

Session 1: State Plan Background & Brain Injury Data

A presentation to the
Iowa Brain Injury Advisory Committee
in preparation of the next
State Plan on Brain Injuries.

October 20, 2025

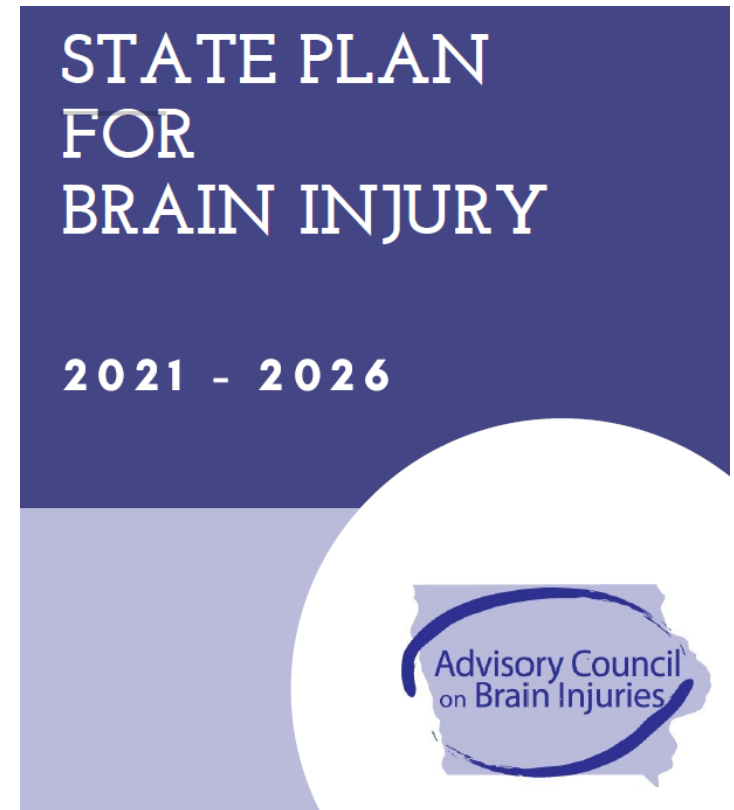


Brain Injury Advisory Committee Mission

To help Iowans by **suggesting system changes** that can **stop brain injuries** from happening and **make things better** for those who already have one.

Current State Plan

- ▶ Includes four priority areas
 - Individual & Family Access
 - Service System Enhancements
 - Prevention
 - Awareness & Education
- ▶ Required by TBI Grant
- ▶ Used by the Advisory Committee, the Brain Injury Program, partners, decision makers and others to guide their work
- ▶ Available at
<https://tinyurl.com/iowaBIplan>



Iowa Brain Injury Data

Source: Iowa HHS

Incidence of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

In 2023, there were more than 8,586 TBI cases in Iowa
This included:

