

# AGENDA

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## **FORUM: Improving Functional Abilities After Blast Injury**

**6:00- 6:30 pm: Registration**

**6:30-6:45 pm: Welcome and Opening Remarks**

Kermit Crawford, PhD

**Introductions**

Nicole Godaire/Tress Ricker

**6:45-7:15 pm: Understanding the Effects of Blast Concussion and PTSD**

Neal McGrath, PhD

Many survivors of blast injuries sustain concussion (mild traumatic brain injury), PTSD, or both. This talk is aimed to provide information on each of these conditions and how they may interact when both are present

**7:15- 8:15 pm: Break Out Sessions**

Screening for TBI – Beth Williams/ Mary Roach

The screening tool is meant to provide information about initial and ongoing symptoms following a blast injury or concussion. The tool also gathers information about any initial treatment/services. This tool is used to assist in determining whether further consultation and/or testing are indicated.

BIA- Memory and Organization strategies – Tress Ricker / Beth Pusey

Are you struggling with memory loss and getting organized? Learn some tips and tricks to remediate memory and organization difficulties to optimize your functioning.

**8:15-8:30 pm: Return to larger Group /Evaluations and Conclusion**

All Presenters

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## Presenter Bio's

**Neal McGrath, Ph.D.** received his degree in Clinical Psychology from Northwestern University in 1985 after interning in Boston with the late Dr. Edith Kaplan at the VA Medical Center. His clinical work has focused on the evaluation and rehabilitation of acquired brain injuries. He has consulted extensively to community-based rehabilitation, day treatment, and residential programs. He has been a consultant to the Massachusetts Statewide Head Injury Program (SHIP) for many years. His more recent work for SHIP has included evaluations for veterans returning from service in Iraq and Afghanistan with TBI and PTSD.

In 2004 he began specializing in sports-related concussion as the director of Sports Concussion New England, a neuropsychological practice which now provides education, case consultation, and concussion program development services to over 40 high schools from all over New England. Dr. McGrath's work in sports concussion management has been featured on National Public Radio, PBS and ABC TV. In 2011 he served on the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's Medical Advisory Committee to assist in the development of regulations for the state's concussion safety law.

Dr. McGrath has been awarded the Journal of Athletic Training's 2011 Clint Thompson Award for Clinical Advancement for his paper "Supporting the Student-Athlete in the Classroom after a Sport-Related Concussion." In 2013 he was the lead author of a study entitled "Post-Exertion Neurocognitive Test Failure Among Student-Athletes Following Concussion," which appeared in the journal Brain Injury.

He is the Director of Sports Concussion New England and Neuropsychology New England and an Annual Lecturer in Traumatic Brain Injury at Boston University.

**Beth Williams** is the Sr. Program Coordinator for the Brain Injury & Statewide Specialized Community Services of the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission. Mary Roach is the President and one of the founding partners of Neuro-Rehab Management, Inc. Mary has over twenty years' experience as a rehabilitation counselor/case manager with expertise in working with individuals who have sustained brain injuries or other neurological disorders. She has extensive experience in working with community-based treatment approaches and has assisted individuals in adjusting to their life changes.

**Tress Ricker** is a licensed social worker and the Central Regional Manager at the Brain Injury Association of Massachusetts (BIA-MA). She has lead brain injury survivor and caregiver support groups and social recreation activities, and provided brain injury education for BIA-MA for the past two years.

**Beth Pusey** is the Information and Resource Specialist for BIA-MA and also a brain injury survivor support group leader. Prior to BIA-MA, she was the Community Resource Specialist for the Cognitive Neurology and Psychiatry units at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. Both Tress and Beth have had clinical training in acquired brain injury.