

# The Arizona Governor's Council on Spinal and Head Injuries

## Initiatives

The Arizona Governor's Council on Spinal and Head Injuries has advisory, program development and program management duties in its oversight of the Spinal and Head Injuries Trust Fund (A.R.S. §41-3201 through 3203). The Trust Fund is designated for client services, public and professional education, and prevention programs (primary prevention, prevention of secondary conditions and data collection) pertaining to individuals with traumatic brain or spinal cord injuries. Definitions of these traumatic injuries can be found in A.R.S. §41-3201.

The Council recognized early that the annual revenues from the Trust Fund would not meet all the identified needs of our constituents. However, revenues could be maximized through strategic partnerships and blended funding approaches. This has been the philosophy for Council activities.

The Council uses five primary strategies for systems development:

1. Create a vision for the project that starts with the whole person, includes the family and community and shifts the paradigm from a service-based model to a quality-of-life model.
2. Identify champions and partners by recognizing shared values, and cultivate initiatives that align with those shared values.
3. Evaluate the readiness of potential partners by assessing: 1. their core capacity (mission, knowledge, experience, and structure) and 2. their level of commitment (presence of a key champion, available staff time and resources, presence of people with TBI in the system, recognition of the need for improvement in service provision).
4. Craft a collaborative action plan to build capacity based on the level of readiness of each partner. Establish braided and/or blended responsibilities for direct services, staff, training, materials, evaluation and technical assistance.
5. Create strategic linkages among partners to build synergy, support momentum and sustainability and promote broader access to resources. Regularly evaluate the impact of service partnerships on the quality of life of the person and family.

### Creative Funding Strategies

- Braided funding: Funding from more than one source that pays for different components necessary for service delivery.
- Blended Funding: Funding from more than one source that is pooled to support staff and services.
- Venture Funding: Funding to support initial development costs. Venture funding may be an element of a braided funding plan.

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The following is a summary of current Council initiatives:

### **Client Services**

- *Blended funding partnership:* Department of Economic Security, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Independent Living Rehabilitation Services (ILRS)

The ILRS program provides rehabilitation counseling and related services to consumers with disabilities to achieve individual goals for increased independence in the community. DES/Rehabilitation Services Administration funds ILRS rehabilitation counselor positions and client services. The Council provides additional client service funds for individuals with traumatic brain (TBI) and/or spinal cord injuries (SCI), ongoing training on TBI and SCI case management issues for ILRS counselors and performs an annual program evaluation of these services. In addition, the Council facilitates a roundtable discussion of stakeholders to address the issues and concerns identified in the evaluation.

- *Blended funding partnership:* Department of Economic Security Rehabilitation Services Administration, Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

The VR program provides vocational rehabilitation counseling and related services to people with disabilities to help them achieve employment. DES/Rehabilitation Services Administration funds the general VR counselor positions. In addition, the Council funds three Traumatic Brain Injury Specialist counselor positions and DES/RSA funds one full-time and three part-time TBI Specialist positions. The Council provides additional client service funds for people with TBI and/or SCI and training to TBI Specialist counselors and to the general VR counselors. The Council also performs an annual program evaluation of these services and facilitates a roundtable discussion of stakeholders to address the issues and concerns identified in the evaluation. A Memorandum of Understanding between the Council and the Rehabilitation Services Administration documents the structure of this program.

*Note:* These two programs were identified as being the most reliable and available programs in Arizona according to the results of a series of consumer focus groups conducted in 2001 by Full Circle Consulting (an evaluation firm).

- *Blended funding partnership:* ADHS Office for Children with Special Health Care Needs (OCSHCN)

This project, which began as a federally-funded demonstration project and is now supported by the Maternal and Child Health Block Grant, provides service coordination for children with traumatic brain injuries and their families. The Council provides ongoing professional training in TBI case management to the service coordinators and offers consumer information

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materials in English and Spanish. In addition, the Council has assisted in the development of a comprehensive evaluation methodology for the pilot program.

Along with supporting these direct services, the Council and OCSHCN have teamed up with the BHHS Legacy Foundation, an Arizona charitable organization in the health care field, and St. Joseph's Medical Center/Barrow Neurological Institute in a community development initiative in Maricopa County. The Council hosts community meetings to gather input from consumers and service providers and to foster the development of improved referral protocols and information sharing. This project is modeled on the successful Community Continuum of Care pilot project in Flagstaff and Tucson under the Council's 1997-2001 federal demonstration grant.

