Mondays • 12:45-1:45p.m. EST*

### Community Peer Support Dinner

Open to inpatient, outpatient, and community families. In person dinner from 6-7pm followed by support group sessions from 7-8pm for survivors and caregivers. Auditorium 7th floor. Virtual support also provided via Zoom link.

*Monthly/ 4th Thursday • 6-8p.m. EST  
Virtual Support via Zoom • 7-8p.m. EST*

### Facebook BI Peers Page

Send a friend request to our Shepherd BI Peers Facebook page and join the conversation with others in the brain injury community!



## What Our Shepherd Families Say About Peer Support:

“The peer support groups have been very helpful. Being able to communicate with others who have been in similar situations is important.”

*-Spouse Caregiver*

“Great to hear stories from others going through this...helps to know that I am not alone.”

*-Sibling Caregiver*

“Always great topics and round table discussion. SO helpful to talk to others who have loved ones in similar situations and to learn other caregiver coping mechanisms.”

*-Parent Caregiver*

## Brain Injury Peer Support Staff



**Mariellen Jacobs**

ABI Family Peer Support Lead  
mariellen.jacobs@shepherd.org  
678.322.7859



**Kim Ross**

Peer Support Liaison  
kim.ross@shepherd.org  
404-759-0093



**Claire Holley**

PRN Peer Support Liaison  
claire.holley@shepherd.org

[www.shepherd.org](http://www.shepherd.org) • 404-352-2020



## Brain Injury Family Peer Support

Walking beside you on the road of brain injury and rehabilitation



**Shepherd Center**

2020 Peachtree Road, NW  
Atlanta, GA 30309-1465

# What Peer Support Is and How to Join Us!

At its root, **Peer Support** is the sharing of common experiences with others having faced similar challenges.

At Shepherd Center, Peer Support is one of our founding programs, enhancing patient and family centeredness. Peer Support walks beside patients' families and offers our own journeys as reference guides, coming together on a level impossible without shared experience.

Our Peer Support staff and volunteer mentors will listen with empathy because they walked the road of brain injury with their own loved one and have successfully navigated to a new normal.



*Tina and Charlie Burton became Peer Mentors after their son Cole's journey at Shepherd!*

## Our Family Peer Support Mentors:

- Act as role models to encourage greater independence and self-care
- Serve as a support so that families and patients feel less alone as they navigate brain injury and rehabilitation
- Share coping skills and resources to effectively deal with problems
- Share knowledge gained through their own experience
- Offer emotional, social, or practical help

## How Peer Support Is Done

- One-to-one meetings with other family peer support mentors both inpatient and after discharge from Shepherd
- Group meetings
- Inpatient and outpatient classes & Family Peer Support Meetings
- Phone calls and/or texts
- Zoom or FaceTime
- Email
- Social media platforms

Within a week of being admitted to Shepherd, one of our peer support staff will reach out to the patient's family. Families will also receive a series of emails to acquaint them with our program and the support opportunities available while inpatient, transitioning home, or to the next phase of therapy.

*The Nall family (below) celebrates graduation day!*



*Brian Kelly turned his family's experience through stroke recovery into his passion for peer mentoring.*

Your family can decide which method of support works best for you and your schedule. We are always happy to answer any questions you might have regarding brain injury and rehabilitation.

## Peers Offer Many Insights:

- Community resources
- Accessibility and mobility barriers
- Recreation and leisure
- Managing relationships and feelings
- Self-care for the caregiver and how to avoid caregiver fatigue and burnout
- Effective use of time and energy
- Education and employment
- Self-advocacy and resourcefulness
- Staying motivated throughout the rehabilitation process
- Opportunities for social connections