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Michigan Brain Injury Act

Approximately 1.7 million people sustain a TBI

It is estimated Michigan had 240,000 survivors of TBI, excluding returning service members

Approximately 511,000 TBIs occur among children ages 0 to 14 years

Falls result in the greatest number of TBI-related hospitalizations

Motor vehicle-traffic is the leading cause of TBI-related death

Issue

Current programs and services for people with traumatic brain injury (TBI) and their families are not available to all persons who sustain a brain injury. Individuals whose TBI is not covered by auto no-fault insurance do not receive appropriate care. Most health care insurers do not cover cognitive rehabilitation, which is fundamental to effective brain injury treatment. Brain injury and brain injury rehabilitation are relatively new terms in law and, through the passage of the federal Traumatic Brain Injury Act of 1996, states were tasked and funded to investigate needed services for persons with a brain injury.

Background

All brain injuries are considered to be Acquired Brain Injuries (ABI), which is an injury to the brain that has occurred after birth. The most common incidence of Acquired Brain Injury is that of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), which is insult to the brain caused by an external physical force such as in a car crash, an assault, or sports concussion. Traumatic brain injury is both a disease causative and a disease accelerant and can cause a wide range of functional changes affecting thinking, memory, sensation, emotions, language, vision, hearing, taste, behavior, balance and motor skills. It can also cause epilepsy, increase risk for conditions such as Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease and other brain disorders. The impact of TBI on the individual and families can be devastating.

Our Position

Michigan must address the disparity of available services through a comprehensive statewide plan to address the needs of ALL individuals with brain injuries. The Michigan Department of Community Health's Services and Prevention Council was established as an advisory council to the director of the Department of Community Health, and will be formally recognized by this legislation.

Additionally, this Act would require The Council, in collaboration with the department to add definitions of brain injury terms to state law; develop a comprehensive statewide information and referral network for individuals with brain injuries; collect data on the incidence of brain injuries in the state; and make recommendations to address the needs of individuals with brain injuries, including the use of public-private partnerships.