



THE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

INTERNAL MEMORANDUM

March 15, 2012

To: Health Subcommittee Members

From: Majority Staff

Re: Hearing on Traumatic Brain Injury

On Monday, March 19, 2012, the Subcommittee on Health will hold a hearing entitled “A Review of Efforts to Prevent and Treat Traumatic Brain Injury.” The hearing will take place at 3:00 p.m. in room 2123 Rayburn House Office Building. At the hearing, the Subcommittee will examine the effect of Federal, State, and private efforts to prevent and effectively treat traumatic brain injury and resulting disabilities.

I. Witnesses

Bonnie Strickland, Ph.D.
Director
Division of Services for Children with Special Health Care Needs
Health Resources and Services Administration
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

William Ditto, MSW
Director of the New Jersey TBI Division
New Jersey Department of Health

Flaura Winston, MD, Ph.D.
Professor of Pediatrics, University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine
Scientific Director, Center for Injury Research and Prevention, Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia

Mark J. Ashley, ScD
President
Centre for Neuro Skills

II. Background on Traumatic Brain Injury

Traumatic brain injury (TBI) occurs when an external force injures the brain. According to data collected by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), approximately 1.7

million people, both children and adults, sustain a traumatic brain injury annually.¹ Of these, 52,000 die, 275,000 are hospitalized, and 1.3 million are treated and released from an emergency room.² Falls are the leading cause of TBI. Rates are highest for children under the age of 4 and adults aged 75 and older. TBI in veterans who have sustained blast injuries and sports-related concussions are increasingly being recognized. Motor vehicle accidents are the leading cause of TBI-related deaths.³

III. Federal Legislation

The federal effort to address TBI was established by the Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Act of 1996 that encouraged research and innovative programs to identify and increase awareness of TBI. The TBI Act Amendments of 2000 amended the TBI Act by extending the authorization to include the implementation of a national traumatic brain injury education and awareness campaign. The Traumatic Brain Injury Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-206) reauthorized the program and included provisions to: (1) determine the incidence and prevalence of traumatic brain injury and related disability; (2) ensure the uniformity of reporting under each such system or registry; (3) link individuals with traumatic brain injury to services and supports; and, (4) link such individuals with academic institutions to conduct applied research. The legislation authorizes the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to:

- Conduct surveillance and prevention of TBI at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and,
- Make grants to States for programs to help TBI patients and their families at the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).

The TBI Act of 2008 also authorized CDC and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to conduct a study to examine the information gathered, assess appropriate interventions, and develop practice guidelines. Results of this study will not be available until November 2012.

IV. Impact of Federal Programs

TBI is a problem that generally involves a multitude of services administered by a variety of providers. Outcomes are improved when there is a coordination of that care especially for those facing a lifelong disability.⁴ This point was underscored in a Government Accountability Office (GAO) report released in January 2012 entitled *Coordinating Authority Needed for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury Activities*. It cites the importance of coordination of services in the care of TBI patients at the Department of Defense.⁵ HHS spent

¹ <http://www.cdc.gov/TraumaticBrainInjury/>

² http://www.cdc.gov/traumaticbraininjury/pdf/BlueBook_factsheet-a.pdf

³ *Traumatic Brain Injury in the United States: Emergency Department Visits, Hospitalizations, and Deaths, 2002-2006*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

⁴ <http://www.paradigmcorp.com/blog/?p=230>

⁵ <http://gao.gov/assets/590/587919.pdf>

about \$400 million in Fiscal Year 2011 on programs to understand, prevent, and reduce the incidence of TBI.

V. Conclusion

The hearing will provide Members with an opportunity to examine the impact of current HHS efforts on Traumatic Brain Injury. Should you have any questions regarding the hearing, please contact Brenda Destro or Ryan Long at (202) 225-2927.