

**Public Comments on Nebraska’s Annual Living with Brain Injury State Plan for 2019-2020**

**Received August 29 – September 30, 2019**

**Access Services**

Nebraskans with a brain injury, regardless of geographic location or financial means, will have access to the necessary resources that they require to pursue their recovery.

<p>Goal 1: Improvements to Nebraska’s system of care and community-based services for people with brain injury will be driven by the collection and analysis of meaningful data.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise the Annual Living with Brain Injury Needs Survey and the survey process with input from people with brain injury, family members, the Brain Injury Alliance of Nebraska (BIA-NE) and other stakeholders, to increase participation.</li> <li>• Advocate for amendments to the Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Registry follow-up statute to allow for multiple contacts with individuals placed on the Registry, and other improvements to connect them with appropriate services for their recovery, using data from the BIA-NE’s Resource Facilitation program and other sources.</li> <li>• Create and implement a plan to systematically collect meaningful data and statistics on Nebraskans impacted by brain injury, including data on the long-term outcomes of people with brain injury.</li> </ul>	<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What process will be used to revise the needs survey to ensure that individuals with BI have input to enable individuals to participate in the survey, which seemed to be a concern from the first survey?</li> <li>• Who decides what “meaningful data” means?</li> <li>• What is meaningful data? Who is going to collect &amp; analyze this data? How will the data be collected? There are strict guidelines setup around the brain injury registry regarding what type of information can be collected.</li> </ul>
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<p>Goal 2: Paid caregivers and professionals in medicine and healthcare, education, behavioral health, law enforcement, vocational rehabilitation, and other disciplines will receive information, training, and education to understand and address the physical, cognitive, emotional and behavioral needs of people with brain injury.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritize professional groups for training and education, and develop training curriculum in collaboration with the BIA-NE, utilizing Annual Living with Brain Injury Needs Survey results.</li> </ul>	<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A wider education response on BI occurrence is needed for the medical community.</li> <li>• More training is needed for nurses &amp; physicians.</li> <li>• Clergy need BI information &amp; training.</li> <li>• Can unpaid caregivers &amp; family members be included?</li> <li>• Who will deliver this training long-term?</li> <li>• Who will fund this training, BIA-NE, BIAC, other entity?</li> </ul>
<p>Goal 3: People with brain injury and their family members will access affordable housing, and home and community-based service options in all parts of the state.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate to amend the current TBI Waiver level of care and services.</li> <li>• Advocate to provide Independence Skills Training services to people with brain injury served under the Aged and Disabled Waiver.</li> <li>• Advocate in the development and implementation of Nebraska’s Olmstead Plan.</li> </ul>	<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the A&amp;D waiver cover independent skill training?</li> <li>• Is this referring to advocating to legislators?</li> <li>• Who would provide the “Independence Skills Training” to those served under the A&amp;D waiver?</li> </ul>
<p>Goal 4: People with brain injury and their family members will be made aware of the dangers of Opioid medication misuse, and know where to seek assistance and treatment of substance abuse concerns. (HHS-wide Public Health Goal)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A BIAC Committee will consult with state Opioid experts and resources and develop action steps for an education plan.</li> </ul>	<p>Comments: None</p>

<p>Goal 5: People with brain injury and co-occurring serious mental illness will receive effective treatment and community-based services to meet their needs. (HHS wide Public Health Goal)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A BIAC Committee will consult with Behavioral Health experts, the BIA-NE, and people with brain injury and co-occurring serious mental illness to develop action steps for the provision of effective treatment and services.</li> </ul>	<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many individuals with brain injuries have untreated PTSD.</li> <li>• This committee should focus on neuro-behavioral programming since this is not available in Nebraska or at the very least, promote Nebraska Medicaid to cover this service in other states since this is not available in NE.</li> <li>• Another issue is that psychiatry services are not always available in a timely manner; I recently tried to schedule a patient with a psychiatrist and for one office the next appointment was in December, not reasonable for a patient who needs services to wait 3 months.</li> <li>• Definitely need to add training for mental health providers and how brain injury ties into that when treating these individuals.</li> <li>• Who is going to be on the committee from the BIAC that deals with comorbidities?</li> </ul>
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## Build the Voice

The Voice of people with a brain injury and their family members will exist as a unified Voice of solidarity and advocacy, and will be engaged to shape policies and programs.

<p>Goal 1: People with brain injury and their family members will have the leadership capacity and resources to effectively advocate for policy, program and service improvements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build the foundation for a statewide, voice-driven association of people with brain injury and their family members by providing leadership and capacity-building coaching.</li> <li>• Equip the association to advocate for policy, program and service changes by making data, resources, tools and strategies accessible to its leaders and members.</li> <li>• Engage association members in shaping policies, programs and services by providing education in advocacy strategies and offering opportunities to advocate, such as an Annual Living with Brain Injury Summit.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The association, Nebraska VR, the BIAC and the BIA-NE of Nebraska will define complementary roles to foster a unified front for brain injury, and to avoid competition and duplication of effort.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need education and training to know what is out there.</li> <li>• Who will be providing funding for the voice-driven association in the initial stages of getting the organization up &amp; running before this organization has a chance to do any fundraising?</li> <li>• It has been a huge struggle in the past to define roles of BIAC &amp; BIA-NE, adding another organization really seems to be muddying the waters even more.</li> <li>• Isn't defining complementary roles being done by creating the Peer Resource Navigator position?</li> </ul>
<p>Goal 2: The Brain Injury Advisory Council will be engaged and fully representative of the statewide population of people with brain injury.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop onboarding, orientation, and mentoring materials to ensure new members are able to fully participate in BIAC activities.</li> <li>• Add new members with brain injury representing each region of the state to reach 50% of the total BIAC membership.</li> </ul>	<p>Comments: None</p>

## Connect to Resources

All stakeholders in the brain injury realm will understand their unique role as well as how they complement each other towards making the future of brain injury better; subsequently, people with a brain injury will have an easier time navigating available resources with the help of specialized assistance from Peer Support Resource Navigators.

