IOWA | Health and Human Services

Brain Injury Advisory Committee Report

Presented to the Iowa Health & Human Services (HHS) Council
Prepared by: Maggie Ferguson, Disability & Injury Prevention Project Director
Date: November 16, 2026

Advisory Committee Membership Appointments

ACTION ITEM: A list of recommended appointees is included in Attachment A for HHS Council review and approval.

An application process was developed to capture interest from potential new members for the 2027 Brain Injury Advisory Committee. Applications were sought specifically from:

- Individuals with lived experience, including survivors of brain injury and their care partners
- Brain injury service providers
- Other individuals with relevant expertise or interest

Applications have been open since the beginning of the year, with promotion through partners starting in September 2026.

Six applications were received, in addition to interest from existing committee members for continued participation. New applicants included three individuals who are brain injury survivors, three brain injury professionals/service providers, and one individual who identified as a person with lived experience and as a brain injury professional. No family/unpaid care partners applications were received.

Summary of Committee Meetings

The Brain Injury Advisory Committee met on October 8, 2026.

Committee members reviewed the Implementation Plan for the State Plan on Brain Injuries (Attachment B) developed in partnership with committee work groups. Where possible, Implementation Plan activities align with planned activities to be completed under a newly awarded Traumatic Brain Injury State Partnership Program (TBI SPP) grant from the Administration for Community Living.

In 2027, the Committee will meet on the second Thursday of January, April, July and October to discuss and monitor progress made to the State Plan. Work groups aligned with the state plan

priority areas will meet monthly to work on action items in the implementation plan. All meetings of the committee and the work groups are held via Zoom. As needed, work groups will bring in community partners, subject matter experts and others with an interest in the activities for their participation.

The next meeting of the Brain Injury Advisory Committee is scheduled for January 14, 2027.

*Questions and comments regarding this report may be emailed to **Brain.Injury@hhs.iowa.gov**.*

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ATTACHMENT A.

2027 Brain Injury Advisory Committee

Recommendations for membership appointment

Guided by 42 USC 300d-52: State grants for projects regarding traumatic brain injury (TBI) and Administration for Community Living funding requirements (HHS-2026-ACL-AOD-TBSG-0070), the following recommendations for community member representatives on the advisory committee are presented to the Iowa HHS Council for consideration.

Recommendations reflect brain injury experience and align with requirements for majority of individuals who have lived experience and the remaining members representing family and other interested parties.

VOTING MEMBERS

2026 Member	Designation	City	2027 Recommendations	Designation	City
Tia Clark	Lived Experience 1	Ankeny	Tia Clark*	Lived Experience 1	Ankeny
Andrea Gomez	Family 1	Shenandoah	Andrea Gomez*	Family	Shenandoah
Eric Lietsch	Lived Experience 2	Burlington	Melissa Bickford	Lived Experience 2	West Branch
Brenda Easter	Family 2	Winterset	Brenda Easter*	Family	Winterset
Laura Jess	Family 3	De Witt	open	Family	
Jim Torner	Researcher	Iowa City	Jim Torner*	Researcher	Iowa City
Jordan True	Lived Experience 3	Des Moines	Ernie Geiger	Lived Experience 3	Iowa City
Brandie Richmann	Family 4	Iowa City	Brandie Richmann*	Family	Iowa City
Kelly Wise	Lived Experience 4	Cedar Rapids	Sue Rhomberg	Lived Experience 4	Johnston
Shamika Carmen	Provider 1	Dubuque	Shamika Carmen*	Provider 1	Dubuque
Sandra Corn	Lived Experience 5	Clive	Open	Lived Experience 5	
Open	Lived Experience 6		Open	Lived Experience 6	
Open	Lived Experience 7		Open	Lived Experience 7	

*Reappointment recommendation

Ongoing recruitment will take place through the remainder of 2026 and into the first quarter of 2027 to fill open seats. The Brain Injury Association of Iowa and other partners have assisted with promoting the committee application link. Annually, information about the Advisory Committee is shared at the annual Iowa Brain Injury Conference.

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ATTACHMENT B.

