

Brain and Spinal Cord Injury Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes
May 7, 2020
Via Webinar/Conference Call

Council Members Present:

Natalie Alden
Erick Collazo
Joanne Hoertz
Rhonda Ross
Patricia Dorrell
Kevin Mullin
Larissa Swan
Richard Zeidman
Suzanne Doswell
Jeffrey Secure
Marsha Martino

Council Members Absent:

Tina Densley
Sean Van Gerena

DOH Staff:

Leah Colston, Chief, Bureau of Emergency Medical Oversight
Kimberly Robinson, Section Administrator
Teresa George, Program and Policy and Compliance Administrator
Robert Pfister, Unit Administrator
Ed Mills, RIMS Project Manager Program
Valerie Collins, Regional Manager 1
Robert Pfister, Regional Manager 2
Rosalind Myles, Regional Manager 3
John Wanecski, Regional Manager 4
Jose Dubrocq, Regional Manager 5
Justin Stark, FSCIRC Director
Nancy LaGasse, Community Health Nurse Consultant
Rob Casavant, System Administrator

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 p.m. by Kimberly Robinson, Section Administrator, Brain and Spinal Cord Injury Program. Teresa George conducted roll call. A quorum was present.

I. Meeting Minutes for Approval

Motion to approve minutes of December 5th, 2019 approved without opposition.

II. Program Update

Welcome New Council Members

Kimberly Robinson welcomed the following new members to the council:

Tina Densley – Registered Nurse and works as the Admin. Director at HCA/ West Florida Hospital.
Dr. Rhonda Ross – Neuropsychologist with a specialty in Brain and Spinal Cord Injury.
Jeffrey Secure – TBI Survivor of 12 years and President of Village Voices self-advocacy group.

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Remaining Vacancies for Council Positions

There are currently three vacant council positions:

- SCI Survivor or Family Member
- Special Needs of Children with TBI or SCI
- Special Needs of Children with TBI or SCI

III. BSCIP Program Status

Statewide Training in Rehabilitation Information Management System

Kimberly Robinson discussed a required Statewide Refresher training that will be provided by Robert Pfister and Nancy LaGasse for each individual region for the Rehabilitation Information Management System (RIMS) via Go To Meeting. This training will aide in standardizing processes across the state.

Development of Internal Surplus Supply List

Robert Pfister is developing an internal surplus equipment list to cut cost. All regional staff will be able to view equipment available for client needs.

Regional Manager Updates

Regional Managers introduced themselves and presented an update of their region.

Region 1 – Valerie (Beth) Collins

- Covers all 33 counties across the top of Florida with 4 offices
 - Jacksonville
 - Gainesville
 - Tallahassee
 - Pensacola
- 235 Cases
 - 81 Applicants
 - 154 applicants enrolled

Ms. Hoertz inquired about the 81 applicants. Ms. Collins stated they are not receiving services until a case manager determines eligibility.

Region 2 – Robert (Beau) Pfister

- Cover 13 counties
- 193 total cases
 - 126 Traumatic brain injuries
 - 67 Spinal cord injuries
 - 5 Dual (brain & spinal cord injuries)

Mr. Pfister explained COVID challenges regarding eligibility determination, communication with vendors and holding virtual meetings.

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Ms. Dorrell inquired about the clients requesting home therapy. Mr. Pfister stated that telehealth is an option but there are limited facilities that offer this choice.

Region 3 – Rosalind Myles

- Cover 8 counties
- 139 Cases
- 130 Adult cases
 - 70 Traumatic brain injuries
 - 13 Spinal cord Injuries
 - 8 Dual (brain & spinal cord injuries)
- 9 Pediatrics
 - 8 Traumatic brain injuries
 - 1 Dual (brain & spinal cord injuries)

Mrs. Myles stated that her region faces the same issues as the other regions.

Region 4 – John Wanecski

- Cover 4 offices
 - FT. Pierce
 - FT. Myers
 - West Palm Beach
 - FT. Lauderdale
- 229 cases
- 204 Adults
- 25 Pediatrics
 - 148 Brain injuries
 - 66 Spinal cord injuries
 - 15 Dual (brain & spinal cord injury)

Mr. Wanecski spoke about the need for more pediatric providers. Region 4 staff recently attended online seminars for staff development. Region 4 also faces challenges regarding different therapies and getting supplies to client homes.

Region 5 – Jose Dubrocq

- Covers Miami-Dade office
- 235 Cases
- 219 Adults
 - 145 Brain injuries
 - 69 Spinal cord injuries
 - 15 Dual (brain & spinal cord injury)
- 16 Pediatrics
 - 1 Spinal cord injury
 - 13 Brain injuries
 - 2 Dual (brain & spinal cord injury)

Mr. Dubrocq spoke about region 5 challenges, his office closure and the use of telehealth. He has also used webinars for staff development.

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FSCIRC – Justin Stark

- Office located in Tampa

Mr. Stark explained FSCIRC is the information education component for BSCIP. The role of FSCIRC is to provide educational packets for newly injured clients, families and case managers. He is also able to provide clients with a peer mentor when needed. COVID has presented challenges and increased use of technology to reach clients.