<p>Goal 1: People of all ages who have experienced brain injury will be connected to resources in their region of the state.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the TBI Registry follow-up mailing, include customized brochures for recipients in three age groups and three regions to connect them to resources closer to their home.</li> <li>• Disseminate customized brochures via the Aging and Disability Resource Centers and other agencies and organizations to ensure outreach to older persons and individuals with disabilities is achieved.</li> <li>• Collaborate with the BIA-NE's Resource Facilitators to ensure individuals with brain injury of all ages in each region of the state are connected to available resources.</li> </ul>	<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you plan to connect resources to individuals? How will people be made aware these resources/services exist?</li> <li>• How do we get individuals who are not currently receiving information onto the TBI registry?</li> <li>• How will ages be broken up?</li> </ul>
<p>Goal 2: People with brain injury will receive help from trained Peer Support Resource Navigators to locate and access available resources.</p>	<p>Define the role of the Peer Support Resource Navigator in collaboration with the BIA-NE's Resource Facilitators, to avoid competition and duplication of effort.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement a Peer Support Resource Navigation demonstration pilot using evidence-based Peer to Peer Support practices. (such as those from the Centers for Medicare &amp; Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).</li> <li>• When established, Peer Support Resource Navigators will serve people with brain injury living in underserved, rural areas of the state as first priority.</li> </ul>	<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who will be funding the Peer Support Resource Navigators?</li> <li>• How are Peer Support Navigators different from the current Resource Navigators?</li> <li>• How will people be served in the underserved, rural areas of the state?</li> </ul>

<p>Goal 3: Nebraska’s statewide capacity to provide comprehensive and coordinated services to people with brain injury and their families will be enhanced through active participation in federal brain injury grant and technical assistance programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nebraska VR will co-lead federal grantee workgroups on “Transition and Employment”, and “Using Data to Connect People to Services” topics, and will share workgroup products with the BIAC and other stakeholders.</li> <li>• Nebraska VR will participate in the development of national Brain Injury Workforce Competencies with other Mentor grantee states.</li> </ul>	<p>Comments: None</p>
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### Shape Policy

The Nebraska Legislature will be informed about the nature of brain injury and its ongoing impact on Nebraskans, and will be supportive of funding and policies to support the necessary statewide resources for those with brain injury.

<p>Goal 1: The Annual Brain Injury State Plan will reflect the Voice-Generated Statewide Vision, and will serve as a structured approach to communicate the needs of Nebraskans with brain injury and their families to the Legislature and other stakeholders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtain public input on the draft Annual Brain Injury State Plan.</li> <li>• Share the Annual Brain Injury State Plan with the new Brain Injury Trust Fund Oversight Committee.</li> <li>• Implement the Annual Brain Injury State Plan with measurable outcomes.</li> </ul>	<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will this public input be obtained?</li> <li>• What are the measurable outcomes?</li> </ul>
<p>Goal 2: Nebraska VR will serve as the state’s lead agency, providing administrative leadership for the Brain Injury Advisory Council, and collaborating with brain injury stakeholders and other state agencies to build and sustain a statewide, comprehensive, coordinated system of brain injury services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nebraska VR will provide state match funds and full- time staff for the federal TBI grant application and administration.</li> <li>• Nebraska VR will provide frequent updates on BIAC and TBI grant activities to the Nebraska Department of Education Commissioner who will serve on the Brain Injury Trust Fund Oversight Committee.</li> </ul>	<p>Comments: None</p>

<p>Goal 3: The Brain Injury Advisory Council’s messaging and advocacy plans will be fully implemented based on meaningful data that drives ongoing voice-driven advocacy efforts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The BIA’s Public Policy Committee will research barriers to the provision of community-based services and draft recommendations.</li> <li>• The BIA’s Public Policy Committee will review Annual Living with Brain Injury Needs Survey and other data to recommend BIA advocacy and public policy priorities on an annual basis.</li> </ul>	<p>Comments: None</p>
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**Increase Public Awareness**

The complex nature of an injured brain and the recovery journey will be understood by all Nebraskans, such that stigma will be decreased and the public will be more supportive of efforts to improve overall brain injury support and resources.

<p>Goal 1: Ensure that families receive information, education and support to address their financial, social and emotional needs associated with caring for someone with brain injury.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritize information and education topics and supports, and plan action steps utilizing Annual Living with Brain Injury Needs Survey results and input from Annual Living with Brain Injury Summit attendees.</li> </ul>	<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who will take on the responsibility for providing this financial, social &amp; emotional needs role? What is the timeline?</li> </ul>
<p>Goal 2: The Brain Injury Advisory Council will be seen as a credible, statewide leader, and the forum for all brain injury stakeholders to pursue the Voice-Generated Statewide Vision.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch public awareness activities to increase BIA visibility, strengthen connections with other disability organizations &amp; increase outreach to brain injury stakeholders across the state (include social media &amp; BIA website enhancements).</li> <li>• Identify supplemental revenue for BIA sustainability.</li> <li>• BIA committees will be established, functioning, active and providing directions.</li> <li>• Submit a proposal to host the National Association of State Head Injury Administrators (NASHIA) conference in Omaha, NE in 2021.</li> </ul>	<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If BIA receives supplemental revenue and decides to break out on its own, will it serve as the advisory board to the federal grant?</li> </ul>