

Maryland Traumatic Brain Injury Advisory Board 2017 Annual Report Primer

Traumatic brain injury is “an injury that disrupts the normal function of the brain caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or a penetrating head injury [or] explosive blasts (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC).” Moderate and severe traumatic brain injury can lead to a lifetime of physical, cognitive, emotional, and behavioral changes. Despite initial hospitalization and inpatient rehabilitation services, about 50% of people with moderate or severe traumatic brain injury will experience further decline in their daily lives or die within five years of their injury.

To examine traumatic brain injury, the **State Traumatic Brain Injury Advisory Board** was established in 2005 by Senate Bill 395 (Chapter 306). The Traumatic Brain Injury Advisory Board consists of 36 voting members charged with investigating the needs of citizens with TBI, identifying gaps in services to citizens with traumatic brain injuries, facilitating collaboration among Maryland agencies that provide services to individuals with traumatic brain injuries, facilitating collaboration among organizations and entities that provide services to individuals with traumatic brain injuries, and encouraging and facilitating community participation in program implementation.

State of the State in Brain Injury

- In Maryland, the overall incidence of TBI related emergency department visits increased between 2012 and 2015 while TBI related deaths and hospitalizations decreased.
- Seniors ages 65 and older had the highest rates of TBI related deaths and TBI related Hospitalizations. The highest rate of TBI related ED visits were for Marylanders aged 5-24.
- Unintentional falls are the leading cause of injury for TBI related deaths, ED visits, and hospitalizations.
- There is a significantly higher rate of TBI related deaths and hospitalization for males than females; however, the rate of TBI related ED visits is equally distributed among both males and females.
- Certain rural counties and Baltimore City are experiencing higher rates of TBI related deaths, ED visits and hospitalizations than other jurisdictions. The densely populated counties of Prince Georges and Montgomery have the lowest rates of TBI related deaths, ED visits and hospitalizations.

Services, Supports, and Gaps in Maryland

- Services and supports that are currently available to Marylanders who sustain a brain injury include trauma and emergency services, inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation, long-term services and supports (both institutional services such as nursing facility and home and community based services), special education services and educational accommodations for students, behavioral health services, case management, and active advocacy organizations.
- The gaps in Maryland largely revolve around the lack of coordination of these services and supports, limited access to case management and home and community based supports, misdiagnosis or under-identification of brain injury by educators and human service professionals, and inadequate clinical services to support individuals who experience neurobehavioral issues following a brain injury.

TBI Advisory Board Recommendations for Maryland

- Appropriately screen for and identify children and youth with brain injuries.
- Implement brain injury screening protocols for participants in Maryland’s public health and corrections systems, including behavioral health services, veterans’ initiatives, jails and prisons, and home and community based services and offer appropriate accommodations to treatment.
- Expand and improve services offered through the Brain Injury Waiver.
- Fund the State of Maryland Dedicated Brain Injury Trust Fund to support care coordination and evidence-based practices.
- In order to comply with HG § 20–108, establish and administer a central registry of individuals living with a disability as a result of a brain injury and ensure that these individuals and their families are provided information about appropriate resources and assistance.

Full report can be found at <https://bha.health.maryland.gov/Pages/mdtbiadvisoryboard.aspx>