# Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

**November 5, 2021**

**10:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.**

**Virtual Meeting**

**Attendees:** Please refer to the attached document in sheet for Board Members and Guests in attendance.

**Public Participants/Special Guests:** N/A

**Facilitator:** Melissa Dehoff, Chair

**Notes Completed By:** Amy Deiderick, Department of Health (DOH), Bureau of Family Health

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agenda Item</th>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Action Items/Recommendations</th>
<th>Party Responsible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Welcome and Introduction (Melissa Dehoff)</td>
<td>Melissa Dehoff chaired the meeting and welcomed Advisory Board members and participants. Introductions were made for members attending.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formalities (Melissa Dehoff)</td>
<td>The Board reviewed the meeting minutes from the August 2021 meeting. Ann Marie McLaughlin moved to accept the minutes. Kelly Cappos seconded the motion. August’s minutes were officially approved.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board Member Activities</td>
<td>Monica Vaccaro reported that the TBI Model System is conducting a longitudinal study that follows TBI Model Systems participants. So far, they are following 1390 patients. The study conducts follow up interviews</td>
<td></td>
<td>Board</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
on patients post injury at one year, two years, three years, four years, five years and every five years after that. The TBI Model Systems through Moss is now moving into their 25th year of post injury follow up.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Office of Long-Term Living (OLTL); Community Health Choices (CHC) Update (Randolph Nolen)</th>
<th>Mr. Nolen provided the following updates for the Office of Long-Term Living:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• OLTL is still waiting for an update on American Recue Plan Act (ARPA) funds from CMS. The goal of OLTL is to use the funding to improve and increase the workforce for direct care workers. ARPA funds have already been approved for use of nursing home services, but they are waiting on approval for home and community-based services. A question was posed regarding recommendations being put in place, so funds aren’t only used for Personal Assistance Services (PAS). Mr. Nolen reported that there are discussions in place, but approval is needed before they can disburse any funds. Stefanie Bauman requested that a payment increase be considered for brain injury workers as well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• OLTL is recommending COVID boosters; they are educating on booster and how to get the booster especially for home bound populations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• OLTL is tracking workers after the announcement that Philadelphia Department of Health employees are mandated for vaccination. Also mandated are Medicare and Medicaid direct service workers. This is being monitored to determine how it will affect the workforce.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Health Update (Cindy Dundas and Nikki Adams)</td>
<td>Ms. Dundas informed the Board that the Bureau of Family Health has successfully submitted the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Block Grant Report. The report contains information on programming for 2020 and the proposal for programming in 2022. The MCH Block Grant funds most of our staff in the Bureau as well as many of our programs including BrainSTEPs, Safety in Youth Sports and the Acquired Brain Injury Program. This year’s report came in at just over 500 pages. Ms. Adams informed the Board that Julie Myers has taken a new position. Interviews have been conducted to fill her position and a candidate has been chosen. In the interim, her duties have been divided among other staff; Danielle Rhodes is overseeing the PATS and BrainSTEPs grants, Brad</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hartman is overseeing the current TBI grants with ACL, Nicole Johnson is overseeing the duties of the TBI Advisory Board and Nikki Adams is overseeing the new ACL grant.

Pattiann Burton had a question regarding BrainSTEPS. She noted that there are many schools who do not participate in BrainSTEPS – why is this not in all schools? Nikki Adams noted that it is available to all schools, but the schools have to choose to participate. Enforcement of BrainSTEPS in the school would have to be done through the Department of Education. Monica Vacarro shared that there has been collaboration with the Department of Education.

The Board asked if we should consider asking someone from the Department of Education to attend one of our Board meetings to aid in collaboration and promote BrainSTEPS in all schools. Drew stated that this may be an issue that could be addressed by the Systems Workgroup.

| Head Injury Program Update (Amy Deiderick) | Ms. Deiderick shared the following updates for the Head Injury Program (HIP):
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The HIP is still considering re-enrollments. Approximately 20 re-enrollment applications have been sent out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The HIP, in collaboration with several HIP providers, continue to review the services definitions for rehabilitation services in the Participating Provider Agreements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow up on BrainSteps collaboration with Department of Education</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Acquired Brain Injury Program continues to have very low referrals. Many providers are sharing information about the program, so the hope is the referrals increase.

Mr. Hartman shared that the no cost extension for the ACL Grant was approved through 12/31/21. Additional training and education programs are being continued. The SAF for the TBI and Opioid Education Program was approved 11/1/21. BIAPA has been moving quickly to get trainings in place.

