

Improving Brain Injury Systems: Stories from an NCAPSS Learning Collaborative

Summary of a webinar from October 21, 2021

Introduction

This webinar is about the NCAPPS Brain Injury Learning Collaborative. The speakers on this webinar took part in the Learning Collaborative. Members from the state teams share their stories using a storyboard.

From the Teams

The Alaska team called their process **Scaling Mt. TABI**. They focused on three areas:

1. Access to peer support
2. Developing a Peer Support and Mentor Program
3. Skills for Vocational Rehabilitation staff

Michele said, “It was great that we were able to speak with other states. And learn from them.”

The West Virginia team called their story a **Road Trip**. They chose to work on:

- Self-advocacy and systems change
- Identifying needs for person-centered planning
- Finding best practices for person-centered planning

They tried out new person-centered tools with a small group.

Gina says, “We must have a person with lived experience at the table and involved at all levels in order for any true and meaningful change and to occur.”

The Utah team used a **Hot Air Balloon Flight** theme to describe their story. They focused on:

- Sharing about Charting the LifeCourse (CtLC) tools
- Choosing a few Charting the LifeCourse tools to test with a small group
- Training on person-centered planning
- Working with the Utah Brain Injury Council

Rolf says they learned that person-centered planning is about working collaboratively.

At the end of the webinar, Rodney led a panel discussion. They talked about how important it is to include people with brain injury, and really listen to them.

The speakers on this webinar were:



Barb Recknagel is the Traumatic Brain Injury Waiver (TBIW) Manager employed by Kepro in 2012. Her responsibilities included initial and ongoing development and implementation of the TBIW program to assist the West Virginian Department of Health and Human Services. Previously, she worked in the Child Welfare field for over twenty-five years. She holds a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree and is a Licensed Graduate Social Worker (LGSW) and a Certified Brain Injury Specialist (CBIS).



Gina Desmond is a Senior Advocate with Disability Rights of WV. She has been with DRWV since July 2011. Gina currently works in the following advocacy systems: accessibility; housing rights; access to home and community-based services; access to assistive technology; etc. She also monitors state psychiatric hospital; jails/prisons; and juvenile facilities.



Rodney Smith is a U.S. Army veteran, father, grandfather, and TBI survivor and advocate. He sustained brain injury when a pickup truck failed to see him and crossed the road in front of his motorcycle. Rodney got involved with the Brain Injury program in West Virginia with the hope that he could help people with TBI, and their families have better lives and avoid the frustrations he went through trying to find right help after his accident.



Rolf M. Halbfell manages the Acquired Brain Injury and Physical Disabilities 1915 c Medicaid Home and Community Based Service Waivers. He is currently employed as a Program Administrator with the State of Utah, Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD). Mr. Halbfell develops strategies to help waiver participants with brain injury develop a greater potential in gaining back their independence and increase their confidence.



Carrie Bambrough is the Quality Management Administrator at the Utah Department of Human Services, Office of Quality and Design supporting contracted providers to ensure quality delivery of services. Prior to this position, Carrie spent 20 years as a direct support professional and Executive Director of an organization that supports people with brain injuries to live independently in their communities. She is an active member of the Utah Brain Injury Council and is a Certified Brain Injury Specialist and Trainer (CBIST).



NCAPPS

National Center on Advancing
Person-Centered Practices and Systems



Danielle Reed is Director of Community Services at the UAA Center for Human Development. She serves as the lead on the Alaska TBI State Partnership grant and also oversees the Disability Abuse Response Team and Friendships and Dating programs at CHD. She has a Master's degree in biomedical engineering and a Master's in business administration. She lives in Palmer, Alaska with her family and two huskies and loves to hike and ski at Hatcher Pass.



Michele Coston is a TBI Resource Navigator at Access Alaska INC. She currently serves on the board of the Housing and Homeless Coalition, and with the Suicide Postvention Team as well as collaborates with the HUD/VASH homeless veterans' workers. As a daughter of a stroke survivor, she is passionate about her work in peer support. As a result of her own experience, she provides support to those that experience TBI with a person-centered approach.



Krystal Blair is the South Central Independent Living Manager with Access Alaska, Inc. Krystal leads a team of advocates providing all aspects of independent living, including information and referral services, Peer Support, Independent living skills training, individual and Systems advocacy as well as transition services with individuals who experience a disability. A big believer in self-advocacy and independent living, Krystal supports Access Alaska's mission of encouraging and promoting the total integration of people who experience a disability and senior Alaskans to live independently in the community of their choice.