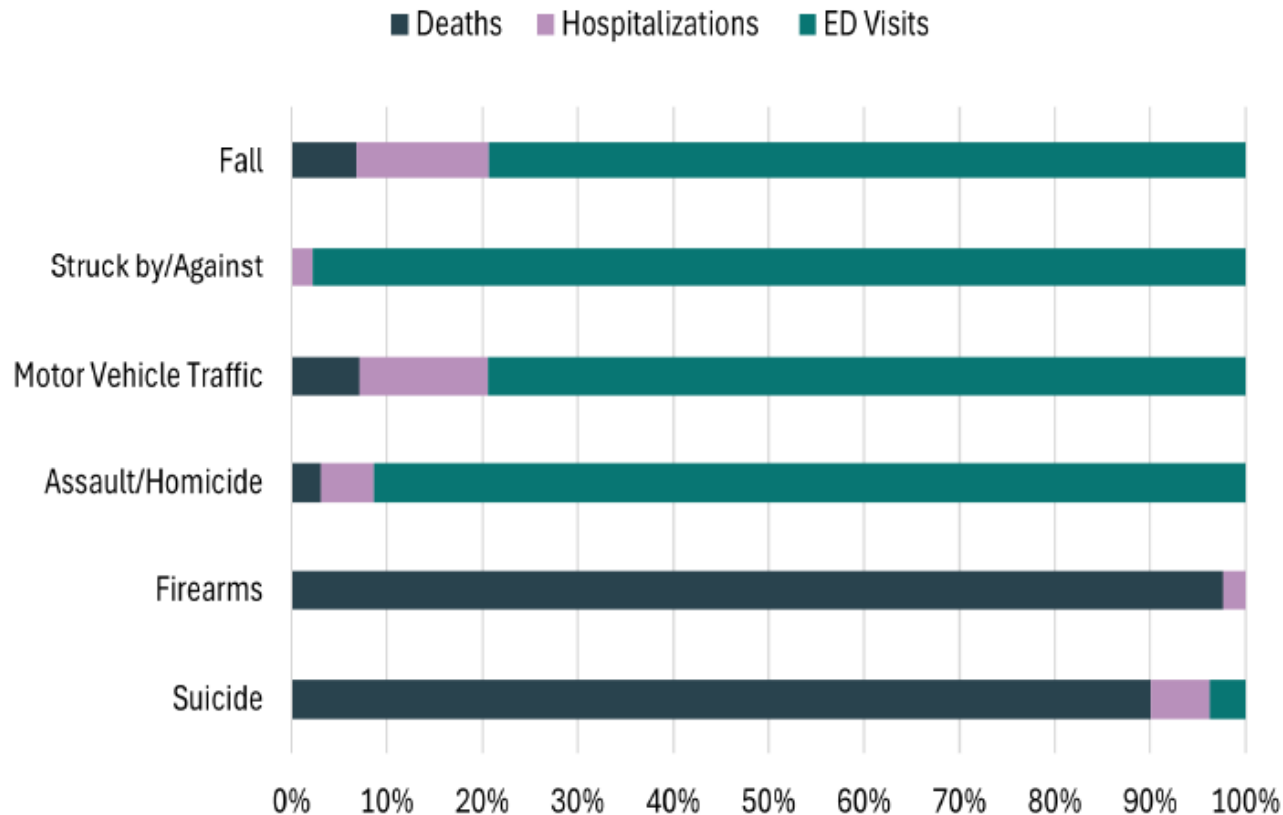
- 697 deaths (18.8 per 100,000 population)
- 6,821 emergency department visits (211.0 per 100,000 population)
- 1,068 hospitalizations (28.9 per 100,000 population)

This does not include:

- Non-traumatic brain injuries, such as brain injury caused by stroke, infection, cancer, etc.
- Injuries that were seen in primary care, urgent care or other settings
- Injuries that weren't treated

Incidence of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Leading Causes

Percentage of annual TBI-related deaths, hospitalization and emergency department (ED) visits by cause in 2023.



