

Brain Injury Advisory Committee Report

Presented to the Iowa Health & Human Services (HHS) Council

Date: August 20, 2025

Committee Meeting Summary

The Brain Injury Advisory Committee convened on July 31, 2025, to review current activities of the Iowa HHS Brain Injury Program. Next steps for advancing planning efforts were discussed. Committee members also had the opportunity to share updates during the meeting.

Brain Injury Needs Assessment Activities

The Committee reviewed initial findings from the statewide brain injury needs assessment, which included a series of listening sessions held in June 2025. These sessions engaged 93 participants across six in-person events held in various regions of the state, as well as three virtual sessions conducted via Microsoft Teams.

A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis was used to guide facilitated discussions, resulting in the identification of several key themes. A summary of these themes is included in Attachment A.

In addition to the listening sessions, a survey is currently in the field to gather additional input from individuals with brain injury, family members and unpaid caregivers and professionals and service providers supporting individuals with brain injury.

Available incidence and prevalence data, as well as Medicaid Brain Injury Waiver data, will be analyzed as a part of the brain injury needs assessment process.

2026–2030 Brain Injury State Plan Development

The Committee is preparing to hold regular working meetings throughout Fall 2025 to support the development of the 2026–2030 Iowa Brain Injury State Plan. The goal is to have a draft plan completed by December 2025 for review and feedback.

Advisory Committee Membership Recruitment

An application process has been developed to recruit new members for the 2026 Brain Injury Advisory Committee. This outreach will seek to ensure representation from:

- ▶ Individuals with lived experience
- ▶ Brain injury service providers
- ▶ Other stakeholders with relevant expertise or interest

The call for applications will begin in September 2025, with applications accepted through early November. A list of recommended appointees will be submitted to the HHS Council for review and approval at the November 2025 meeting.

Attachment A

Brain Injury in Iowa:

2025 Listening Session SWOT Analysis Results

Background & Method

In June 2025, staff from the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services' (Iowa HHS') Brain Injury Program conducted six in person and three virtual listening sessions to gather input from community members across Iowa about life after brain injury. Over 90 individuals living with brain injury, family members, service providers and other advocates participated in the listening sessions.

Through a facilitated SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis, this report provides a high-level overview of the key themes that emerged.

Summary of Findings

Strengths <i>(What is working well?)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Resource facilitation ▪ Support networks ▪ Specialty services ▪ Hospital and rehabilitation services ▪ Education and training ▪ Growing public and provider awareness ▪ Innovative care models 	Weaknesses <i>(What is not working well?)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Waitlists and HCBS waiver access ▪ Managed care case management ▪ Ease of navigating services ▪ Medical knowledge gaps ▪ Housing and transportation ▪ Insurance challenges ▪ lack of caregiver support ▪ Legal and transitional gaps
Opportunities <i>(What could be improved, added or changed?)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public education campaigns ▪ Provider training ▪ Support services expansion ▪ Simplified communication ▪ Policy changes ▪ Non-technology access options ▪ Caregiver and peer support ▪ Employment and reentry planning 	Threats <i>(What are potential barriers to progress?)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Medicaid cuts & policy changes ▪ Work requirements ▪ Stigma and hidden nature of brain injury ▪ Technology reliant systems ▪ Loss of services ▪ Provider shortages ▪ Complexity of benefits systems

Next Steps

Utilizing this and other available Iowa data, members of the Brain Injury Advisory Committee will meet over the course of the next several months to develop the 2026-2030 *Iowa State Plan for Brain Injury*.

For information about this report, email brain.injury@hhs.iowa.gov.