

**Brain Injury Advisory Council Meeting  
Nebraska VR Office  
Lincoln, NE  
September 16, 2016**

*Public notice of upcoming meetings will be available on the Department of Education website under "conferences & meetings" at least 10 days prior to each meeting.*

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Tiffany Armstrong, Michael Chittenden, Rose Dymacek, Michelle Hawley-Grieser, Brett Hoogeveen, Dale Johannes, Jason Kirkman (substitute for Peg Ogea-Ginsburg), Kristen Larsen, ML Lehman, Heather Leschinsky, Judy Nichelson, Kilee Oetjen, Peggy Reisher, Frank Velinsky, Judy Vohland

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Brooke Murtaugh

**ADVISORS PRESENT:** Shari Bahensky, Tania Diaz, Larry Roos (substitute for Deanna Jesse)

**STAFF PRESENT:** Keri Bennett, Ashley Hernandez, Nancy Noha

**VISITORS:** Cynthia Brammeier, Joyce Schmeackle, Cathy Wyatt

*The meeting of the Nebraska Brain Injury Advisory Council commenced at 10:05 a.m. Public notification of this meeting was made on the Nebraska Department of Education web site.*

**APPROVAL OF JUNE 17, 2016 MEETING MINUTES**

The minutes from June 17, 2016 were reviewed. A motion was made by Dale Johannes and seconded by Brett Hoogeveen to approve the June 17, 2016 meeting minutes as submitted. There were no objections to the motion. **The motion carried by unanimous consent.**

**AGENDA APPROVAL**

The agenda for the day was reviewed. A motion was made by ML Lehman and seconded by Judy Vohland to approve the agenda with one addition and a change to order. There were no objections to the motion. **The motion carried by unanimous consent.**

**INTRODUCTIONS**

Council members, staff and technical advisors briefly introduced themselves.

**OPEN MEETINGS ACT**

Tiffany Armstrong announced that the meeting was an open meeting and the Open Meetings Law was posted on the side table.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Judy Nichelson shared that she attended a town hall session with the Governor in August. Judy reported that she had the opportunity to ask a question to the governor at this meeting and she was able to share her experience with brain injury and address concerns of brain injury and how it is handled in the corrections system. Judy stated many individuals approached her after the meeting and shared their personal issues with brain injury. Judy also reported she was approached by the North Platte Telegraph, stating her brain injury support group was featured on the front page over the weekend.

Tiffany Armstrong shared that council member Courtney Lankford resigned from the council and the council will be looking for new member applicants.

### **BIA-NE RESOURCE FACILITATION PILOT PROGRESS**

Cathy Wyatt reported on behalf of the team at the Brain Injury Alliance. Cathy stated they are officially in year two of the resource facilitation pilot program and calls are increasing and numbers are going up. Cathy shared they are finalizing their new website. Copies of the Brain Injury Alliance information card and Resource Facilitation Guide were provided to members for review.

### **BIA-NE REPORT**

Peggy Reisher shared they are working on a social media campaign with the Concussion Coalition including billboards sharing the message “When in Doubt, Sit ‘Em Out.” Peggy shared there will be messages via Facebook and Snap Chat as well as a 60 second TV spot airing in Lincoln and Omaha during televised football programming. Peggy discussed the Women of Warriors Weekend and shared with members the flyer for the event. Peggy stated numbers for the weekend are down this year and they are hoping to increase attendance.

