

Project Title: *Closing the Gap: Expanding Virginia's Brain Injury Services Infrastructure*
Project Period: April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2013

PROBLEM: Virginia's network of brain injury services does not offer a coordinated system of treatment and care for all Virginians with brain injury. Two groups in particular, juvenile offenders and people with low socioeconomic resources, are in critical need of services.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

- ***TARGETED GROUP #1: Juveniles with brain injury committed to the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ).*** Improve the ability of DJJ to identify and meet the needs of juveniles with traumatic brain injury (TBI) within their service system through screening, data collection and analysis, development of education / training materials, and dissemination of study findings and recommendations for action.
- ***TARGETED GROUP #2: Virginians with traumatic brain injury and their families who have low socioeconomic resources (LSER).*** Enhance relationships among state agencies and organizations to enable them to address critical service needs, expand ability to collect and analyze data on their needs, develop educational opportunities and provide educational information to increase their knowledge and skills, and develop and disseminate resource materials on TBI to nontraditional partners serving economically disadvantaged populations.
- ***TARGETED AREA: Infrastructure Expansion.*** Improve efficiency / effectiveness of the advisory board and strengthen the advocacy role of family members, conduct comprehensive Needs and Resources Assessment, increase knowledge and skills of professionals, and conduct outreach to at risk populations, including veterans and those with mental health comorbidities.

METHODOLOGY: Grant activities will be carried out by: establishing and refining statewide data reporting, collection, and analysis methods; developing and strengthening capacity-building interagency partnerships; conducting extensive education and outreach activities; and increasing participation of culturally diverse and low socioeconomic populations and family members/caregivers in project planning, advisory, education, and evaluation activities.

COORDINATION: Project activities will be led by the Project Director and Grant Manager, at the Lead Agency (DRS). The Brain Injury Association of Virginia and Virginia Commonwealth University will be integral partners in conducting grant activities. The Virginia Brain Injury Council (VBIC) will be the grant's advisory group and receive quarterly reports; Nancy Bullock, Director, Children with Special Health Care Needs Program, will chair the advisory committee.

EVALUATION: The evaluation will include a process evaluation (focusing on the extent to which the project is implemented as planned, and challenges or issues that may affect either continuation of specific project activities or anticipated outcomes) and an outcome evaluation (focusing on the extent to which the project is achieving its intended goals and anticipated impacts on the targeted populations. The process will be carried out under the leadership of Dr. Barbara Burkett, DRS Lead Analyst for Research and Evaluation. Data for the process evaluation will be obtained from a variety of sources, including existing databases, project administrative records sources, surveys developed for the evaluation, structured interviews, and participant/user satisfaction assessments.