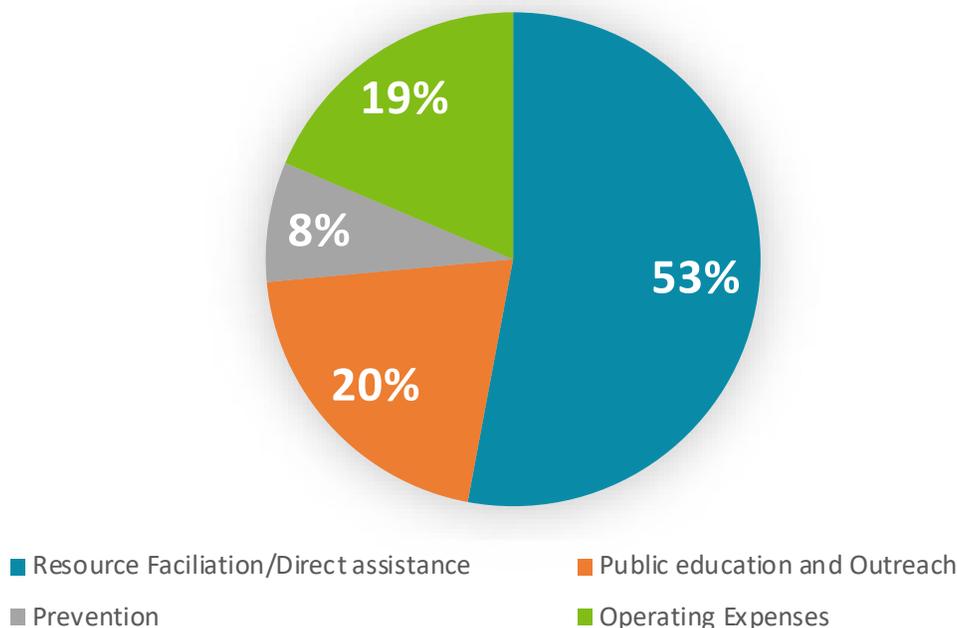


Legislative Report SFY 2019 (7/1/18 to 6/30/19)

The Utah State legislature established the Utah Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Fund in 2008. The TBI Fund educates Utahns on TBI treatment and prevention and provides assessments to determine eligibility for services. The fund also helps brain injury survivors coordinate their short term care. The TBI Fund has been successful in connecting people to the services they need through resource facilitation, a process that assists people with problem solving, links people with available resources to meet their goals and enables successful return to school, work or the community.

The fund is administered under the direction of the Utah Department of Health Executive Director, Dr. Joseph Miner, through the Violence and Injury Prevention Program. In SFY19, the TBI Fund expended the \$200,000 in SFY19 legislative appropriation from the fund. An additional \$31,000 of in-kind services were contributed, that are not reflected in the **Figure 1**.

Figure 1: Breakdown of SFY 2019 TBI Fund Expenditures



Between July 2018 and June 2019, the TBI Fund:

- Assessed more than **293** clients with **112** qualifying for TBI resource facilitation services.
- Provided one-on-one resource facilitation services for nearly **112** clients, directing them to approximately **288** resources.
- Provided ongoing services to more than **70** of the **112** participants who received resource facilitation services.

Austin's Story

Austin received resource facilitation and a neuro-psych evaluation through the TBI Fund. Due to these services he is now receiving Medicaid and SSI. The neuro-psych helped him obtain the benefits that he qualified for. He is also now receiving on-going services from DSPD that will help him with his activities of daily living. Without the Fund he and his family would not have been connected with services that help him live independently in his community. Both Austin and his family are now excited for the future, as it looks just a little brighter.

Stacie's Story

Stacie sustained her TBI by domestic violence. She was homeless when her sister found information about the TBI Fund. She was connected to a resource facilitator that helped her and her family navigate through complex systems of resources available. Because of the services she received through the TBI Fund, she is no longer homeless. "It has been a long process and lots of twists and turns, however; I am proud to let you know that through the help of the TBI fund and other state agencies working together I am no longer homeless and for the first time in a long time I am excited about the future possibilities."

TBI Fund Advisory Committee

TBI Fund Advisory Committee members must be appointed annually by the UDOH Executive Director and represent individuals who are familiar with TBI, its causes, diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation, and support services, including individuals who have sustained a TBI and family representatives. The TBI Advisory Committee met six times throughout the SFY 2019. The TBI Advisory committee reviewed the last five years and decided to update the way Resource Facilitation is provided. The committee decided to move from a one-time fee to an hourly rate and the resource facilitator will provide resource facilitation for up to two years.

TBI Fund Accomplishments

- New Request for Proposals was completed and three organizations were awarded to provide services for the next 5 years. They are the Brain Injury Alliance of Utah, Phoenix Services and Roads to Independence.
- Services were changed to provide up to two years of services with the Quality of Life after Brain Injury Assessment done every 6 months to measure the effectiveness of resource facilitation.
- 26 people received a neuro-psych evaluation to clarify the needed services that will be most beneficial.
- 80 of the 112 participants who received resource facilitation services are in need of ongoing services.
- 38 additional people received an intake interview and did not qualify for services because they did not have a 'traumatic' brain injury but an 'acquired' brain injury (e.g., as a result of West Nile virus, encephalitis, or anoxia, etc.), or no brain injury.
- MRI services have been provided at a low cost to the fund by US MRI in Salt Lake City. They provided 2 MRI's for participants referred after a neuropsychological exam.
- The Ohio State University Traumatic Brain Injury Identification assessment (OSU TBI-ID) was added to all intakes.
- Because of the efforts of the resource facilitation services offered by the TBI Fund, people were connected to over 300 resources to obtain their goals and be successful in community, work or school.