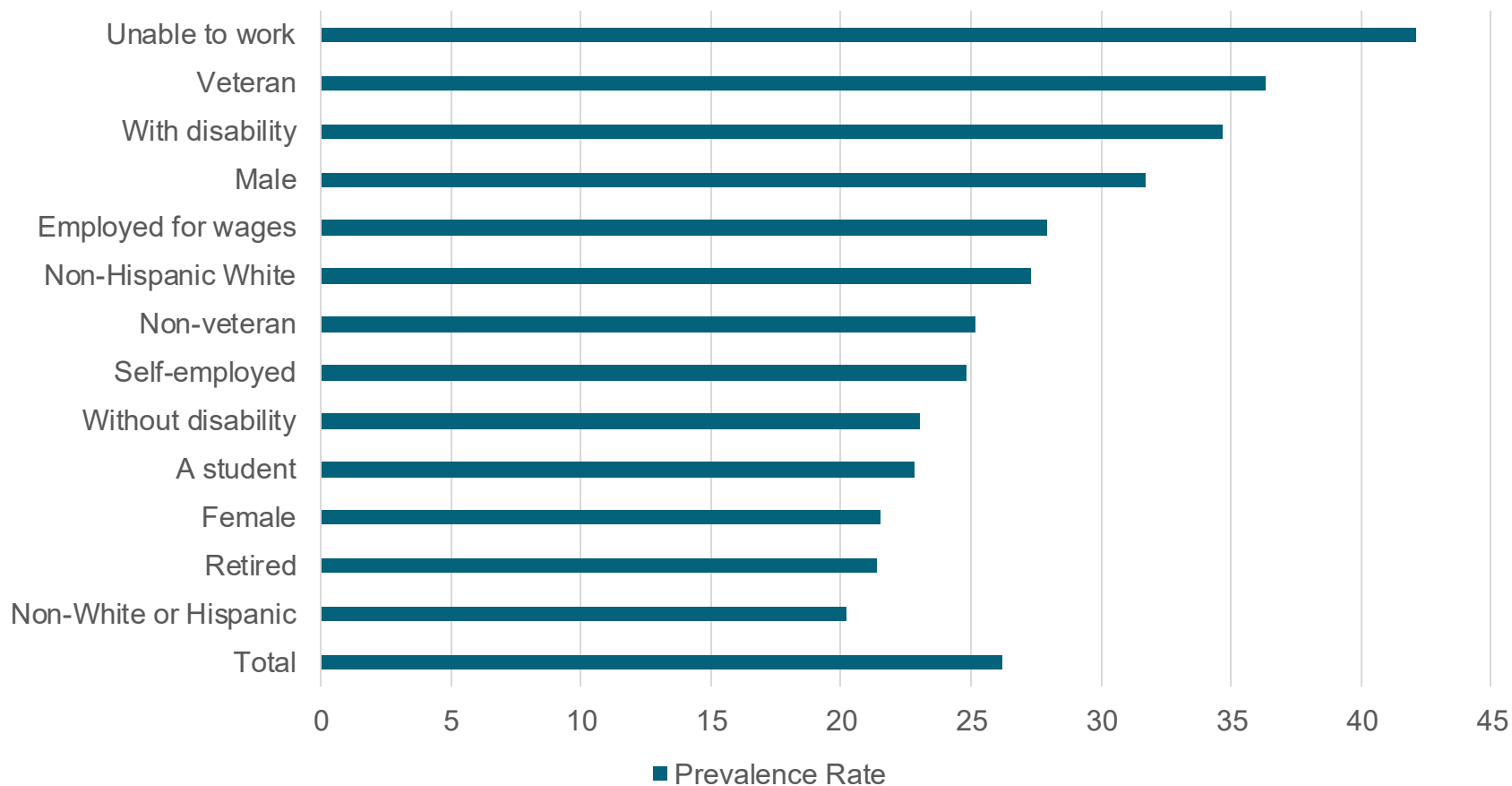
Incidence of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Fatalities

Leading causes of TBI-related Deaths in Iowa, 2023.

Cause	Count	Rate/100K people
Falls	326	10
Firearm	249	8
Suicide	237	7
Motor vehicle	75	2
Homicide	19	1