### **DHHS LTSS REDESIGN ACTIVITIES UPDATE**

Heather Leschinky reported they are now using the title, Long Term Care Redesign, and they are currently in the listening and information gathering phase. Heather reported they have held listening sessions in Kearney, North Platte, and Gering. There was a live streaming webinar with NET but they experienced some technical difficulties last night so they will be holding another live streaming event which will be posted on their website. Mercer will be submitting a preliminary recommendation packet following the listening sessions. Heather reported they do not expect any changes to occur until next year as they are taking their time fully evaluating the current systems. Frank Velinsky shared as a provider the concern is not the ability to ask questions but when a redesign takes full action there is often unforeseen side complications. Frank asked if there will be some type of safety net set in place. Frank shared that rates and incentives in other states as examples of those difficulties. Heather shared that part of the assessment process is to evaluate and learn from other programs’ successes and problems. Heather shared they are going to take their time so they do it right. Heather shared that Heritage House managed care, which is going live January 1<sup>st</sup>, enrollment packets will be going out to individuals who have not traditionally been in the managed care system next week so they have time to review and understand their options. Heather shared that many view Nebraska’s Heritage Health system as one of the most comprehensive programs in the nation. Heather also reported there will be an Ombudsperson for the managed care delivery system. Heather shared they have an administrative simplification committee working to implement a stream lined credentialing process. Heather shared the reason they are not moving to managed long term care today is because it would be devastating for the system so they are taking their time. Heather reported the current system is not sustainable so they know they need to make changes. Heather shared their report states they value community based services. Brett Hoogeveen shared he has spent time with the NASUAD subcontractor consultants, stating those representatives have been very professional and he was impressed with their knowledge.

### **AGING & DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER PRESENTATION**

Cynthia Brammeier shared with members an outline of the Aging & Disability Resource Center Pilot Project (ADRC). Cynthia shared the 1-800 number has been active for about a year but has not been highly advertised; reporting that the calls are geo-routed to the nearest Agency on Aging. Cynthia reported they have offered many presentations throughout the state and they have been well received. Cynthia shared there is a community calendar affiliated with the website which anyone can add to. Cynthia discussed the different resources and links available on the website. The online hub of information can be found at <http://nebraska.networkofcare.org/aging/index.aspx>. Cynthia shared the

website is available in many different languages and updates and additions are open to the public by edit request. Cynthia shared they have been making presentations to different community resources and have been soliciting updates and website information is validated annually. There is an online call center application being utilized by the Area Agencies on Aging to gather and input data. AAAs have hired Fritz & O'Hare as statewide ADRC Coordinators. Cynthia shared she encourages everyone to review and utilize the webpage and submit any edits or additions members may have. Cynthia shared there are Options Counselors at the AAAs that individuals can meet with to help them identify their options.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Older Adults Committee**

Dale Johannes shared a summary of what the committee has done since it received the grant in 2008. Dale reported that they began working with the AAA soon after the committee was established and a number of nursing homes were visited. Dale shared he feels brain injury in the elderly population is not addressed due to funding sources. Dale shared working with Cathy Wyatt has been a tremendous benefit, stating she has put together great contacts and advisors creating a strong voice for the population. Cathy shared they have met with this group a few different times and they are very supportive of the proposed pilot program in three potential nursing care facilities in Omaha for the pilot. Cathy shared they also recommended increased outreach to emergency rooms and primary care providers in response to falls and proper screening for brain injury. Their collective response was to spend their energy educating first responders. Currently the subcommittee is reviewing a list of conferences where presentation proposals could be submitted.

### **REAP CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT MATERIALS UPDATE**

Peggy Reisher shared a draft copy of the REAP manual stating there are some printing issues that need to be corrected but the content is finalized. Peggy shared a PDF version of the manual will be available on the Brain Injury Alliance website and they hope to have it shared electronically on other agencies websites as well. The sponsors listed, Columbus Community Hospital, Bryan Health, Children's Hospital and Nebraska Medicine will have hard copies that they will distribute. Peggy shared the alliance will likely develop a handout describing what the manual is and where it can be accessed online.

### **SAFE CHILD SCREEN**

Rose Dymacek discussed the Safe Child Screen Tool for birth to 3-year-olds and shared copies of the screening with members for review. Rose explained they use this screener for children that have been referred for special education evaluation and it is completed by the child's parent. Rose shared the pilot was conducted over the summer and during that time there were 19 infant and toddlers that were screened with 4 screening positive. A positive screen occurs when both an incident and symptom are reported on the screen. Rose shared the screen does not diagnose a brain injury but provides information in regards to the possibility of a brain injury to be discussed with a child's healthcare provider. Rose shared screening is very helpful in understanding students as they age and the ability to put in place proper supports for individuals in school.