Iowa State Plan for Brain Injury: 2026-2029

Implementation Plan

Originally finalized on 10/08/2026

This is a living document. Updates may be made as approved by the Brain Injury Advisory Committee.

The State Plan can be downloaded at [State Plan for Brain Injury 2026-2029, 2026 - Iowa Publications Online]

Focus Area: Service Delivery

Strategy 1: Conduct an environmental scan to assess the delivery of brain injury services in Iowa				
Tactic 1.1 Identify gaps in care and barriers to brain injury services in Iowa				
Activities	**Responsible**	**Start**	**End**	**Annual**
A. **Conduct annual community conversations (virtual and in-person) to gather stakeholder input on gaps, barriers and service experiences** across Iowa.	Brain Injury Program Staff	March 2027	June 2027	X
B. **Conduct a survey of screening partner organizations' staff engaged activities outlined in the TBI Grant** to identify training and support needs and organizational strengths related to implementing brain injury-informed practices.	Brain Injury Program Staff	November 2026	December 2026	X

C. **Assess social health needs of clients who screen positive for brain injury history** within screening partner organizations to understand unmet needs and close service gaps.	Screening Partners	January 2027	Ongoing	X
D. **Gather feedback from individuals who have been screened for brain injury** regarding their experience to inform system improvements.	Brain Injury Program Staff	March 2027	Ongoing	X
E. **Conduct needs assessment surveys** to inform development of the next state plan	Brain Injury Program Staff	August 2028	October 2028	

Tactic 1.2 Publish a report with findings and recommendations for improvement

Activities	Responsible	Start	End	Annual
A. **Produce the annual *Brain Injury in Iowa Report*** to summarize statewide trends and recommend evidence-based interventions for brain injury prevention and for supporting individuals after an injury has occurred.	Brain Injury Program Staff	March 2027	March 2027	X
B. **Produce semiannual reports as required by the TBI Grant** to monitor progress and inform program adjustments.	Brain Injury Program Staff	April 2027	October 2027	X
C. **Develop annual summary of community conversation findings** to highlight public input on service needs.	Brain Injury Program Staff	July 2027	August 2027	X
D. **Discuss findings and recommendations** at Service Delivery Workgroup & Advisory Committee meetings to promote stakeholder alignment.	Brain Injury Advisory Committee	September 2027	October 2027	X

E. **Disseminate reports** through conferences, presentations and on the Iowa Health and Human Services (HHS) Brain Injury Program webpage to expand public access to information.	Brain Injury Program Staff	October 2027	Ongoing	X
F. **Identify priority populations, partners and strategies for improving systems** for inclusion in the next state plan and TBI Grant application.	Brain Injury Advisory Committee	January 2029	July 2029	

Tactic 1.3 Share evaluation recommendations with providers, partners and the public

Activities	Responsible	Start	End	Annual
A. **Share evaluation results** with screening partner organization project steering committees to support continuous quality improvement.	Brain Injury Program Staff	April 2027	October 2027	X
B. **Publish public-facing Resource Facilitation dashboard** to track evaluation metrics and provide timely insights, with quarterly updates.	Brain Injury Association of Iowa, with University of Iowa	June 2027	Ongoing	X
C. **Disseminate evaluation results** through conferences and the Iowa HHS Brain Injury Program webpage to increase awareness of findings.	Brain Injury Program Staff	January 2028	Ongoing	X
D. **Share evaluation results and recommendations** during national grantee workgroup meetings to contribute to national learning.	Brain Injury Program Staff	January 2028	Ongoing	X

Strategy 2: Strengthen brain injury screening, service coordination and workforce capacity.

