

Traumatic Brain Injury Services Coordinating Council (TBISCC)
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 12, 2021; 11:00 am – 12:30 pm
Meeting Conducted Via Web Ex

Topic	Discussion	Action/Next Steps/Who/When
Attendance	<p>Council Members Present: Michael Kaplen, Esq. (Chair), Brent Feuz, Clifford Hymowitz, Crystal Collins, Michael Davison, Nina Baumbach, Ed Devitt, Earl Schmidt, Maxine Smalling, Dr. Jeffrey Bazarian, Dennis Barlow, Paul Novak.</p> <p>DOH Staff: Susan Montgomery, Maribeth Gnozzio, Teri Schmidt, Thomas Rees, Anna Ko, Jessica Bower, Stephen Casscles, Esq. (Division of Legal Affairs).</p> <p>Note: due to COVID-19 restrictions, the meeting was conducted via Webex.</p>	
Welcome, Introductions & Election of New Chair	<p>M. Kaplen called the meeting to order at 11:06 am. M. Kaplen confirmed his resignation as Chair and steps were initiated to elect a new Chair. J. Bazarian was nominated by C. Hymowitz. M. Davison seconded the motion/nomination. S. Casscles confirmed there were 12 Council members present via Cisco WebEx, meeting a quorum. S. Casscles asked if there are any other nominations for Chair; hearing none. M. Kaplen motioned for the election to occur by unanimous consent. M. Davison provided the second motion. The Council voted 12-0 in favor of appointing J. Bazarian Chair of the TBISCC. J. Bazarian provided remarks regarding his goals for the Council in the months ahead and indicated his desire to have ongoing advice and counsel from M. Kaplen, S. Casscles and the Council members.</p>	<p>Attachment: April 21, 2021 letter to the Commissioner of resignation as chair to be attached to the meeting minutes</p>
Review and Approval of December 9, 2020 TBISCC Meeting Minutes	<p>M. Kaplen introduced a motion to adopt the December 9, 2020 meeting minutes. B. Feuz seconded the motion. M. Kaplen indicated the minutes were adopted.</p>	
Michael Kaplen's Letter to DOH Regarding Prioritization of Persons with Brain Injury to Obtain Covid-19 Vaccinations	<p>M. Kaplen presented his letter to prioritize people with brain injury in the vaccine program for COVID-19 and requested the letter be entered into the record of the meeting minutes. Motion made by M. Davison to adopt; all in favor 12-0. J. Bazarian also presented that vaccination for the TBI population is extremely important and noted that his experience with concussive patients presented that these individuals have experienced longer recovery periods.</p>	<p>Attachment</p>

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<p>Introduction of New Council Member</p>	<p>M. Gnozzio introduced new Council member, Dennis Barlow. D. Barlow is a representative of the State Education Department/ACCESS VR and replaces Jennifer Semonite. D. Barlow was an ACCESS-VR representative to this Council approximately 15 years ago. He is looking forward to his new participation and recognizes the Council's commitment to serving individuals/stakeholders impacted by traumatic brain injury.</p>	
<p>Member Updates</p>	<p>M. Smalling – No updates at this time. C. Hymowitz asked for updates on the Most Integrated Setting Coordinating Council (MISCC). M. Smalling responded that she is not able to provide updates on the MISCC, since the MISCC crosses over several departments and offices. M. Gnozzio stated the NYSDOH will work with OMH/Ms. Smalling to ensure that an update is provided.</p> <p>E. Schmidt – The Veterans Health Care Administration is providing veterans, spouses, and caregivers any of the three available COVID-19 vaccines free of charge.</p> <p>M. Kaplen requested that Susan Montgomery introduce herself as the new Division Director of DLTC. S. Montgomery presented her 25-year experience in health policy and is looking forward to working with the Council.</p> <p>M. Davison shared that (as a Service Coordinator), the largest barrier currently present in TBI is the lack of homecare workers to provide the services, especially in central NY. C. Hymowitz suggested that the Council should address the capacity issues/shortage. C. Hymowitz shared that he would like to promote person-centered planning specifically through training for participants to become better advocates in their own planning process. M. Gnozzio shared that there is a person-centered planning training module through Open Doors. M. Gnozzio will reach out to Andrea Juris/MFP to set up a call with Council members to talk about specific trainings that are currently in the development stages for participants on how to effectively use person-centered planning. E. Devitt suggested the creation of a certification for individuals who want to help people with brain injury, potentially a peer support system.</p>	<p>Schedule Andrea Juris/MFP to discuss person-centered planning and trainings in development.</p>
<p>Public Comment</p>	<p>Christina LeBeau (Director of Advocacy at BIANYS) shared that BIANYS partnered with the NYSDOH in the past on the HRSA grant and now wishes to partner with the NYSDOH on the ACL grant. Ms. LeBeau explained that the grant requires a state partner in order to apply. BIANYS participated in preliminary discussions with NYSDOH-OHIP regarding the grant opportunity shortly before the deadline to submit and was referred to another office within NYSDOH. BIANYS then attempted to have meetings to discuss the grant, but unfortunately they were cancelled by NYSDOH and were not rescheduled due to the limited time remaining prior to the grant deadline. The deadline to submit is May 27, 2021. The current program only applies to people who acquired their TBI before age 22 and must be Medicaid eligible. BIANYS is seeking financial assistance through this grant to provide referral and informational support to the large volume of callers to BIANYS seeking assistance. BIANYS is looking at private funding to assist people not eligible for the waiver or are over the age of 22 or have behavioral issues.</p>	<p>Attachment: BIANYS Letter to the Commissioner</p> <p>NYSDOH will provide a response re: Council letterhead</p>