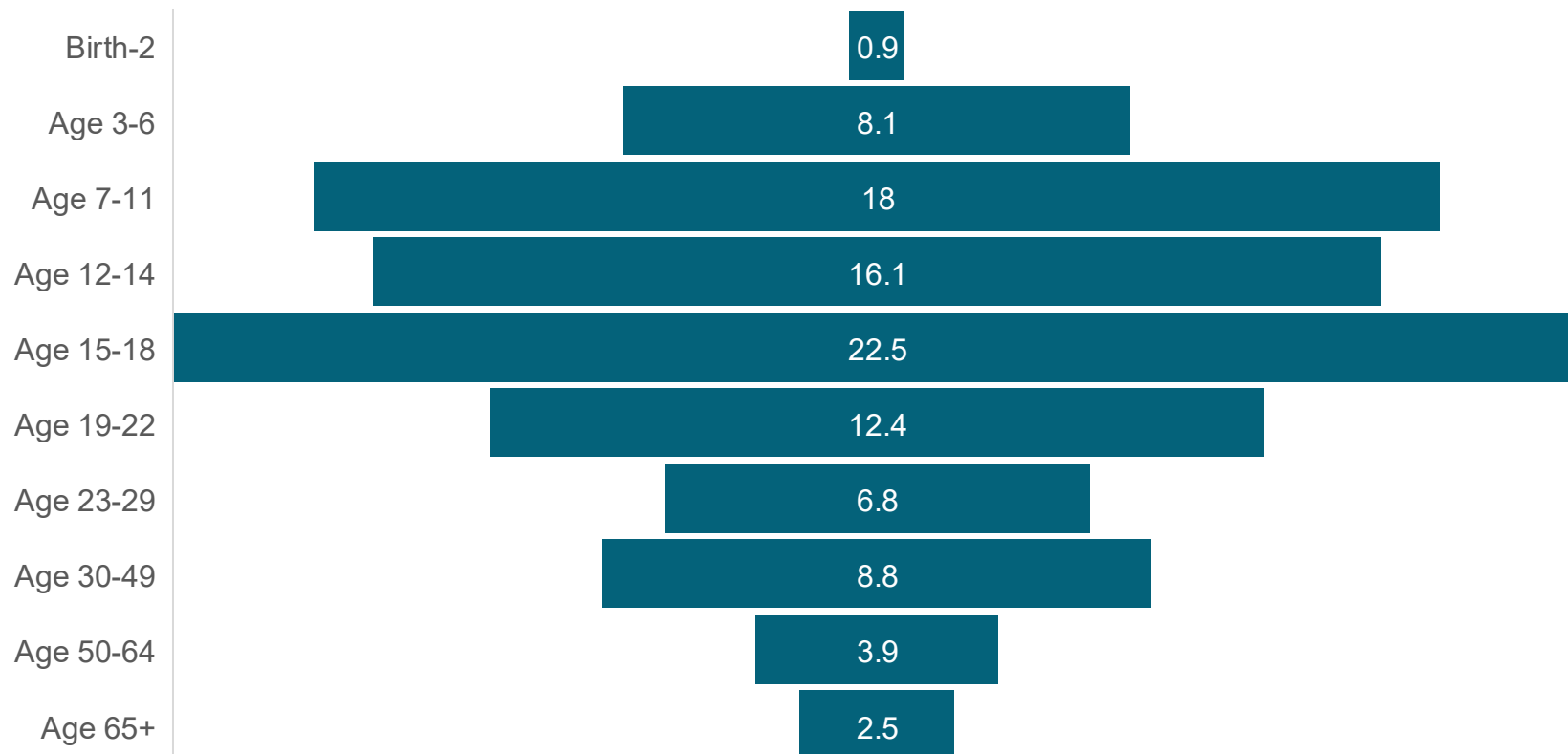
Prevalence of Severe Brain Injury

Select Demographics



Age at First Severe Injury

Distribution of Age at First Severe Brain Injury



Severe brain injury (SBI) among Age Groups

▶ 18-24

- 15-28% sustained SBI from ages 7-22
- 28% sustained SBI from ages 15-18

▶ 65-74

- 20% sustained SBI from ages 15-18
- 8% sustained SBI from age 65+

▶ 75+

- 8% sustained SBI from age 3-6
- 14% sustained SBI from ages 15-18
- 20% sustained SBI from age 65+

Mental Health & Brain Injury

Frequent
mental
distress

- 1 in 5 Iowans with SBI vs. 1 in 10 without SBI

Depressive
disorder

- 1 in 4 Iowans with SBI vs. 1 in 6 without SBI

Insights

Early to late adolescence is a critical time for development

Binge drinking, among males across lifespan, highest among Iowans who had SBI in adolescence

Older adults living with SBI

- 8% from early childhood
- Up to 20% from age 65+

Iowa Community Input

Source: Brain injury listening sessions & online surveys

2025 Listening Session Feedback

Summary of strengths and weaknesses



- Resource facilitation
- Support networks
- Specialty services; Hospital and rehabilitation services
- Education and training
- Growing awareness



- Wait lists and HCBS waiver services access
- Managed care case management
- Navigating services
- Medical knowledge gaps
- Housing and transportation

2025 Listening Session Feedback

Summary of opportunities and threats



- Public education/awareness campaigns
- Provider training
- Support services expansion
- Simplified communication
- Policy changes
- Non-technology access options
- Caregiver and peer support
- Employment and reentry planning.