Ms. Adams shared that DOH received the ACL grant. It will be a five-year grant with a start date of 8/1/21. The grant proposal was written for BIAPA to do the NeuroResource Facilitation Program as well as education programs focusing on older adults and juvenile justice and the PA Coalition Against Domestic Violence (PCADV) to do education and training on brain injury and domestic violence. The contracts are currently in process. The ACL is now requiring a needs assessment during this grant cycle and the Department would like to form a committee to organize and conduct the assessment. The committee would be tasked with identifying gaps in service. Anyone who may be interested in joining the committee please contact Nicole Johnson.
| PA Coalition Against Domestic Violence (Mae Reale) | Ms. Reale shared that their work with the ACL grant would involve revamping their trainings on brain injury. The purpose is to strengthen the response to domestic violence survivors who may have a brain injury. In a recent survey, two/thirds of staff expressed they felt comfortable incorporating brain injury information and resources when meeting with clients; conversely, only 24% felt resources were widely available and easy to connect survivors. The next step is to conduct focus groups among program staff in urban, suburban and rural areas to do a deeper dive into some of the questions that have come out of the survey. | N/A | N/A |
| Brain Injury Coalition Update (Drew Nagele, Melissa Carmen, and Kevin McDonald) | Dr. Nagele announced that they have been very busy over the last couple of months working with legislative caucus staff to plan a Brain injury awareness day, but the congressional session for the day has been cancelled. They are now hoping to move the BI Awareness day to the spring, possibly in March during Brain Injury Awareness month. They continue to have the support of the brain injury legislative caucus including co-chairs Senator Kearney, Senator Aument, Representative Briggs, Representative Pickett. | N/A | N/A |
| Brain Injury Association of Pennsylvania Update (Ann Marie McLaughlin) | Ms. McLaughlin informed the Board that they now have a statewide monthly support group. For more information, email survivorsupport@biapa.org  
- The annual conference is scheduled for June 26-28 2022 at the Lancaster Marriott and Convention Center. Scholarships will be provided to the brain injury community to attend the conference.  
- BIAPA has an active communication and social media committee that is advertising information on various platforms. BIAPA may | N/A | N/A |
highlight information shared by the Advisory Board on these platforms.

Monica Vaccaro provided an update on the BIAPA’s work in the ACL grant. Through the no cost extension BIAPA continues the work on the Brain Injury Ambassador Program. The Brain Injury Association of America (BIAA) recognized the Ambassador Program as a Program of Excellence last week at the BIAA’s Leadership Conference. If anyone is interested in having a partnership with the Brain Injury Ambassador Program, please reach out to Monica.

- BIAPA conducted a short-term veteran’s task force to learn more about the Veterans systems and also share brain injury resources. A resource was developed that is now under review.
- BIAPA is working with Cristobel Braden on short term video project to be used for trainings.
- The telerehab project will continue into the next phase with a qualitative review of the data received and follow up done with participants and providers.
- BIAPA is working on a new project to follow up with students who received BrainSTEPs services in the past to find out what the students are doing now.
- BIAPA is continuing trainings on intersection of Brain Injury and Opioids. Trainings will continue through 12/31/21. If you know of any groups who may want to consider the training, please contact Ms. Vaccaro.
- BIAPA and Dr. Nagele are currently working on two new research projects. The first is called REACH, (Re-entry Assistance from Corrections to Home). It is a five-year study that assesses the
The effectiveness of NeuroResource Facilitation. The second project is called STABI (School Transition after Brain Injury) and is a partnership with Case Western Reserve that evaluates the effectiveness of BrainSTEPS. The study compares PA students to students in Ohio, where there is no BrainSTEPS program.

### Open Forum and Public Comment

Emily Moscato, Psychology resident and LEND fellow at CHOP would like to raise awareness and advocate for telerehab for psychology services. Continuation for re-imbursement of psychology services to extend allowances to March 2022. Nikki Adams responded by stating that there is potential for the Head Injury Program to consider Psychology services and Counseling.

### Officer Elections

Ms. Adams thanked Ms. Dehoff, Ms. Lowery and Ms. Bauman for holding their positions for the past two terms. New officers have been elected:
- New Chair – Bridget Lowery
- New Vice Chair – Kevin McDonald
- New Secretary – Stefanie Bauman
New positions will start at the February meeting.

### Workgroup Meetings

- Health Equity Workgroup update provided by Ms. Bauman. The group worked on a report that included a brief summary of what they have been working on. They are focusing on how to bring health equity, diversity and inclusion to clients being served. They want to focus on the composition of the Advisory Board to include at least 50% of individuals with a Brain Injury. The group will be sending out a survey in the near future for Board members to complete. Ms. Adams asked that the group also consider the ACL requirements for the make-up of voting members of the board.
- Systems Workgroup update was provided by Dr. Nagele. The group is focusing on Goal three of the state action plan which is to
enhance services and supports for individuals with brain injuries and their families. The workgroup was formerly the Telehealth workgroup, so follow up on that work is being discussed. We would now like to work on promoting those services. Ms. Deiderick added that we are looking at different resources we can use to promote those services such as Aunt Bertha or resource listings within the MCOs. The group has invited a representative from DHS Special Needs Units to collaborate on sharing this information with the MCOs.

- Education and Advocacy Resource Group update was provided by Mae Reale. The workgroup is focusing on finding resources and ways to share those resources. The group also discussed ways to reach out to the medical professionals to determine if someone has a brain injury; how to get a proper diagnosis.

The Board discussed and agreed that each workgroup should prepare a report on the work they have been doing for each TBI Advisory Board Meeting.

| Review Upcoming Meeting | Next TBI Advisory Board Meeting is: **February 4, 2022**  
**TIME:** 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
**Location:** **PaTTAN Harrisburg Conference Center, 6340 Flank Dr, Harrisburg, PA 17112.** |

Handouts: August Meeting Minutes, Agenda, HIP Activity Report and Referrals,

Facilitator Signature: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________