

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

THE COUNCIL OF STATE ADMINISTRATORS OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

AND

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE HEAD INJURY ADMINISTRATORS

I. MISSION AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this memorandum of understanding is to improve outcomes for individuals with traumatic brain injury (TBI) who receive vocational rehabilitation services.

The Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) serves as an advisory body to the Rehabilitation Services Administration in the U.S. Department of Education on policy, regulations and the administration of programs affecting persons with disabilities; provides a forum for collective deliberation of State Vocational Rehabilitation agencies on all issues affecting the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to persons with disability; and informs the public as to the effect of disability on the lives of persons with disabilities.

The National Association of State Head Injury Administrators (NASHIA) is the first and only voluntary membership organization representing 170 state agency employees and individuals concerned with traumatic brain injury programs and policy at the state level. The mission of NASHIA is to assist state government in promoting partnerships and building systems to meet the needs of individuals with brain injury and their families.

CSAVR and NASHIA enter into this memorandum of understanding to facilitate access to existing traumatic brain injury (TBI) information within and across states by fostering and maintaining a collaborative relationship in achieving the goals and objectives set forth in this document.

II. STATEMENT OF NEED

A traumatic brain injury (TBI) occurs every twenty-one seconds in the United States. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that at least 5.3 million Americans live with a permanent disability as a result of a traumatic brain injury. TBI can cause physical impairments. More often, however, the consequences of the brain injury include problems with cognition, emotional functioning, and behavior in connection with independence, interpersonal relationships, school, and work.

With increasing numbers of individuals surviving TBI due to more effective emergency and health care, families and individuals with TBI often look to state government and/or

local agencies for the ongoing resources and rehabilitation services needed. What this means for those agencies is an increasing number of individuals with TBI and their families who are seeking programs, services, and supports for a range of needs that vary and change over time for each individual.

Data from several recently published studies indicates that individuals with TBI access a variety of services from many agencies. Yet services and supports are fragmented because there is limited information on programs offered in states, inadequate coordination and linkages across agencies in states, and inadequate dissemination of innovations nationwide. Consequently, individuals with TBI and their families are inadequately and/or inappropriately served. This undermines vocational rehabilitation efforts and results in fewer numbers of individuals who successfully return to work and school.

III. TERMS OF MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This memorandum of understanding establishes an understanding between CSAVR and NASHIA to share information and coordinate activities designed to carry out and support the goals of this memorandum of understanding.

This memorandum of understanding establishes a TASK FORCE made up of individuals representing CSAVR and NASHIA. The TASK FORCE will convene at least two times per federal fiscal year after implementation. The functions of the TASK FORCE will be to :

1. Develop and monitor specific goals and objectives
2. Develop and monitor a unified and coordinated action plan.
3. Review implementation of the memorandum of understanding and make such changes and additions to the memorandum of understanding as deemed necessary. The memorandum of understanding will be reviewed annually.
4. Amendments to the memorandum of understanding will be recommended by the TASK FORCE for prior approval by each organization through their internal procedures.

There shall be a liaison from both CSAVR and NASHIA to facilitate their efforts to advance and improve outcomes for individuals with traumatic brain injury who receive vocational rehabilitation services. These liaisons will be the point of contact for each party and will convene TASK FORCE meetings as outlined in this memorandum of understanding.

The liaison for CSAVR shall be a member of the CSAVR Committee on Direct Client Services.

The liaison for NASHIA shall be a member of the NASHIA/CSAVR Committee with a designated alternate.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL 1. CSAVR and NASHIA will seek to improve access to existing TBI information among vocational rehabilitation staff.

- **OBJECTIVE 1:** CSAVR will assist in dissemination of information to increase the understanding of traumatic brain injury.
- **OBJECTIVE 2:** As funding and programming permit, a NASHIA representative will attend, exhibit, and/or present at a CSAVR meeting. As funding and programming permit, a CSAVR representative will attend, exhibit, and/or present at a NASHIA meeting.

GOAL 2. CSAVR and NASHIA will maintain ongoing dialogue to promote promising practices.

- **OBJECTIVE 1:** CSAVR will share its promising practices, experience and expertise with NASHIA regarding the employing of persons with traumatic brain injury.

GOAL 3. CSAVR and NASHIA will seek to identify opportunities where collaboration can result in improved services to persons with traumatic brain injury.

IV. EFFECTIVE DATE/DURATION/AMENDMENTS

This memorandum of understanding shall become effective upon the date of final signature of the undersigned parties and shall remain in effect for one year. This memorandum of understanding may be terminated at any time upon thirty (30) days advanced written notice by one party to the other, and may be amended by the written memorandum of understanding of both parties or their designees. In the unlikely event a conflict should arise, any disputes will be resolved by the President of CSAVR and the President of NASHIA.

_____	_____
CSAVR, President	Date
_____	_____
NASHIA, President	Date

*** The National Association of State Head Injury Administrators is able to create these deliverable products as a result of a Cooperative Agreement with Health Resource Services Administration (HRSA)/Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB).**