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M. Kaplen asked why NYSDOH is reluctant to support the request. **C. LeBeau** responded that the NYSDOH requirements for NYSDOH financial and staffing support, combined with the imminent submission deadline, were the primary factors cited by NYSDOH in their lack of support for the request. BIANYS advised NYSDOH that they would use their own internal grant writer to prepare the grant request. **M. Kaplen** asked if there is anything the Council can do to assist. **C. LeBeau** will provide the Council with sample letters from BIANYS and other letters of support from medical professionals. These letters will be sent to the Commissioner. **M. Kaplen** requested that **C. LeBeau** read the letter written to the Commissioner. **J. Bazarian** asked if awarded, would the grant be managed by NYSDOH. **C. LeBeau** replied yes, but with very little staffing resources needed. The grant would provide counseling, find doctors, and offer care coordination to non-Medicaid individuals. Not everyone is eligible for the waiver or Medicaid. **J. Bazarian** asked what entity is the funding source for the grant. **C. LeBeau** indicated it is a federal grant. **C. LeBeau** indicated that there could ultimately be a savings to the State due to the reduction in ER visits due to the assistance BIANYS could provide. BIANYS is working to increase care coordinators (currently there are 9). This program would not compete with the TBI waiver. **C. Hymowitz** suggested the letter should go to the Commissioner with a deadline for a formal response. **M. Kaplen** made a motion to send the letter that Christina read to the Council to the Commissioner. **J. Bazarian** stated that even if the Council does not receive a response from Dr. Zucker, the letter should still be sent. **C. LeBeau** also read a letter from Albany Med written to the Commissioner recommending the grant. **M. Kaplen** presented a motion that the letter from BIANYS be sent to the Commissioner with an explanation that the grant proposal is supported by the TBISCC. **J. Bazarian** presented that the issue of letterhead for the Council has not been resolved. **C. Hymowitz** and **M. Davison** presented and seconded a motion that TBISCC letterhead should be created. **M. Kaplen** moved to request **S. Montgomery** forward the BIANYS letter to the Commissioner on behalf of the Council. **E. Schmidt** seconded the motion. Passed unanimously. **M. Gnozzio** will forward the letter to **S. Montgomery** and all Council members. **S. Casscles** stated that he will research the matter of TBISCC letterhead and provide a formal response.

M. Gnozzio will arrange a presentation from a representative regarding the statewide registry and how information is collected. Next meeting is scheduled for June 16, 2021.

C. Hymowitz inquired if NYSDOH contacted the Veterans representative in Plattsburgh as a potential Council member. **M. Gnozzio** responded yes, and that the person has since relocated out of NYS. **M. Gnozzio** encouraged Council members to recommend potential presenters and agenda items for future meetings to give NYSDOH sufficient time to arrange the agenda for the meeting and to contact presenters.

No other public comments were found in the WebEx chat box.

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Adjournment	M. Kaplen motioned to adjourn the meeting. M. Smalling seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 12:36 pm.	
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