Florida Health Charts

Ed Mills, the RIMS Administrator, is currently working with the Bureau of Community Health and Vital Statistics to share data collected in RIMS, regarding the number of brain and/or spinal cord injury patients that are in service with our program in each county. This will aid first responders throughout the state to have a more accurate idea of the number of people with brain and/or spinal cord injuries in their county and what their needs may be in the event of a disaster. The client data shared will adhere to HIPAA regulations. The data will be listed on FLHealthCharts.com. The data will include:

- Injury county
- Type of injury
- Age and year of injury
- Gender
- Race
- Ethnicity

Central Registry Portal (Update)

Ed Mills gave an update on the Central Registry Portal project. This portal will allow hospital facilities and self-referring applicants to submit a referral online. There will be two phases in the development of the portal.

- During phase one, BSCIP staff will log into the portal to receive the referral and manually enter the client information into RIMS. This phase is much like the current referral receiving process.
- Phase two will automatically add referrals to RIMS once entered in the portal.

IV. Overview of Brain and Spinal Cord Injury Program Annual Report FY18-19

Kimberly Robinson discussed the Annual Report for the fiscal year 2018-2019. The report lists data from the previous year. The report summarizes the budget and lists statistics about the program. A copy of this report can be found on the Brain and Spinal Cord Injury Program website.

V. 2020 Legislative Update

Leah Colston discussed the need for the council to revisit statutes and rules for the program. The council will need to update the charter.

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VI. Impact of COVID 19

Kimberly Robinson discussed the impact of COVID-19 on the program.

- Some clients asked for suspension of services due to social distancing.
- Region 5 currently has one infected client.
- Case Managers contact clients regularly to ensure their needs are being met.
- Some services were impacted due to COVID 19; however, facilities have offered telehealth to our clients.
- For those who could not receive their services, their therapy was put on hold so they will not have to be reassessed.
- Interviews for applicant clients were completed over the phone or through encrypted emails, fax and through the mail, causing no delay for our clients.
- Clients are given ultimate say on whether they would allow vendors into their home or not.
- Vendors who did visit clients followed CDC guidelines.
- There was little or no delay in clients receiving supplies.
- Peer mentoring has continued through the FSCIRC. Communication with clients was maintained through telephone, Go To (Video Conferencing) Meeting, and Skype.

VII. Clients Served / Types of Services

Kimberly Robinson went over the clients served by our program and the types of services provided during the third quarter of our fiscal year, January 1st through March 31st.

- The grand total of clients in applicant status in our program during this time was 871 in the adult program and 80 in pediatric program.
- The total of clients in service during this time was 731 adults and 64 pediatric.
- Closed cases and clients that were community reintegrated during this time were 122 adults and 10 pediatric.

Also discussed were the most commonly used services by our clients. This information was sent out to all council members.

VIII. Comprehensive Outreach Network

Kimberly Robinson discussed her goal of a Comprehensive Outreach Network to bring together all community resources to work together to better client services.

Kimberly notified members BIAF liquidated in February of this year and BSCIP is currently referring clients to BIAA (Brain Injury Associates of America). She asked for recommendations for resources for brain injuries from the council.

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The resources that will be involved in this are as follows:

- Centers for Independent Living (CILS) - Jane Johnson, Executive Director
- Florida Alliance for Assistive Services (FAAST)
- Florida Disabled (FDOA)
- Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

Jane Johnson, Executive Director of the Centers for Independent Living, presented information on CILS. CILS provides free services for people of all ages with disabilities in all counties in Florida. They are a great resource for case managers and clients to assist in community reintegration as they have a lot of experience in transferring clients from hospitals and nursing homes back into the community. They do not provide residential services, which is a common misconception.

VIII. Council Business

Charter for the Council

Leah Colston requested the council review the charter for a future update and vote.

Client Satisfaction Survey

Kimberly Robinson introduced the Client Satisfaction Surveys updated with the council's comments. These were sent out to the council prior to the meeting for review. Kimberly asked for comments on these updated surveys. She asked that the council send feedback to her via email and these changes would be discussed during upcoming sessions with the council.

X. Recommendations for Quarterly Program Report to Council Members

Kimberly Robinson requested recommendations for the Quarterly Program Report to council Members. Richard Zeidman asked that the Vendor Provider Resource list be included in this report. Kevin Mullin seconded this request, requesting a full list of vendors working with the program.

XI. New Business

Nominations for Chair and Vice Chair

Kimberly Robinson called for nominations for Chair and Vice Chair. Richard Zeidman nominated himself for chair and Natalie Alden for Vice Chair. Erick Collazo seconded this nomination. The nominations were approved without opposition.

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Open Discussion

Kimberly Robinson opened the floor for open discussion.

Erick Collazo asked for more information involving the liquidation of the Brain Injury Associated of Florida. Kimberly stated that the association was dissolved and that we are now referring clients to the Brain Injury Association of America.

Kevin Mullin inquired about other options for funding for the program as COVID-19 might lower funding provided from traffic tickets and fines. Richard Zeidman requested council members send other funding options to Kimberly to discuss at the next meeting.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Future Meeting Dates

Kimberly Robinson requested dates for the next quarterly meeting be sent to her email.

Closing Comments & Adjourn

Richard Zeidman thanked Kimberly Robinson for putting the meeting together. He also welcomed the new members to the council.

Richard Zeidman made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved without opposition and the meeting was adjourned at 4:22 PM.