*Note:* This project won the 2000 Arizona Governor's Spirit of Excellence Award, and has been recognized by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration as a national model of successful systems development.

➤ *Community-based partnership: Arizona Spinal Cord Injury Association*

The Council funds the Association to provide a wide variety of client services, such as hospital visitations, support groups and information and referral. The Association, in keeping with the collaborative model the Council supports, has also built alliances with such partners as Banner/Samaritan Medical Center, St. Joseph's Medical Center, Phoenix Children's Hospital, Arizona Paralyzed Veterans of America, the Phoenix Suns and the Banner Wheelchair Suns.

➤ *Community-based partnership: Brain Injury Association of Arizona*

The Council has a program development contract with this Association to expand its statewide information and referral system. The Brain Injury Association of Arizona has participated in Council activities and has contributed to the development of education and information materials.

### ***Professional and Public Education***

In addition to educating VR, ILRS and OCSHCN counselors and service coordinators, the Council provides the following educational programs:

➤ *Empowerment for Consumers with Spinal Cord Injuries* is a 12-module series developed and presented in collaboration with the Arizona Spinal Cord Injury Association. St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center, a co-sponsor of the series, provides classroom space and encourages physician and therapist participation.

➤ *The Education and Rehabilitation of Children with Traumatic Brain Injuries*, an 8-module course for educators and related professionals, is offered in

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collaboration with local school districts, the Arizona Department of Education and the Brain Injury Association of Arizona.

- *Case Management Issues: Pediatric and Teenage Traumatic Brain Injury* is a two-day seminar provided regionally to Medicaid Long Term Care (Arizona Long Term Care System) case managers. In addition to medical and psycho-social topics, the program includes cross-agency information sharing. Participants include the Office for Children with Special Health Care Needs, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Arizona Department of Education/Exceptional Student Services, Arizona Center for Disability Law and the Brain Injury Association of Arizona.
- *Introduction to Traumatic Brain Injury Issues*, a one-day seminar provided regionally for DES Division of Developmental Disabilities support coordinators, offers basic medical, behavioral and rehabilitative topics, along with cross-agency discussion (see ALTCS training).
- *Heads Up! Consumer Rights and Resources* is a half-day consumer conference offered by the Arizona Center for Disability Law with support from the Council.
- The Council also provides technical assistance to the Arizona Department of Education/Exceptional Student Services in a multi-year federal grant project that focused on developing a statewide cadre of TBI specialists who are available on-call to schools.

## **Prevention Programs**

### *Primary Injury Prevention*

- *Drive Safe Campaign*, a one-hour school assembly program aimed at reducing traumatic injuries associated with teenage motor vehicle crashes, is in partnership with the Banner Wheelchair Suns and funded by the Council.
- The Council supports *child passenger safety seat training* in partnership with Desert Samaritan Hospital in Phoenix and Apache County Department of Health Services in St. Johns.
- The Council is represented on the statewide Injury Prevention and Control Advisory Council convened by the Arizona Department of Health Services.

### *Prevention of Secondary Conditions*

- *Wheelchair seating clinics*, a program in partnership with the Banner Wheelchair Suns and funded by the Council, educates consumers in effective

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wheelchair use. Improper wheelchair seating is a common cause of secondary conditions such as pressure sores (decubitus), early-onset arthritis and soft-tissue injury.

- Other risk reduction/health promotion topics are incorporated into the *Empowerment of Consumers with SCI* course listed above.

### *Data Collection:*

- The Council provides technical assistance and funding for printing and distribution of reports generated by the Arizona Department of Health Services, Bureau of Public Health Statistics-TBI Surveillance System (primary funding is by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).

### **Other Activities**

#### *Systems Development:*

- In addition to the service programs described above, the Council pursues an active agenda for systems development, hosting cross-agency meetings to explore collaborative solutions to complex consumer needs.

#### *Legislative Activities:*

- The Council testifies before the Legislature regarding matters specifically relating to the Spinal and Head Injuries Trust Fund. The Council can provide information at the request of the Governor, the legislature and the public.