- Medicaid cuts & policy changes
- Work requirements
- Stigma and hidden nature of brain injury
- Technology reliant systems
- Loss of services
- Provider shortages
- Complexity of benefits system

Survey Results – Most Useful

Survivors

- ▶ Rehabilitation services
- ▶ Counseling/mental health support
- ▶ Gov. assistance
- ▶ Information about brain injury
- ▶ Support groups

Care Partners

- ▶ Rehabilitation services
- ▶ Financial assistance
- ▶ Gov. assistance
- ▶ Information about brain injury
- ▶ Home and community-based services
- ▶ Counseling/mental health support

Paid Professionals

- ▶ Rehabilitation services
- ▶ Government assistance
- ▶ Financial assistance
- ▶ Counseling/mental health support
- ▶ Employment support and job training

Survey Results – Most lacking

Survivors

- ▶ Financial assistance
- ▶ Gov. assistance
- ▶ Counseling/mental health support
- ▶ Support and advocacy for accessing services
- ▶ Employment support and job training

Care Partners

- ▶ Social or recreational opportunities
- ▶ Home and community-based services
- ▶ Counseling/mental health support
- ▶ Financial assistance
- ▶ Gov. assistance
- ▶ Affordable and accessible housing

Paid Professionals

- ▶ Government assistance
- ▶ Counseling/mental health support
- ▶ Affordable and accessible housing
- ▶ Social or recreational opportunities
- ▶ Home and community-based services
- ▶ Financial assistance

Survey Results – Barriers/challenges

Survivors

- ▶ Lack of direct care providers with brain injury knowledge
- ▶ Insurance coverage issues
- ▶ Long wait to access brain injury waiver
- ▶ Cost of services
- ▶ Difficulty with paperwork/processes to get services

Care Partners

- ▶ Lack of brain injury specialists
- ▶ Lack of direct care providers with brain injury knowledge
- ▶ Lack of primary care providers who have experience with brain injury
- ▶ Long wait times to access services
- ▶ Long wait to access brain injury waiver

Paid Professionals

- ▶ Long wait to access brain injury waiver
- ▶ Insurance coverage issues
- ▶ Lack of mental health or substance use treatment providers with BI knowledge
- ▶ Lack of transportation

Survey Results – what could improve lives

Survivors

- ▶ Increased funding for brain injury services
- ▶ Increased availability of brain injury specialty services
- ▶ More services and/or financial support closer to time of injury
- ▶ More support for caregivers and families

Care Partners

- ▶ More support for caregivers and families
- ▶ Increased funding for brain injury services, like the waiver
- ▶ Increase availability of brain injury specialty services
- ▶ More options for community-based support services
- ▶ Access to time-limited financial support

Paid Professionals

- ▶ Increased funding for brain injury services, like the waiver
- ▶ More options for community-based support services
- ▶ Access to time-limited financial support needs related to brain injury
- ▶ Increase availability of brain injury specialty services

Survey Results – Survivors

(Open-ended feedback themes)

- ▶ Access to Care & Services
- ▶ Continuity of Support
- ▶ System Navigation & Coordination
- ▶ Justice & Understanding
- ▶ Mental Health & Family Support

Survey Results – Care partners

(Open-ended feedback themes)

- ▶ Access to care & services
 - Income limits are a barrier
 - Waitlists are long
 - Support is more than what coverage will provide
- ▶ Healthcare system challenges
- ▶ System instability & bureaucracy
- ▶ Housing & transportation
 - More quality/appropriate options needed for individuals with acquired disability such as brain injury
- ▶ Care partner strain
- ▶ Education & public awareness

Survey Results – Paid professionals

(Open-ended feedback themes)

- ▶ Financial and Insurance Support
 - Stable funding and insurance coverage is needed
- ▶ Long-term and Community-based Care
 - Lack of options for ages 30-50
 - More flexibility for day programs
- ▶ Personalized, Human-centered Support
 - Face-to-face and hands on supports
 - More funding for assistive technology, home modifications and caregiver pay
- ▶ Prevention & Public Safety
 - Injuries from e-scooters, ATVs and riders not wearing helmets = need for stronger laws and public education



Questions

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Health and
Human Services