



July 23, 2024
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Council Members:

Peri L. Nearon
John Tkacz
James McGhee

Jennifer Underwood
Porsha Moody
Lisa Joyce

Staff and Guests:

Sakina Ladha
Adam Neary
Margaret Lumia
Jacqueline Moskowitz
Meredith Van Pelt

Sophie Wilkinson
Nicole Roldan-Roberts
Barbara Chabner
Rose Coculo
Tom Grady

Lee Grimanis

Survivor Board Members:

Tara Buggie
Patricia Thompson
Christopher Mueller

Cathy Trapani
Matt Collura

Absent Council Members: Wendy Berk, Katherine Hempstead, Dr. Gregory Przybylski, Katrina Majewski, Robert Robinson, Virgilio Caraballo

Absent Board Members: Sandra Barnett, Ginamarie Williams, Inger Magnusson

Welcome, Introductions, Review of Minutes, Division Updates:

Peri L. Nearon, MPA, Executive Director, Division of Disability Services

April Meeting Minutes:

Meeting minutes were accepted.

DDS Updates:

- July 26, 2024 is the 34th Anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Launching the Disability Hub, a fully accessible, comprehensive and interactive website created over the course of the past 2+ years, led by the Governor's Office. The launch, a virtual event, will take place on Friday, July 26, 2024 at 10 am.
- July is also Disability Pride Month.

- Welcomed newest staff member, Lee Grimanis, Communications Specialist.

State Action Plan Development:

Sakina Ladha, MD, MPH, Project Director

- The Administration for Community Living (ACL) Traumatic Brain Injury State Partnership Program Grant and the State Action Plan began in 2021. This is a 5-year grant awarded to NJ/DDS tasking us with making TBI services more accessible and equitable for the residents of New Jersey, their caregivers and service providers, and creating a formal State Plan.
- The grant tasks us to address four barriers to needed services: screening, professional training, disseminating information and facilitating access to services through resource facilitation.
- The purpose of the state action plan is to guide continued progress to individuals living with a TBI (and their families) to address the need for TBI prevention and to improve access to needed care and services so individuals may return to community life post-injury.
- The role of the NJ Advisory Council on TBI and its Survivor Board is to:
 - support DDS in identifying gaps in services and supports;
 - develop a responsive plan to address these gaps
 - collaborate across private and public partners to meet the needs of NJ residents living with a TBI across the lifespan;
 - create a statewide plan on traumatic brain injury, which will serve as a blueprint to guide the work of the DDS and related boards and councils and to monitor these efforts.
- State Plan Focus Areas include Equity and Inclusion, Infrastructure and Access, and Education and Awareness.
- Sophie Wilkinson (DDS staff) shared State Action Plan examples from New York State, North Carolina, Colorado, Iowa, Massachusetts and Missouri.
- Action Plan Timeline: **Stage 1** – Implement Needs Assessment & Establish Task Force; **Stage 2** – Create State Action Plan; and, **Stage 3** – Organize an Action Plan Conference.
- Discussion regarding brainstorming questions:
 - **Equity and Inclusion** – (A) What changes would you like to see in New Jersey to enhance equity in the TBI space? (B) How could healthcare, public service and community organizations create a more inclusive environment for individuals with TBI?
 - **Infrastructure and Access** – (A) What improvements are needed in NJ's infrastructure to better support individuals with a TBI? (B) How can access to essential services for individuals with a TBI be improved in New Jersey?

- ***Education and Awareness*** – (A) Who should education and awareness be targeted to? (B) What initiatives would you recommend to increase educational awareness about TBI in New Jersey?

BREAK

Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey Updates:

Barbara Chabner, Director, Education & Outreach

- BIANJ continues to promote awareness and education about the TBI Fund through in-person and virtual presentations, social media distribution, which targets a variety of social services, and health-related organizations.
- BIANJ exhibited at 115 workshops, presenting to 5000+ attendees, covering a wide range of topics and settings across 19 of NJ's 21 counties.
- In FY24 BIANJ presented 320 workshops to more than 12,000 attendees on topics such as brain injury, substance abuse, brain injury as a result of domestic violence, brain health strategies for older adults, return to work after a brain injury and shaken baby syndrome.
- BIANJ continues to exhibit at community events and professional conferences such as NJSHA (Speech-Language-Hearing Association). They participated in 34 community fairs and wellness events, and attended 55 community coalition meetings as well as individual networking meetings.
- In May, BIANJ held their annual professional seminar. Dr. Kelli Gary Talley was the keynote speaker, who is a brain injury survivor, professor, researcher and advocate. Nine workshops were held, which included 20 student posters and 28 exhibitors. A total of 214 people attended. Sharon Naulty received the Mimi Goldman Positive Achievement Award.
- BIANJ hosted three webinars wherein 286 individuals attended. For FY24 there were 11 webinars with 1,021 attendees. BIANJ led eight Facebook Live discussions where the new BIANJ Resource App was introduced.
- BIANJ continues to promote the TBI Fund: this quarter there were 72 referrals, and during the FY24 there were 262 referrals directed to DDS.
- BIANJ is updating their concussion guides and materials to provide to schools and recently completed a brain injury substance use handout.

TBI Fund Updates:

Margaret Lumia, PhD, MPH, Administrator, Disability Health & Wellness/TBI Fund

- TBI Fund is supported by a 50-cent surcharge on every NJ motor vehicle registration fee;
- TBI Fund is projected to collect \$4 million in revenue;
- TBI Fund processed \$1.6 million in payments to service providers for direct services to beneficiaries;
- TBI Fund has processed \$350,000 for case management services;

- To date, the TBI Fund collected \$37,000 in lien recoveries;
- Since April, 2024 the TBI Fund has accepted 16 new applicants;
- TBI Fund awarded approximately \$3M in services in FY24;
- The Technology Initiation Proposal (TIP) form has been completed and is under review for the TBI Fund online management system; and
- TBI Fund staffing will be expanding and hiring two more employees, one in case management and the other as line staff.

Open Discussion:

- October, 2024 meeting will be in-person – Save the Date notice to follow.

Adjournment: 12:00 pm

Next Meeting Date: October 15, 2024