Tactic 2.1 Prioritize the settings and professions that would benefit from additional brain injury screening and referral training

Activities	Responsible	Start	End	Annual
A. **Discuss settings and professions where screening and referral training should be prioritized** for inclusion in the TBI Grant application.	Brain Injury Program Staff	July 2026	August 2026	
B. **Develop intergovernmental agreement and contracts with screening partners** to formalize collaboration.	Brain Injury Program Staff	November 2026	December 2026	X
C. **Host steering committee meetings** to guide training priorities and workflow development.	Brain Injury Program Staff	December 2026	Ongoing	X

Tactic 2.2 Train community partners on screening, symptom management and referral options, including information about Brain Injury Resource Facilitation

Activities	Responsible	Start	End	Annual
A. **Develop screening, assessment and referral workflows** in collaboration with screening partners to ensure consistent organizational implementation.	Brain Injury Program Staff	November 2026	December 2026	

B. **Develop in-person training** based on Steering Committee priorities and survey results to build partner capacity.	Brain Injury Association of Iowa	January 2027	April 2027	
C. **Develop and maintain online training modules** for inclusion in a learning management system (LMS) to provide accessible education statewide.	Brain Injury Association of Iowa	April 2027	Ongoing	
D. **Deliver in-person training** to enhance workforce competency for brain injury informed practices.	Brain Injury Association of Iowa	April 2027	Ongoing	
E. **Conduct fidelity checks and coaching** to improve accuracy and consistency in screening practices.	National Association of State Head Injury Administrators	January 2027	Ongoing	
F. **Provide facilitator training for the Achieving Healing through Education, Accountability, and Determination (AHEAD) curriculum** to expand educational support for individuals with brain injury.	Brain Injury Association of Iowa	October 2027	December 2027	X

Tactic 2.3 Offer a variety of accessible training options to strengthen person-centered planning skills for staff

Activities	Responsible	Start	End	Annual
A. **Develop an annual training calendar** using insights from workforce assessments to align training with needs.	Brain Injury Association of Iowa	June 2027	July 2027	X

B. **Promote in-person and on-demand training opportunities** through the Iowa Brain Injury Resource Network, screening partners, and others to expand workforce knowledge.	Brain Injury Association of Iowa	January 2027	Ongoing	
C. **Promote case consultation services** to support screening partner staff working with individuals with brain injury.	Brain Injury Association of Iowa	January 2027	Ongoing	
D. **Develop and deliver scenario-based learning sessions** for screening partners to improve practical application of screening and support.	Brain Injury Association of Iowa	December 2026	Ongoing	
E. **Develop and disseminate sample person-centered plans** to guide professionals in best practices.	Brain Injury Program Staff	April 2026	June 2026	X

Tactic 2.4 Assess the workforce needs of providers and community organizations

Activities	Responsible	Start	End	Annual
A. **Collect training needs in post-session evaluation** to refine future training priorities.	Brain Injury Association of Iowa	November 2026	Ongoing	
B. **Review Resource Facilitation data** to identify common client needs that can inform training content.	Brain Injury Association of Iowa	July 2027	August 2027	X
C. **Report identified workforce needs** to the Service Delivery Workgroup to guide planning.	Brain Injury Association of Iowa	September 2027	October 2027	X

D. **Conduct a landscape analysis** of the Iowa Brain Injury Resource Network and others to identify statewide workforce gaps.	Brain Injury Association of Iowa	April 2027	May 2027	X

Strategy 3 Increase timely access to medical and community-based services

Tactic 3.1 Promote the use of Brain Injury Resource Facilitation services

Activities	Responsible	Start	End	Annual
A. **Expand referral pathways from screening partners** to increase access to Resource Facilitation services.	Brain Injury Association of Iowa	November 2026	Ongoing	
B. **Develop and maintain a Resource Facilitation dashboard** to monitor referral patterns and outcomes.	Brain Injury Association of Iowa	June 2027	Ongoing	

Tactic 3.2 Explore alternative options for Iowans who need support but do not qualify for Medicaid waivers

Activities	Responsible	Start	End	Annual
A. **Conduct screenings for social needs and provide referral education** to ensure individuals receive appropriate supports.	Screening Partners & Brain Injury Association of Iowa	January 2027	Ongoing	

B. **Review funding options used in other states** to identify viable models for supporting individuals post-injury.	Brain Injury Advisory Committee	April 2027	July 2027	
C. **Deliver an annual report** on identified needs, referrals made, unmet needs and service gaps to inform program updates and policy action.	Brain Injury Association of Iowa, with Brain Injury Program Staff	July 2027	October 2027	X
D. **Recruit a Disability Access Point representative** to recommend for appointment to the Advisory Committee.	Brain Injury Program Staff	September 2027	November 2027	X

