

Goodbye to Adria



We will miss you Adria!



Seven years ago, a young woman was hired to coordinate the support groups at HBIA. None of us knew Adria before from any other brain injury services in the Hamilton area and there was no overlap with the previous coordinator who had just left. Let me say that we as survivors are not an easy group to deal with sometimes so it was going to be a challenge for anyone new coming in.

We all have brain injuries but they affect us in many different ways and our coping mechanisms are different too. Some of us are pretty quiet, some like to talk a lot, some are pretty emotional at times, some have a hard time staying on topic, others have difficulty expressing themselves or communicating at all. For many the knowledge and desire of what to say is there but the words just don't come out the way want or not fast enough....and sometimes we get stuck on a topic Still if there is any common denominator amongst us all it is the care and concern we have for each other because we recognize we have all been through a pretty tough time with many similarities.

Adria is a person who easily recognized this commonality right away and was able to use her previous experience dealing with people with difficulties very well. It wasn't long before we all had respect for her... her gentle control of our meetings, keeping us on track and extracting positive things from us.

Her position soon became full time as we obtained a clubhouse and doubled the number of support and activity groups. The organizational and administrative demands of our 5 K by the Bay event and fundraising dinner remained high and we added a third event with the golf tournament. We also added a bookkeeping coordination role just for good measure.

Adria, you did all of that so well and your need to move on in your life, although difficult to accept, is understandable. You can't be involved as much as you have been all this time without a very close connection being developed. Yes, we will be Ok to continue on and we will grow to love our new coordinator Rachel too, but, I sincerely hope that the connection is never completely broken. We miss you too much for that to happen.

We know you will do splendidly in your new life in Ottawa and can only wish you the very best because you deserve no less.

Dave Gaylor, on behalf of all brain injury survivors at HBIA