

**THI/SCI TRUST FUND
ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES
November 14, 2019**

CALL TO ORDER

Andrew Kuyoro, the chair of the board, called to order the regular meeting of the Traumatic Head and Spinal Cord Injury Trust Fund Advisory Board at 9:58 a.m. on November 14, 2019.

IN ATTENDANCE

Board Members: Melissa Bayham, Michael Chafetz, John Fanning, Stephanie Fletcher, Andrew Kuyoro, Gary Matherne, Hazel Odom and Sherlyn Sullivan

Board Members Not in Attendance: Lawrence Bagley, Dan Claitor, and Thomas Loupe

Agency Staff: Tonia Gedward, Tara LeBlanc, Anastasia Webb, Ayanna Wilson, John Korduner

Contractors: Kimberly Hill

Public: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The board reviewed the minutes from the last meeting held on May 9, 2019. Andrew asked if anyone had any comments about the minutes. There were no comments. The meeting minutes were approved as presented.

BOARD/INTRODUCTIONS

Board Members and others in attendance introduced themselves.

Tara stated she received a resolution from the NAACP of Louisiana stating that they would like to change the definitions of the type of injuries within the program. In addition, the NAACP would like to use the money in the THSCI trust fund to create a Medicaid waiver for only brain injury individuals. It was sponsored by Rep. Jefferson. She stated a group of LDH staff spoke with Rep. William Jefferson on Halloween and he appeared to be fond of the idea. Tara stated if someone already has a brain injury that may not fall under the definition as it relates to the program; the individual can get services through other mechanisms such as our Community Choice Waiver, Office for Development Disabilities and other services. She stated she will send the resolution to everyone once she gets to the office. She will also keep everyone updated. At this point, we may lean heavily on the medical and clinical experts of this board to see if we are meeting the needs of people with brain injuries.. She stated we need to focus on Medicaid because we can't force private insurance to cover certain services unless we pass a law. Tara stated with the upcoming legislative session approaching, please let her know if there is anything the board would like to change or initiate.

BUDGET/FINANCIAL REPORT – SHERLYN SULLIVAN

Sherlyn asked everyone to review the financial report. Andrew asked if anyone had any questions about the financial report. There were no questions.

PROGRAM STATUS – TONIA GEDWARD

Currently, the Trust Fund is serving 630 participants, which is eight participants more than the last board meeting. Since the last board meeting, the program added 42 new eligible participants and closed 34 cases. The closed cases included 6 for funds expended, 6 deceased participants, 18 unable to contact participants, 2 moved out of state, 1 failure to cooperate and 1 participant who no longer had a TH/SCI.

There were 47 2017 waitlist applicants ready for review. The program has reviewed and either approved or denied all 2017 waitlist applicants. Between 2017 and 2019, the program received 266 applications. Of the 266 applications, currently 158 remain eligible for the waitlist as of 11/13/19.

Current THSCI Waitlist as of 8/2/19				
	Waitlist Eligible	Program Eligible	Waitlist Ineligible	Total Apps Received for the year
2017	0	33	21	54
2018	72	0	12	84
2019	86	0	42	128
Totals	158	33	75	266

The program continues to have bi-weekly meetings with the THSCI case management agencies, which helps with process improvement. We were able to cancel this week’s meeting, which is a small indication that the agencies are becoming more self-sufficient with working with our participants as it relates to policies and procedures. We continue to improve our internal processes. Tonia stated we continue to update forms and policy to align with the program rules and guidelines as well as procedures.

Since the last board meeting in May, the program staff received and reviewed 350 Participant Service Plans and processed 676 payments (see charts below).

PSPs Reviewed (5/10/19 – 11/13/19)

<u>Month</u>	<u>PSPs</u>
May	38
Jun	71
Jul	36
Aug	62
Sep	59
Oct	70
Nov	14

Grand
Total 350

Payments Released (5/10/19 – 11/13/19)

<u>Month</u>	<u>Payments Released</u>
May	97
Jun	118
Jul	105
Aug	84
Sep	125
Oct	103
Nov	44
Grand Total	676

The program mailed 91 letters to nonpaying municipalities. Since then, we have started receiving payments from some of them. We are working to determine a solution on how to handle the ones that did not respond.

THSCI RESOURCE CENTER/BIALA – KIMBERLY HILL

Kimberly state the main focus of the organization continues to be running the resource center and educating people around the state about the THSCI trust fund program. Their hotline receives 35-40 calls per month where they assist individuals in finding the resources and/or support needed. The website continues to receive good traction; especially the resource guide page. Kim stated outreach continues around the state in the form of in-services at both inpatient and outpatient rehab hospitals, visits and calls with case managers, and participation in different community events. Additionally, they keep in close contact with support group leaders statewide. Hospitals are becoming more reluctant to allow in-services so we are looking for other ways to provide outreach. Current trust fund applications have been given to hospitals, and all have been encouraged to make sure to use the current application. Some hospitals still have copies of the older application even though they have been given new copies. Their website, which many hospitals use to print the application, has the current application. Many hospitals have folders with information about our organization which also includes a copy of the trust fund application.

In support of those BIALA serve, and in conjunction with operating the resource center, they offer a variety of services and programs. She mentioned in the meeting, they were recently nationally recognized by both of the national organizations that they are state affiliates for because of their programs and services. They recently crowned a new Ms. Wheelchair Louisiana 2020 which is a program about education and advocacy. She will represent the state well and will be great in her advocacy efforts. Their Connections Circle program that was started a few months ago is bringing people with brain and/or spinal cord injuries who are not currently connected to supports and connecting them with support systems through social and enrichment

activities. An example of a past bowling event was shared. Their caregiver program is launching now where they will provide respite for caregivers by having hot, prepared dinners delivered to participants a week at a time. Kim stated their 2020 conference planning is underway, and the schedule of presentations is set. CEU applications have been submitted. The event is March 27-28, 2020. Survivor day will be the following Saturday, April 4, 2020 in Baton Rouge. They are offering a whole day for survivors this year rather than offering a “survivor track” at the conference due to feedback from survivors wanting more opportunity to socialize rather than have to participate in scheduled sessions. Since the last THSCI trust fund meeting, they have created an advisory board where they have three physicians on the board. On the current board of directors, they have added two new members. One member is from north Louisiana which is an area where they were hoping to find a board member. They are currently looking to add board members from Lake Charles and Lafayette to give the board a good cross section of the state. Kim stated they will continue to work on finding additional funding for the organization and use this funding to support the new programs they have added. They need programs to attract funding... but they need funding to run programs.

OTHER BUSINESS

There is a brain injury participant who requested an Advisory Board Review. The board members decided to uphold the decision.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

FUTURE MEETINGS

The next board meeting is scheduled for February 13, 2020 at 10:00 a.m., held at PACE, 7436 Bishop Ott Dr., Baton Rouge, LA 70806.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.