Measures of Success: Service Delivery

Indicator	Baseline	Target	Data Source
Reduction in unmet needs among individuals assessed	To be determined	10% reduction	Brain Injury Association of Iowa and Screening Partners
Increased self-determination, independence, health and quality of life	To be determined	25% increase	Brain Injury Resource Facilitation evaluation report & AHEAD participant evaluation
Increased employment rates of individuals identified with history of brain injury	To be determined	10% increase	Screening partner data
Percentage of professionals receiving training who report increased confidence for supporting individuals with cognitive or behavioral challenges	NA	80%	Brain Injury Association of Iowa Training Report

Number of referrals to Brain Injury Resource Facilitation from priority settings	NA	50	Brain Injury Association of Iowa Brain Injury Resource Facilitation annual report

Focus Area: Prevention & Education

Strategy 4: Strengthen partnerships with Iowa HHS programs

Tactic 4.1 Identify Iowa HHS programs that can help increase brain injury awareness and prevention efforts

Activities	Responsible	Start	End	Annual
A. **Discuss collaboration opportunities with Iowa HHS Advisory Committee members** to foster cross-agency alignment on brain injury-related topics.	Brain Injury Program Staff	January 2027	March 2027	X
B. **Hold a brain injury education session for Iowa HHS staff** to increase awareness and collaboration opportunities.	Brain Injury Program Staff	March 2027	March 2027	
C. **Conduct pre/post education evaluation** to measure increased understanding and identify follow-up needs.	Brain Injury Program Staff	March 2027	March 2027	X
D. **Display awareness materials during Brain Injury Awareness Month** to encourage Iowa HHS staff engagement.	Brain Injury Program Staff	March 2027	March 2027	X

Tactic 4.2 Collaborate with Iowa HHS programs to increase the reach of brain injury education and programming

Activities	Responsible	Start	End	Annual
A. **Follow up with identified Iowa HHS programs** to explore screening and prevention integration opportunities.	Brain Injury Program Staff	February 2027	April 2027	X
B. **Schedule discussion and support sessions** to build program capacity.	Brain Injury Program Staff	April 2027	May 2027	X
C. **Develop a training and support plan** to guide ongoing collaboration.	Brain Injury Program Staff	May 2027	June 2027	X
D. **Conduct customized training and support** for Iowa HHS programs and partners to promote brain injury-informed practices.	Brain Injury Program Staff	May 2027	December 2027	X
E. **Celebrate program engagement** through newsletter articles to highlight progress and partnerships.	Brain Injury Program Staff	December 2027	January 2028	X

Tactic 4.3 Ensure existing Iowa HHS programming is inclusive of people with brain injuries

Activities	Responsible	Start	End	Annual
A. **Promote the Brain Injury Advisory Committee as a resource** for community input and inclusion for Iowa HHS programs.	Brain Injury Program Staff	March 2027	March 2027	X

B. **Provide accommodations resources to Iowa HHS programs** to support individuals with brain injury symptoms.	Brain Injury Program Staff	March 2027	December 2027	X
C. **Develop customized case studies and resources** to help programs create brain injury-informed programs and services.	Prevention & Education Workgroup	April 2027	Ongoing	

Strategy 5: Reduce preventable brain injuries using evidence-based practices

Tactic 5.1 Identify and collaborate with groups that share prevention priorities

Activities	Responsible	Start	End	Annual
A. **Invite University of Iowa Injury Prevention Research Center staff to participate in a brainstorming session** on prevention priorities.	Prevention & Education Workgroup	July 2027	August 2027	
B. **Develop a list of partners** aligned with identified priority areas.	Prevention & Education Workgroup	September 2027	October 2027	
C. **Invite identified partners to Prevention & Education Workgroup meetings** to explore collaboration opportunities.	Prevention & Education Workgroup	November 2027	December 2027	