Public Education and Outreach

- Sports related Facebook ads were created and ran all year with emphasis in September through November.
- Family related Facebook ads were created and ran all year with emphasis during brain injury awareness month in March.
- Facebook ads reached 400,124 people
- KSL Television Partnership and Game Night Live produced a spot featuring Ron Zundle that ran over 500 times from the middle of November through the middle of December.
- Studio 5 interview in October had a viewership of 10,402.
- Advertising resulted in 86 calls to the Health Resource Line directing people to providers of the TBI Fund.
- Contractors attended 5 professional conferences reaching approximately 700 professionals.
- Contractors provided community training and education in rural areas.

Edgar's Story

Edgar, 24 from Hooper, suffered 2 TBI's. The first one was considered mild and received it in a fight at a party in January 2018 where he was knocked unconscious and was taken to the hospital. His second TBI was from an automobile accident in August 2018 which was severe. Edgar was in a coma for a week and a half and in the hospital for 5 months. His mother came to us seeking help for him. Edgar could not speak, walk or take care of any of his basic needs. His mother requested that Edgar receive a neuropsychological evaluation to determine what help he could receive and the best course for treatment. Edgar received the neuropsychological evaluation and with that information worked with the TBI Fund resource facilitator, and DSPD to get the therapy that he needed to recover. Since that time Edgar is now walking on his own and learning how to speak again. His mother stated that she was grateful for the help from the TBI fund to find them direction and has also helped the family to find a vendor to install a lift in his home for mobility.

Tyler's Story

Tyler is an 18 year old boy who was injured while at the trampoline park. After his injury Tyler was becoming more and more unpredictable as well as very impulsive in making some dangerous decisions. His family and Tyler felt like they were at the end of their rope when they contacted the TBI Fund. Through the Fund they have received resource facilitation services and a neuropsychological evaluation. The evaluation has helped Tyler and his family understand better his TBI and what barriers he might have due to the injury. They are on the road to finding resources the need to help Tyler and his family overcome those barriers and reaching his goals.

Professional Training

- A total of 73 training events were held during SFY18 by the TBI Fund contractors, reaching approximately 1,305 individuals.
- Phoenix Services provided one Certified Brain Injury Specialist (CBIS) training for 5 professionals.

Prevention

Because older adult falls are the leading cause of TBI hospitalizations and deaths in Utah, the TBI Advisory Committee continued to allocate funding for prevention by contracting with four local agencies to implement the Stepping On falls prevention program. The Stepping On program is an evidence based workshop that is endorsed by the CDC to help prevent older adult falls. The program has shown a 31% reduction in falls. Some of the subjects covered in the Stepping On workshops are exercise, home and community safety, vision, medication review and safe footwear. Outcomes from the Stepping On program throughout Utah indicated older adults reduced their fear of falling, increased activity, and are more comfortable in talking with their healthcare provider about falls (98%).

The program was implemented in Tooele, Central, and Utah, Local Health Departments and the Five County Association of Governments which covers Beaver, Iron, Garfield, Kane, and Washington Counties. There were two Stepping On Leader Trainings and 14 new leaders trained, 14 workshops and had a total of 155 participants

Needs and Concerns Documented by Contractors

- Resources for TBI survivors are limited outside of the Wasatch Front.
- It is difficult to staff resource facilitator positions due to the knowledge needed for this position.
- TBI survivors are overwhelmed with needs and underserved with resources.
- Insurance and Medicaid barriers include: limited benefits, high co-pays, uninsured, unaffordable; and providers who are not willing to serve individuals with TBI, due to low reimbursement levels from Medicaid.
- Risk of suicide increases among TBI survivors due to isolation and lack of support, combined with impulsivity.
- There is little awareness about TBI and the Fund among the increased number of domestic violence individuals that are seeking help.
- There continues to be a need for similar services for acquired brain injured individuals that cannot be served by the TBI Fund.
- Due to the memory loss caused by the TBI, participants need continued follow up to ensure they do not "get lost in the system".
- Some documentation of the TBI is difficult to obtain and can take a long to acquire, if at all.
- Services are sometimes not available to individuals due to financial constraints, lack of availability or severity of crisis, and age restrictions.
- Difficulty getting the word out about training provided by the providers.

Emma's Story

Emma, 50 from Ogden, suffered a severe TBI in a car accident in September 2018 where she also broke her neck. She was virtually homeless and had been "couch surfing" with people that she was acquainted with when she went looking for assistance and found the TBI Fund and was directed to a TBI Fund provider. She came hoping to find housing, obtain food stamps, general assistance and apply for Medicaid. The resource facilitator helped her fill out an application and apply for the services she needed. She received a neuropsychological evaluation that has been imperative in understanding her TBI and getting connected to the services she needs. She continues to work with the resource facilitator in applying and following up with all the resources there are for her that she might be eligible for.