



**TBI SPP**  
Traumatic Brain Injury  
State Partnership Program

# Grantee Profile 2018-2021: Pennsylvania

The designated lead agency is the **Community Systems Development and Outreach Division within Pennsylvania's Department of Health, Bureau of Family Health**—which administers the Pennsylvania Head Injury Program. Individuals who are Medicaid-eligible may seek assistance through the Community HealthChoices HCBS Waiver, which offers a home and community-based program developed for individuals who experience a medically determinable diagnosis of TBI.

## Main Grant Aim: Maximize the health, independence and overall well-being of individuals with TBI in Pennsylvania

### Additional Aims

- Increase access to resources and services for individuals with TBI and their families across the state through NeuroResource Facilitation
- Increase awareness among families and professionals with a focus on the older adult and juvenile justice communities
- Increase the knowledge of TBI, with a focus on TBI screening, to professionals in health and human services across Pennsylvania

### Accomplishments/Outcomes

- Established and implemented the NeuroResource Facilitation Program
- Developed Older Adult and TBI education, training, and technical assistance program
- Expanded Justice Involved Youth and TBI education, training, and technical assistance program
- Conducted a Tele-Rehab demonstration study
- Established and implemented the Ambassador Program
- Developed Return to Learn TBI Workforce competencies
- Developed Criminal and Juvenile Justice TBI Workforce competencies
- Developed and disseminated a Criminal and Juvenile Justice Best Practices Guide
- Presented at several state and national conferences
- Delivered several state and national webinars

#### Pennsylvania Lead Agency Contact

Nicole L. Adams, Program Manager  
Department of Health  
Phone: 717-772-2763  
Email: [nicadams@pa.gov](mailto:nicadams@pa.gov)



#### Other Contact

Erika Pae, Public Health Program Administrator  
Department of Health  
Phone: 717-772-2763  
Email: [epae@pa.gov](mailto:epae@pa.gov)

### Legislative & Other Policy Accomplishments

In 2020, House Bill 1838 and House Bill 1459 passed. House Bill 1838 increases the funds to the Head Injury Program by doubling the fines that make up Emergency Medical Services Operating Fund. House Bill 1459 designates \$250,000 of those funds for a new program that would help first responders who have post-traumatic stress disorder or TBI.

# Advisory Council



The Traumatic Brain Injury Advisory Board was created by the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health in August 2001 as a requirement of the federal TBI state grant. The board, composed of 20 voting members and 17 non-voting members, reports to the Health Secretary and focuses on advocacy, collaboration, education, funding decisions, information & referral and planning. The board, which meets quarterly, produced 2019 and 2020 annual reports and a tele-rehab demonstration study.



Pennsylvania has access to data through a volunteer reporting system and through the emergency medical systems administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Health, Bureau of Emergency Medical Services, which publishes a statewide data report annually.



The Pennsylvania Trauma Systems Foundation oversees the trauma registry. The registry collects data on seriously injured patients and provides data reporting and analysis; it is a complex database of the demographics, injuries, care, and outcomes of trauma patients.

# Service Delivery

Individuals with TBI age 21+ may be eligible for services administered by the Department of Health, Head Injury Program or the Medicaid Home and Community-based Services Waiver program, known as Community HealthChoices. The Pennsylvania Head Injury Program was created in 1988 by the Emergency Medical Services Act of 1985, which made Pennsylvania the first state to enact trust fund legislation to pay for rehabilitation services to help eligible individuals with a TBI live independently in their homes and communities. Community HealthChoices is a new waiver for individuals over age 21 with a disability who previously received services through the Independence, COMMCARE for individuals with TBI, or Aging Waivers. These individuals select or are automatically enrolled in one of three managed care organizations that have contracts with the state.

Under contract from the Department of Health and with partnership from the Department of Education, the Brain Injury Association of Pennsylvania developed a Child and Adolescent Brain Injury School Re-entry Program called BrainSTEPS (Strategies, Teaching Educators, Parent and Students).

## Revenue for TBI-Specific Programs/Services

Fiscal Year	BI Waiver Allocation	Trust Fund Allocation
2018	UK	\$4,500,000
2019	UK	\$4,300,000
2020	966 Slot Capacity	\$4,100,000

## Promising Practices

- The NeuroResource Facilitation Program utilizes person-centered planning
- BrainSTEPS provides safe Return to Learn programming
- All PA Department of Health programs are working to become trauma-informed by addressing the social determinants of health and promoting health equity in the populations served by it programs