D. **Facilitate discussion on potential joint prevention initiatives** to identify areas of alignment.	Brain Injury Program Staff or Prevention & Education chair	January 2028	May 2028	
E. **Set a schedule for ongoing collaboration meetings and follow up** to support long-term partnership development.	Prevention & Education Workgroup	April 2028	Ongoing	

Tactic 5.2 Use data to find populations most at risk and guide prevention strategies

Activities	Responsible	Start	End	Annual
A. **Consult with the NASHIA** on Online Brain Injury Screening and Support System (OBISSS) to identify at-risk populations.	Brain Injury Program Staff	November 2026	December 2026	X
B. **Analyze Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) data** to understand prevalence and risk patterns in Iowa.	Injury Epidemiology & Brain Injury Program Staff	November 2026	January 2027	X
C. **Present data findings to the Brain Injury Advisory Committee** to guide future activities.	Brain Injury Program Staff	April 2027	April 2027	X
D. **Identify a priority population for prevention strategies** and monitor trends annually.	Brain Injury Advisory Committee	April 2027	April 2027	X
E. **Submit a request to include brain injury questions in the BRFSS** to strengthen future data.	Brain Injury Program Staff	July 2027	August 2027	X

F. **Discuss comparative analysis opportunities** with NASHIA and other states to enhance understanding of Iowa's data.	Brain Injury Program Staff	October 2027	December 2027	X

Strategy 6: Improve concussion prevention and management

Tactic 6.1 Identify ways to improve concussion tracking and reporting in Iowa for non-school related injuries

Activities	Responsible	Start	End	Annual
A. **Conduct a literature review and develop a needs assessment questionnaire** to understand reporting gaps.	Drake University	December 2026	February 2027	
B. **Conduct needs assessment of school health and athletic staff** to gather insights into concussion reporting and support practices.	Drake University	February 2027	April 2027	
C. **Develop a needs assessment report** to summarize findings and inform solutions.	Drake University	April 2027	September 2027	
D. **Create awareness and education materials** to promote the importance of reporting concussions and the return-to-learn process.	Brain Injury Program Staff	September 2027	December 2027	

E. **Disseminate materials and reporting templates** to partners to support improved concussion reporting statewide.	Brain Injury Program Staff	January 2028	Ongoing	

Tactic 6.2 Promote the use of the Teacher Acute Concussion Tool (TACT) in schools through activities such as webinars, flyer dissemination, and newsletter articles

Activities	Responsible	Start	End	Annual
A. **Create an instructional video** to guide schools in the implementation of TACT.	Get Schooled on Concussions	November 2026	January 2027	
B. **Participate in the National Association of State Head Injury Administrators' Concussion Management Institute** for peer learning and development of customized materials for concussion management implementation recommendations for Iowa Schools.	Brain Injury Program Staff, with Department of Education Staff	January 2027	July 2027	
C. **Host a webinar in preparation of a new academic year to educate school personnel** on concussion management and TACT implementation.	Brain Injury Program Staff	March 2027	May 2027	X
D. **Host a webinar at the beginning of the academic year to educate school personnel** on concussion management and TACT implementation.	Brain Injury Program Staff	August 2027	October 2027	X
E. **Disseminate concussion information** at conferences and events to expand awareness.	Brain Injury Program Staff	Ongoing	Ongoing	

Strategy 7: Raise awareness about non-traumatic and traumatic brain injuries and their causes

Tactic 7.1 Develop policy briefs on prevention-related topics

Activities	Responsible	Start	End	Annual
A. **Review and discuss available data and reports** to identify injury areas for policy brief development.	Brain Injury Advisory Committee	April 2027	April 2027	X
B. **Identify potentially impacted partners** to assess unintended consequences and financial implications of prevention policies.	Brain Injury Advisory Committee	April 2027	May 2027	X
C. **Invite partners to review draft briefs** to ensure accuracy and relevance.	Brain Injury Program Staff	May 2027	May 2027	X
D. **Review and synthesize evidence-based recommendations** to strengthen policy proposals.	Prevention & Education Workgroup	June 2027	November 2027	X
E. **Draft and finalize policy briefs** with stakeholder input.	Brain Injury Program Staff	November 2027	December 2027	X
F. **Disseminate policy briefs** through appropriate communication channels to promote awareness.	Brain Injury Program Staff, in partnership with BIAIA	December 2027	March 2028	X

Tactic 7.2 Share public awareness messages about the leading causes of traumatic brain injury (falls, motor vehicle crashes, and assaults).

