

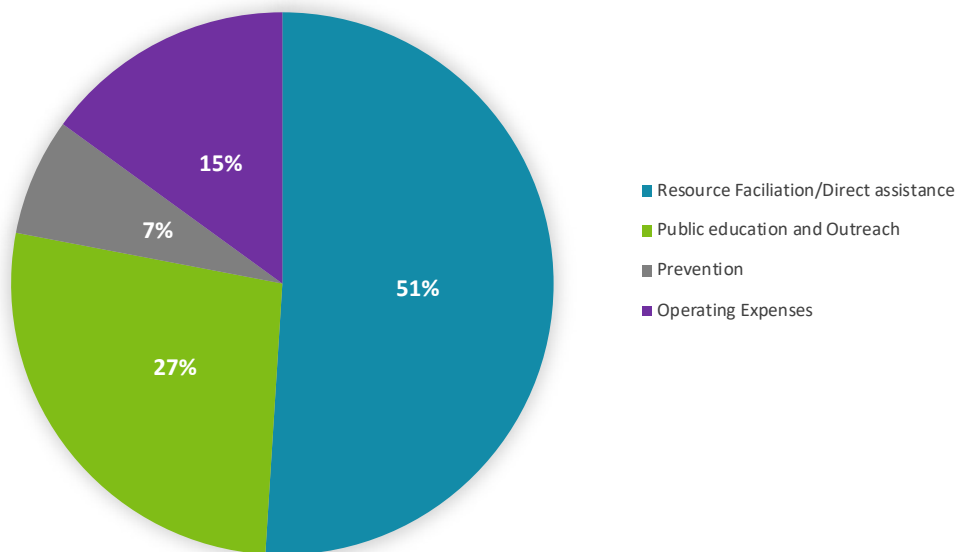
Legislative Report

SFY2020 Report (7/1/19 to 6/30/20)

The Utah State Legislature established the Utah TBI Fund in 2008. The TBI Fund provides individuals who are living with a brain injury and their family, caregivers, and support team with connecting people to the services they need through resource facilitation. Resource facilitation is 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 TBI Fund also provides education and awareness to the community, professionals and others about the treatment and prevention of TBI.

The fund is administered under the direction of the Utah Department of Health Executive Director, Dr Joseph Miner, through VIPP. While the last half of the SFY 2020 was difficult due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The TBI fund continued to provide services via telehealth. The contractors of the fund did see about a 50% decline in intakes and services between March 2020 and June 2020 due to the pandemic. The chart below shows the breakdown in how the funds were spent. The fund maintained the 50% direct assistance required.

Figure 1: Breakdown of SFY 2019 TBI Fund Expenditures



Bonnie's Story

Bonnie is 32-years-old. She suffers from short term memory loss and epilepsy brought on by a severe TBI due to a car accident. Bonnie was on the verge of losing her housing and social security benefits and had already lost her SNAP benefits because she was unable to turn in needed documentation on time due challenges of her TBI. She was so focused on trying to work, maintain her benefits and manage her time that she was

unable to spend time with her friends. She expressed she was often extremely sad, depressed, and overwhelmed by her life. Bonnie's main goal is to have someone teach her to maintain her benefits and learn time management so she had time to focus on work and family. Because of the TBI Fund, Bonnie has received a neuropsych evaluation that she says has helped her understand how her TBI is impacting her life. Bonnie has been maintaining her housing, social security, Medicaid, and SNAP benefits and is using a planner to write down appointments. Bonnie often tells me, "If it wasn't for the help you gave me, my brain would explode." Bonnie says she now has a better outlook on her future because of our help.

Jennifer's Story

Jennifer lived in Ogden in an intermediate care facility. She had sustained multiple TBI's in her lifetime ranging from mild to severe. She was being involuntarily released from the care facility and had no resources. Because of the TBI Fund the provider was able to find her a place to live and get information needed to obtain long term services through the ABI Waiver program. She is now living in her own home with in home supports. She would have been homeless with no supports had it not been for the work done by the provider through the TBI Fund.

