Brain Injury Advisory Council (BIAC) Meeting

Wednesday December 20, 2023

The BIAC Meeting was held at Nusenda Training Center, 4100 Pan American Fwy NE,

Albuquerque, NM 87107 in a hybrid fashion utilizing Zoom.

10:07 AM- The meeting was called to order by Adrienne Bratcher, Council Chairman.

**Roll call of members:**

Adrienne Bratcher Present

Joanne Azulay Present

Michelle Hawley Absent

Nandei McAnally Present

Ralph Frakes Absent

Alfred Benalli Absent

Sandra Turner Absent

Valerie Klopp Absent

Jason Kerkmans Present

Dominic Moreno Absent

Melanie Buenviaje Present

Victoria Herrera Present

**Staff present:** Lisa McNiven, GCD Deputy Director

Angelia Velarde-Logsdon, BIAC Coordinator

The quorum was not met. The agenda and minutes from the previous meeting were available, but they were not voted on.

**2023 Legislation Update-**

**SM 30 by Lisa McNiven**

Medical providers, state representatives, and persons with brain injuries met at least 10 times between July and November to complete the Senate Memorial 30 paper. Copies of the paper are available today for members and guests. The paper covered needs of people with brain injuries in New Mexico which is summarized at the end with 11 key findings and recommendations. The paper also included personal stories from people living with brain injuries. Lisa McNiven, Emily Stern, Dr. Austin Davis, and Dr. Mark Pedrotty presented to the legislatures on November 28th. Lisa McNiven reported that the paper was well received. A copy of the paper and a letter was sent to state personnel directors and the Governor by Senator Gerald Ortiz y Pino. Margot Feldvebel is going to spearhead the bill including brain injury surveillance, registry, and ECHO. The surveillance and registry will be operated by the Injury and Prevention unit of the department of health. The dashboard will include non-identifying data and will be near real-time. The registry will be voluntary to any person with a brain injury in New Mexico, and it includes identifying information. ECHO will provide the educational component for health care providers, so they can connect with persons with brain injuries who are in the registry. Currently, there are very few providers who are experts in brain injury in New Mexico. Dr. Austin Davis is the only outpatient brain injury physician, and he wants everyone to know. He sees patients at UNM and Lovelace. Referrals come from a physician and the BIRC. Senator Antionette Sedillo-Lopez is sponsoring this bill.

**BISF by Ed Gellis, Lisa McNiven and HSD**

After the presentation to the legislatures, there was discussion of Ed Gellis with possible HSD support taking the lead on the bill for the Brain Injury Service Fund. Melanie Buenviaje and Crystal Cantu discussed a strong concern for conflict of interest because Ed Gellis is a fiscal agent contract provider. They further stated that the Human Services Department provides bill analysis, and it is done behind the scenes. Adreinne Bratcher and Jason Kermans will take the lead on this bill. There is a little amount of funding in reserves, but HSD is having an internal discussion about other places to look for funding. Currently, $5 from traffic violations is funding the BISF, but this will discontinue on July 1st.

**Brain Injury Waiver by HSD**

HSD will take over stakeholder engagement with constituents by townhalls. Melanie Buenviaje and Victoria Herrera will draft the waiver application and work with CMS to facilitate public hearings through all regions. Any waiver funded must be approved by CMS and meet their requirements including abuse, neglect, exploitation, health safety, level of care, financial eligibility, etc. There is concern that some people with brain injuries would not meet the requirements of a Medicaid waiver. When there is a waiver, Ed Gellis can put in a bid. Victoria Herrea stated that this waiver may all come together without a bill. The department heads at HSD are aware of the need for a waiver.

**BIAC Update-**

**Introduction of BIAC Coordinator by Lisa McNiven and Angelia Velarde-Logsdon**

Lisa McNiven introduced Angelia Velarde-Logsdon who is the new BIAC Coordinator at GCD. Angelia Velarde-Logsdon is traveling to Hobbs, Roswell, and Fort Sumner in early February to educate youth about brain injuries, injury prevention, and distribute and fit bicycle helmets. Obtaining the American with Disabilities Act certification and the Brain Injury Specialist certification are some goals she has this coming year. She also plans to research brain injuries in youth from tackle football and research resources available for people with Alzheimer’s and dementia to provide awareness across the state. She has already met with the New Mexico Safe Routes to Schools and has discussed how they can work together educating and preventing brain injuries amongst our youth. She is working with Margot Feldvebel as part of the planning committee for a Brain Injury Awareness Conference. Lisa McNiven explained that moving forward, Angelia Velarde-Logsdon will lead the BIAC meeting. Any questions relating to Brain Injury and BIAC should be addressed with Angelia Velarde-Logsdon.

**BIAC Website by Lisa McNiven**

Angelia Velarde-Logsdon oversees the website. She is having training within the next 2 weeks. The BIAC bylaws, strategic plan, meeting minutes, agenda, and Zoom link will be on the website. We also would like to include the names and titles of the members of the BIAC along with a short bio.

**BIAC Strategic Plan and Bylaws by Lisa McNiven**

It is time to update the strategic plan and bylaws. In the past, we used BIAC members through subcommittees to review and update the strategic plan and bylaws. The agenda for the next BIAC meeting will include these items. Adrienne Bratcher agrees that subcommittees are best for these items.

**BIAC Membership by Lisa McNiven**

There are vacancies on the Brain Injury Advisory Council. Lisa McNiven plans to go to the Governor’s Board and Commissions office to obtain a new roster, and to check if there are any new appointments. Nancy McAnally informed the group that she knows people who are interested in serving on the BIAC. Lisa McNiven stated that anyone who is interested should submit a letter of interest.

**BIAC Member Updates and Comments**

Jason Kermans was part of the putting together of SM 30. He thanked Lisa McNiven for her hard work and dedication in making this paper happen.

Nancy McAnally stated that she wants to be more involved, and she would like to be part of the upcoming subcommittees. Nancy McNally is a brain injury survivor and struggled to find health care providers to meet her needs. It took her years to develop the support system she has now, and she wants to try and make it easier for other brain injury survivors. She requested and was provided with 10 copies of SM 30 to share with her providers.

**Public Comment**

The phone number and email on the legal ad may be incorrect. Lisa McNiven is looking into this.

11:42 AM- The meeting was adjourned by Adrienne Bratcher, Council Chairman.