Activities	Responsible	Start	End	Annual
A. **Discuss data sources** to identify injury areas for public awareness messaging	Brain Injury Advisory Committee	April 2027	April 2027	X
B. **Determine audiences and dissemination methods** to maximize message reach.	Prevention & Education Workgroup	April 2027	July 2027	X
C. **Provide updated data** as needed to ensure messaging accuracy.	Injury Epidemiologist	July 2027	August 2027	X
D. **Draft and finalize public messaging** with Workgroup input.	Brain Injury Program Staff	August 2027	October 2027	X
E. **Disseminate messages** through partners and other communication channels to increase public awareness, leveraging nationally recognized awareness days.	Brain Injury Program Staff, in partnership with Brain Injury Association of Iowa	October 2027	Ongoing	

Tactic 7.3 Develop toolkits for Brain Injury Awareness Month and Concussion Awareness Day to ensure consistent statewide messaging

Activities	Responsible	Start	End	Annual

A. **Develop a Brain Injury Awareness Month toolkit** to support local awareness efforts.	Brain Injury Association of Iowa	October 2026	December 2026	X
B. **Host a webinar** to promote and disseminate toolkit.	Brain Injury Association of Iowa	January 2027	January 2027	X
C. **Gather partner feedback** to measure utilization of the toolkit and improve future toolkit materials.	Brain Injury Association of Iowa	March 2027	April 2027	X
D. **Develop a Concussion Awareness Day toolkit** to support local awareness efforts.	Brain Injury Association of Iowa	May 2027	July 2027	X
E. **Host a webinar** to promote and disseminate toolkit.	Brain Injury Association of Iowa	August 2027	August 2027	X
F. **Gather partner feedback** to measure utilization of the toolkit and improve future toolkit materials.	Brain Injury Association of Iowa	October 2027	November 2027	X

Tactic 7.4 Offer Brain Injury 101 training online and in communities across Iowa

Activities	Responsible	Start	End	Annual
A. **Create an outline for training content** to support professionals working in prioritized settings.	Brain Injury Association of Iowa	November 2026	January 2027	
C. **Develop PowerPoint slides and a presenter script** to standardize live presentations.	Brain Injury Association of Iowa	January 2027	February 2027	

D. **Develop on-demand training modules** for inclusion in a learning management system (LMS) to expand statewide access.	Brain Injury Association of Iowa	April 2027	August 2027	
E. **Publish modules.**	Brain Injury Association of Iowa	September 2027	September 2027	
F. **Promote training opportunities** to increase awareness and participation.	Brain Injury Association of Iowa	September 2027	Ongoing	
G. **Conduct pre/post training evaluations** to measure knowledge and perceived confidence gained.	Brain Injury Association of Iowa	September 2027	Ongoing	

Measures of Success: Prevention & Education

Indicator	2026 Baseline	2027 Target	Data Source
Number of Iowa HHS staff who complete internal brain injury education annually	NA	15	Iowa HHS attendance records
Percentage of Iowa HHS staff reporting an increased confidence in supporting a person with brain injury	NA	80	Iowa HHS education session evaluations

Number of Iowa HHS programs adopting brain injury screening practices	1	2	Iowa HHS Brain Injury Program screening data
Increase in number of schools consistently using the Teacher Acute Concussion Tool.	3	8	Iowa HHS Annual TACT Utilization Report.
Number of prevention-focused policy briefs published	0	1	Iowa HHS Brain Injury Program
Number of learning management modules published	0	1	Brain Injury Association of Iowa
Number of individuals completing the new Brain Injury 101 training (on-demand or in-person)	NA	50	Brain Injury Association of Iowa
Percentage of participants with increased knowledge on brain injury after the Brain Injury 101 training.	NA	50	Brain Injury Association of Iowa training report
Number of partners who use new brain injury and concussion awareness toolkit messaging	NA	10	Post-event survey of partners