### **TECHNICAL ADVISOR ROLE & RESPONSIBILITY**

Michael Chittendon shared with members a report on the subcommittees recommendations in regards to the role of technical advisors for the council. Michael shared one member of the subcommittee recommended getting rid of technical advisors and making them voting members. The remainder of the subcommittees' recommendations were: Make sure committee is aware of intent and any regulations needed to comply with/around technical advisors. Ensure that a technical advisor has an identifiable area of expertise needed by the committee. Executive committee to contact the technical advisor as needed in between meetings for consults. Inform the technical advisor if needed for the quarterly meeting and at what time. Expectation is to have the advisor available for the area of expertise needed on agenda. The

technical advisor is not expected to stay for the entire meeting. Ensure that the advisor is kept up to date with meeting minutes and notices.

Tania Diaz shared she feels that Disability Rights Nebraska should be made a voting member on the council. Tiffany Armstrong shared she feels if there is an individual who the council is inviting to every meeting and valuing their knowledge and input they should be made a voting member and if there are individuals only needed for input on a case by case basis they could be utilized on a consultant basis as needed instead of required for every meeting. Keri Bennett shared that currently the council roster meets the law and there is nothing written in the law or grant in regards to technical advisors. Michael stated he would like to have an additional subcommittee meeting to clarify what technical advisor areas would be needed. Members discussed eliminating advisors and what members would fit well as members. Michael suggested that the council extend membership to the current technical advisors and discontinue the role of technical advisors. Council members discussed that by-laws would need to be amended in regards to membership. Keri stated she will find the grant language in regards to membership percentage requirements. Tiffany stated the current by-laws will be brought to the December meeting for further review. Michelle Hawley-Grieser asked that the potential technical advisors becoming members discuss possible conflicts of interests.

### **TBI GRANT ANNUAL REPORT**

Joyce Schmeekle shared copies of the Annual Evaluation Report with members and summarized its contents. Grant objectives were reviewed including, information and referral services, training, screening, resource facilitation and sustainability. Joyce discussed with the council that 11,712 letters were delivered to those on the TBI Registry and 12,177 hits to the Nebraska Brain Injury Advisory Council Website.

### **TBI LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY WORK GROUP**

Keri Bennett shared that one of the objectives in the grant narrative is creating sustainability. Keri stated a long-term sustainability work group needs to be created at this time to address sustainable funding sources. A request for proposals (RFP) will need to be sent out to locate a contractor to help in creating a sustainability plan. Keri stated this is one of her primary goals for the next several months. Keri shared she will send out the RFP by email for review and input from council members. Keri stated she would love to have any council members join this work group.

Keri reported she recently submitted a performance report to HRSA on last year's activities. She reported that Information and Referral took 377 TBI related calls were fielded from 131 individuals. 27 information and referral services were provided to individuals by the Hotline for Disabilities. Resource facilitation case management was designed in program year 1 and case management services were provided to 14 individuals and 11 remain open. Resource facilitation community outreach conducted 209 outreach activities with an estimated reach to 3,870 individuals. Five trainings were offered training 222 individuals. TBI screenings and statistics were reviewed. The PARTNER Tool was repeated in 2015 to measure the collaboration of key stakeholders and partners around TBI in Nebraska. The levels of perceived trust, value, and other indicators remained consistently strong. The cost of TBI analysis and surveillance data were discussed. Behavioral risk surveillance system is a self-reporting phone survey conducted every 2 years in Nebraska and validated by the CDC. Dr. Corrigan of Ohio has a TBI module set of questions that can be added to the BRFSS (Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System).

