

**TBI Advisory Board Meeting**  
**April 20, 2010**  
**Office of Protection & Advocacy**  
**60B Weston Street**  
**Hartford, CT 06120**  
**1:00PM-3:00PM**

**Attendees:** G. Allen; K. Arnold; S. Cochran; J. Culbertson; K. Hanson; C. Kramer; D. Long; S. Lourie; C. Lyons; M. Merwin; G. O'Neil-Wild; T. Rothstein; J. Sanford; B. Simmers; M. Storch; S. Werboff; B. Zoubek; D. Montelle

**Excused:** H. Chelednik; L. Gibbons; L. Gelman-Wegener; T. Graziani; S. Harvey; A. Palmer; J. Peters; Sylvia Gafford-Alexander

**Absent:** L. Neff; M. Leary; C. Sears

**Recorder:** Donna Montelle

**1. Welcome and Introductions:**

- Each participant introduced themselves
- Minutes from previous TBI Advisory meeting were reviewed and a motion by C. Lyons was seconded by K. Arnold to accept the minutes and the motion passed
- Agenda was distributed to all participants along with written committee reports and information regarding legislative Bill H.B. # 5353 and #189 and questions for DSS regarding the ABI Medicaid Waiver.

**2. Committee Reports:**

**Coordination Report:** There was no report from the Coordination Committee. There is still no chair.

**Screening Tool Report:** K. Arnold reported that a small group of committee members made telephone calls to follow-up on the organizations that were using the TBI Screening Tool. Some organizations have incorporated a portion into their assessments while others have not begun to utilize the screening tool. M. Merwin reported that she is using the screening tool at Asian Family Services. K. Arnold also reported that the committee will expand trainings and continue to follow-up on those organizations that have shown an interest in the utilization of the TBI Screening Tool. Mount Sinai, Behavioral Health is interested in utilizing the screening tool. G. O'Neil-Wild reported that CCADV is interested in having Domestic Violence Advocates trained so that they can assess TBI in their DV shelters. Gerri O'Neil-Wild and Tara Rothstein volunteered to participate on the Screening Tool Committee.

**Minimum Standards Report:** D. Montelle reported that S. Gafford-Alexander will be scheduling a meeting in the near future. She has been corresponding with A. Palmer trying to arrange a convenient time for Dr. Palmer to attend meetings due to her demanding schedule and physical distance.

**Outreach & Awareness Report:** M. Merwin reported that the committee has met once and has corresponded via email. The committee members have identified teens as a group they wish to target.

She reported that BIAC is currently working in the schools doing trainings. Also, A. Suarez is involved in education and advocacy with the Hispanic/Latino community. Committee Members felt that the best way to target teens was to educate teachers, coaches and other significant adults.

**Waiver Review Work Group Report:** B. Simmers reported that the group has corresponded via email. The group is currently developing a written document that will provide an overview of all the Medicaid Waivers in Connecticut. D. Long was asked to explain the steps that need to take place when an individual applies for ABI Waiver which she did. As part of the application process it was suggested that the client be given a list of hospitals that perform Neuropsychological testing. Written responses to the questions posed by the TBI Advisory Committee at the January meeting are enclosed in the minutes.

**Nominations Report:** C. Lyons reported that there is a new Bill (189) which is being discussed in the Legislature. The bill would create a TBI Advisory Council that would report to the Governor and the DSS Commissioner. The Nominations Committee has received and accepted 3 new applicants to the TBI Advisory Board but they will not be submitted to the DSS Commissioner until after May 6<sup>th</sup> when the proposed Bill is either accepted or rejected by the Legislature.

**Executive Report:** B. Simmers reported that the Executive Committee met and discussed concerns regarding the Legislative Bill 189.

**Update on the ABI Waiver Program:** D. Long reported that there are 37 individuals on the wait list.

## 2. Old Business:

- D. Montelle reported that the updates to the DSS TBI Website have not been completed due to inability to receive appropriate training. She also stated that until the training is implemented D. Long will have another DSS staff person have the minutes from the TBI Advisory posted on the website.
- The TBI Institute Certificate Program offered at Tunxis Community College Annex was completed. S. Werboff reported that the participants in the class were made up of a diversified group of adults from various agencies. S. Werboff suggested that an expanded version of the certification program be offered in the future. B Simmers reported that the program went well and needed to consider that this was a pilot program. There were 12 students in this class. D. Montelle reported that Tunxis would be offering the program again but no planning has taken place at present.

## 3. New Business:

Discussion centered on House Bill # 189. If passed, the Bill would establish a traumatic brain injury advisory council to the governor. The council would be charged with developing a plan to address the needs of individuals with TBI. If the legislation is passed the TBI Advisory Board would no longer need to continue.

Several members had concerns regarding the verbiage of the Bill. One of the concerns was regarding the membership of the Advisory Committee. Many members felt that there was a lack of representation of TBI Survivors and family members. B. Simmers asked members to individually provide feedback on what they thought about Bill #189. Many members expressed a need for modifications to be made to the Bill but thought that this should be done when and if the Bill was passed, rather than before. Most members thought that if the Bill passed in the next two weeks there might be more public awareness and better chances of changing legislation to support the needs of individuals with TBI. G. Allen expressed that he was not in agreement with terminating the Advisory Board and felt strongly that the new Bill

would be detrimental to persons with brain injury. He also expressed a concern about the lack of representation of Survivors on the Advisory Council if the bill was to pass.

In an effort to address the Priority Areas in the Statewide Action Plan, the Board held a brief discussion on two of the Priority Areas from the Statewide Action Plan:

- Priority 5: Affordable, Accessible Housing will be available to persons with TBI
- Priority 6: Services will be available to non-waiver eligible persons with TBI

The Board voted to establish a work group to focus on Priority 5. B. Simmers will email Board members to request participation in this work group.

**4. Next Meeting Date:**

The TBI Advisory Board will meet July 20, 2010 1:00-3:00pm at P&A, 60B Weston St., Hartford

Meeting Adjourned at 3:00pm