

ACCESS

(A Comprehensive Coordinated Entry into
Services and Supports)

Federal Grant from Administration for Community Living
TBI State Partnership Program
90TBSG070-01-00

August 2021 through July 2026
(This Period: August 1, 2024 through January 31, 2025)

5 Primary Goals

1. Effective treatment for individuals with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and co-occurring behavioral health & substance use disorder
2. Supports for caregivers of individuals with TBI
3. Increased access to and the ability to engage with culturally relevant brain injury specific programs and community-based resources (Yrs 1-3)
4. The work of the Virginia Brain Injury Council (VBIC) will reflect the input of individuals living with traumatic brain injury
5. Service development driven by accurate data and progress measured through data-based evaluation (Yrs 4-5)

Goal 1: Effective treatment for individuals with TBI and co-occurring behavioral health & substance use disorder

- Partnership with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) and the Virginia Association of Community Services Boards (VACSB)
- Deployed and deployed a survey across 40 Community Services Boards (CSBs) to obtain information about what training supports were needed as they navigate working with individuals living with brain injury (BI) and co-occurring behavioral health conditions
- Exploring training options to meet the CSB needs based on survey responses
- Next steps: Assess survey results and develop the needed training for frontline providers to address their learning needs
- CSB partners will have opportunity to receive a demonstration of the Online Brain Injury Screening and Support Services (OBISSS) provided by the National Association of State Head Injury Administrators

Goal 2: Supports for caregivers of individuals with TBI

- A partnership with the Brain Injury Association of Virginia (BIAV)
- DARS approved a short No Cost Extension to allow them to complete work that was slightly delayed by leadership and staffing changes within the organization
- BIAV continued to hold their monthly Caregiver Support Groups, and they provided new resources, training opportunities and coping support through their online caregiver network to 145 support group leaders
- Community Resource and Support Manager took a caregiver toolkit training through Sheltering Arms Institute
- DARS' Federal Grant staff continued to serve a final term as Chair of the Virginia Caregiver Coalition's Education Subcommittee

Goal 3: Increased access to and the ability to engage with culturally relevant brain injury specific programs and community-based resources (Yrs 1-3)

- A partnership with Virginia's No Wrong Door (NWD) Program
- Modified Ohio State University TBI Identification Method was uploaded to NWD Virginia Easy Access (website)
- Completed the Brain Injury Service Finder "widget" in Virginia Navigator
- Completed CRIA (Communication, Referral, Information & Assistance) training. Electronic tool within NWD that enables partners to make secure automated referrals, share information on individuals they serve (with consent), track what is happening to them over time, and run progress reports at the client, agency, and community level.
- Conducted pilot with the Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) to screen for brain injury at intake
- Trained BI providers in Options Counseling and the BI screener tool
- NWD is partnering with BIAV on shared links and resource for brain injury

Goal 4: The work of the Virginia Brain Injury Council (VBIC) will reflect the input of individuals living with TBI

- A project with the VBIC/Council
- Significantly amended Council Bylaws, ensuring that Council was able to be responsive to emerging needs and enhancing transparency related to Council business
- Formally embedded the new membership structure into the Council Bylaws, incorporating the requirement that at least 50% of the membership is made up of individuals living with brain injury; Recruitment and marketing of open positions is underway
- The Council membership application was revised and is now available in multiple formats designed to improve accessibility
- Outreach materials were redesigned and distributed widely

Goal 5: Service development driven by accurate data and progress measured through data-based evaluation (Yrs 4-5)

- Partnership with researchers from James Madison University (JMU)
- Implemented a contract with researchers from JMU to develop a comprehensive Needs and Resources Assessment by the end of Year 5 (August 2026)

Virginia Needs and Resources Assessment

■ Project team

- Drs. Cynthia O'Donoghue and Cara Meixner, with Andrew Davie, Karen Grazionale, Caitlyn Hewitt, and Madison McGuire

■ What is the Needs and Resources Assessment?

- Community-based **needs** and **resources** using inclusive, user-friendly tools
- Foundation for developing the next state plan
- Methodologies to boost broad-based engagement (**three-phased approach**)
- Funded through Commonwealth Neurotrauma Initiative (CNI) Trust Fund (August 2024 - July 2026)

Where Are We Now?

- Launched **survivor and caregiver surveys** in February 2025
- Designed **targeted outreach and recruitment plans** with key stakeholder groups (e.g., BIAV, Alliance providers, dLCV, VAIL, Sheltering Arms, etc.) and stakeholder outlets (e.g., Facebook groups, *Making Headway* conference)
- Engaged in **weekly progress monitoring** to evaluate response representation

Where Are We Heading?

■ Quarter 3 (through May 1, 2025)

- Continuation of phase 1 with stakeholder campaign, ongoing survey recruitment and outreach, progress monitoring

■ Quarter 4 (May 2, 2025 - July 31, 2025)

- Qualitative focus (Phase 2) with consumer involvement in listening session development, writing and securing of IRB approval, and launch of interviews and focus groups (on-site across Virginia and online)

National Workgroups (add-on)

- Using Data to Connect People to Services - 11 states
 - Virginia, Rhode Island, Nebraska, Ohio, Idaho, Iowa, California, Alabama, Alaska, Colorado, and Maryland
 - This workgroup supports state efforts in collecting and utilizing data to expand access to services for individuals living with brain injury, their families, and their support networks by developing and sharing tools and best practices
- Advisory Boards - 12 states (added 3)
 - Arkansas, Florida, Indiana, Kansas, Maine, Missouri, New Jersey, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, and Virginia
 - This workgroup supports state efforts to develop and maintain effective Advisory Boards and identify best practices for engaging individuals living with brain injury in all aspects of Board development and management

Other Collaborations:

Resource Facilitation → Capacity Building

- Systems Change: enhancing provider capacity to address community needs
- Virginia collaborated with some housing/homeless programs that expressed interest in and received training on the Online Brain Injury Support & Services Screening (OBISSS) Tool.
 - Training for approximately 20 individuals was provided by the National Association of State Head Injury Administrators (NASHIA)
- DARS hosted a retreat for the 9 Brain Injury Providers, focusing on overall capacity building and service delivery
 - The collaborative spirit enabled the group to address topics such as: telling their stories, strengthening outcomes, and expanding their footprint across the Commonwealth
- DARS worked with the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) Office of Emergency Management Services and BIAV to access the Virginia Statewide Trauma Registry to provide information and resources to 5000+ newly injured Virginians

Other Collaborations: Resource Facilitation → Capacity Building (con't)

- The Brain Injury Association of America (BIAA) reached out to DARS to help them find a Northern Virginia resident who is living with brain injury to be part of a panel presentation during their annual Conference
 - Grant staff facilitated a connection with Derek O'Neal
- DARS supported Grant Staff, 1 Council member, and 1 JMU faculty member to attend the NASHIA State of the States Conference in October 2024
- DARS supported Grant Staff to attend a webinar on Facilitating Effective Communication between Advisory Boards and States

Thank You and Questions

- For more information, please contact:

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