### **JUVENILE JUSTICE & TBI WORKSHOP REPORT**

Keri Bennett shared she attended the Juvenile Justice and TBI workshop in August in Alabama and there will be a summary coming out soon. Keri shared that each state provided a summary of their state partners and services which she can provide members via email. Keri discussed some other states plans and how they are utilizing their services including Pennsylvania which is doing a lot of work with the corrections system. Keri reported she took a lot of notes and gathered a lot of useful information if the council decides to focus on juvenile justice as a targeted population in the future.

## **NASHIA SOS CONFERENCE REPORT**

Keri Bennett shared that herself and Peggy Reisher attended the NASHIA Conference and the speakers' presentations will be available on their website in about a week. Keri discussed the speakers who presented at the conference. Keri shared that the preconference was on substance abuse and brain injury. Adult and juvenile justice systems, homelessness and brain injury, national collaborative on children's brain injury, access to neurobehavioral services were all topics featured at the conference. Keri shared with council members the Ohio Valley Center for Brain Injury Prevention and Rehabilitation Accommodating the Symptoms of TBI informational booklet. Members stated they would like to have copies of the information booklet for use in Nebraska. Peggy Reisher reported the website at msktc.org has a lot of downloadable, useful information.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Tiffany Armstrong asked members for any new business. Frank Velinsky shared the article "Disabled Behind Bars" with the council. Frank discussed the possibility of a very large number of persons in prison with a brain injury. Frank discussed sessions he attended 5-7 years ago that addressed community based corrections. Frank also shared an article in today's Omaha World Herald regarding the Governor's comments regarding new jobs, funding and a needed change in culture in the corrections system. Frank shared he feels this is an opportune time to encourage the state to look at brain injury in particular the effects of brain injury in the corrections system and how brain injury is handled in the corrections systems. Frank stated he thinks it is time that we introduce brain injury to the corrections department. Peggy Reisher shared the Brain Injury Alliance was asked to present to Douglas County Corrections and additional interest in presentations came from this information center. Peggy stated she met with the director of Douglas County Corrections and a person from the Department of Justice who are working to address mental health and substance abuse in the prison system as well as brain injury. Peggy stated her favorite model is from Colorado which has pilot programs screening those entering the corrections system for brain injury and referrals to resource facilitators are being made. Peggy shared many states are having breakout sessions in regards to brain injury in the corrections system. Peggy shared she hopes to see these corrections facilities to not only do screenings and assessments for brain injury but also staff training. Peggy shared the CDC has some great information in regards to the number of incarcerated persons with brain injury. Peggy stated she would like to develop a proposal with a potential hospital to partner in offering assessments of those screened positive for brain injury in the prison system. Peggy shared that she thinks it may be more effective to start at the county level. Tania Diaz shared there is a prevalence of persons with disabilities in the prison system. Peggy shared, you can strongly suspect a high prevalence for brain injury in the corrections systems but the data is not there. Members discussed other states pilot programs using HRSA grant dollars. Members discussed possible funding sources and grant opportunities. Frank stated he thinks we need to elevate what is known about brain injury and feels strongly that something needs to be said. Frank stated he thinks this council has a great deal of knowledge and information that should be shared with the corrections system. Peggy stated her recommendation is to start small like the county level as the corrections system is a huge machine. Kristen Larsen stated there will be grants re-released that focus on community inclusion that could be a good fit for a potential funding source. Larry Roos suggested inviting Lisa Mathews who is the ADA coordinator for the Nebraska corrections system. Council members decided to put this topic on the agenda for the December council meeting.

Dale Johannes shared he met with a software company and Dr. Nedro discussing eye scanning for brain injury screening in the elderly last Friday which was very promising and he will keep the council updated on the progress.

ML Lehman shared she really enjoyed the 20-year anniversary TBI council member spotlights, sharing they are available on the council website if anyone has not seen them.

### **UPCOMING MEETING DATES**

- December 16, 2016

### **ADJOURN**

The next meeting is scheduled for December 16, 2016, in Lincoln. The meeting adjourned at 2:34p.m. with a motion made by Frank Velinsky and seconded by Michael Chittendon. There were no objections to the motion. **The motion carried by unanimous consent.**