TBI Fund Accomplishments

- Thanks to the TBI Fund, 172 people were provided with a free intake assessment that includes an assessment the OSU-TBI-ID, a self-assessment that looks for a lifetime history of TBI.
- The contractors provided resource facilitation services to 66 individuals with TBI and their families connecting them to more than 300 resources in the community.
- The resource facilitators provided more than 850 hours of resource facilitation services.
- Out of the 66 participants how received resource facilitation services 50 are in need of ongoing services.
- An additional 15 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., the result of West Nile virus, encephalitis, or anorexia, etc.), or none at all.
- The TBI Fund provided 30 people with a neuro psychological exam that helped identify barriers the person might be having and help connect to resources.

Public Education and Outreach

- Sports-related Facebook ads were paused in March due to COVID-19 and resumed in May-June.
- KSL Sportsbeat aired several TV spots reported by Jeremiah Jensen.
- KSL Schedule included 103 aired, Added Value Spots and Cozi TV ran 200 spots. These are sports-related ads to increase prevention efforts and increase awareness.
- Game Night Live featured the UDOH logo and aired during high school football season.
- KSL conducted two interviews with Executive Director Glenn Lanham with a viewership of 11,122.
- The Health Resource Line received 34 calls as a result of the advertising efforts requesting information about the providers of the TBI Fund.
- Contractors attended eight professional conferences reaching approximately 1,650 professionals.
- Contractors provided community training and education in rural areas.

Professional Training

- A total of 16 training events were held by the TBI Fund contractors, reaching approximately 371 individuals.
- Phoenix Services provided one Certified Brain Injury Specialist (CBIS) trainings for three professionals.
- Two Brain Injury Fundamentals trainings were provided by the Brain Injury Association of America, resulting in 16 individuals getting their certification.

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 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 three local health departments (Tooele, Central, and Utah), 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

COVID-19 Impact

Due to COVID-19, the providers were not able to provide community trainings resulting in a decrease in training and outreach. COVID-19 greatly impacted the TBI population, due to the fears and isolation created by the pandemic. Many of those who are supported by the TBI Fund were not reaching out for help in the beginning. They were focused on staying isolated and staying healthy. The contractors were also unable to provide much outreach due to the pandemic. Contractors used virtual means to provide services and provided education on COVID-19 to the participants. Some providers were able to utilize the Utah Department of Human Services Telehealth platform to provide services. Providers also started providing virtual trainings to the community and professionals during the month of June.

Needs and Concerns Documented by Contractors

- 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.
- 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 who are seeking help.
- There continues to be a need for similar services for acquired brain injured individuals who cannot be served by the TBI Fund.
- There is a need to reach more hospital/rehabilitation discharge workers to provide them with information on the TBI Fund for the client and family to access once they are released home.
- More resources are needed to make things more “virtual” so more people can benefit from the TBI Fund.

Nicolas's Story

Nicolas is a 17-year old who sustained his TBI by getting hit in the head by a wind turbine in 2019. The accident caused a severe TBI resulting in short term memory loss, cognitive decline, and vision loss in his right eye. Other than physical therapy Nicolas didn't have much follow up care. Nicolas and his family didn't understand how a TBI would impact their lives. Nicolas' mother was struggling to help him understand the TBI as she had

very little knowledge of it herself. When Nicolas started working with the TBI Fund, he was very quiet and had no understanding of his TBI. During the intake he identified that he wanted to enroll in school, make friends, and learn more about his TBI so he was able to advocate for himself better. Since starting with the TBI Fund, Nicolas has received a neuropsych evaluation that has helped him and his family understand how the TBI affects his life. He has been enrolled in high school and he has also been enrolled in an employment transition service program. His teachers say he not only participates, he has become the most active and well-mannered student in the class. Nicolas and his mother say they are extremely grateful for the services provided by the TBI Fund. Nicolas has opened up and has come so far in just a short period of time. He is happy with his progress and is looking forward to becoming more independent in the future.