

Updates on Waiver Transition to Medicaid Managed Care

Thanks to advocacy efforts in the brain injury community, the transition of the TBI and NHTD Waiver Programs into Medicaid Managed Care was delayed until January 2017, and a workgroup was convened to give input into the transition plan.

At the time of this writing, specific details of the transition plan are not yet available, but we will post them to the website as they are released. In the meantime, the Governor, Legislators and policy makers need to hear from you why Waiver services are necessary to support individuals with brain injury.

BIANYS is committed to ensuring that all current TBI and NHTD Waiver participants and those who may need services in the future have access to specialized brain injury community support services. We have been at the table with the Department of Health, advocacy groups, the Governor's office, Legislators, policy makers, and stakeholders, including Waiver participants. We stress that all Waiver recipients and providers must educate themselves on the transition process and take action to make sure services are not disrupted.

Visit the BIANYS website at bianys.org for updates on the proposed transition plan and action items, including letters to send to policy makers and our public hearing testimony on brain injury presented to the Assembly on October 8.

Stay tuned to BIANYS communications on the Waivers for future action alerts and plan to join us for Advocacy Day in Albany on March 23, 2016.

Join BIANYS in Albany for Brain Injury Advocacy Day!

March 23, 2016

Legislative Office Building, Albany, NY

BIANYS is organizing a day of action, visibility, and advocacy. Bring your friends, family, and community members to Albany to share your experiences and be an advocate. Meet with legislators, learn about the legislative process, and show your support for brain injury awareness.

Providers: learn how you can help spread the word & get involved – contact BIANYS for details and information.

Together we can show our New York legislators that brain injury is a significant health and social issue deserving attention.

Join us in Albany on March 23 to take action!



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From the Executive Director, *Eileen Reardon*

Recently, I celebrated my one year anniversary with the Brain Injury Association of NYS. What I have seen over the last year is a steadfast commitment to improving the lives of those who have a brain injury and being a resource for those most vulnerable. I was curious what the first anniversary signified, similar to Silver for a 25th Anniversary. According to Hallmark, it is paper. How appropriate I thought. We have exchanged a lot of paper through letter writing campaigns, brochures inviting you to our "March On for Brain Injury" Walks in the Hudson Valley and Rochester, letters of support to our legislators to advocate for the postponement of the transition of the waiver to managed care. You are even reading this newsletter on paper. We have shared our stories, experiences and emotions on many sheets of paper. Captured moments through photographs and putting them on paper. I encourage you to keep sharing ideas and thoughts as it is truly the only way that we will continue to change. I want to thank my dedicated staff who work tirelessly on your behalf and the Board of Directors who give of themselves so that this organization is available as a resource to you and of course to all of you who have made this last year an experience I will never forget. Onward and Upward!

From the President, *Lois Tannenbaum, PsyD*

Bill Gates said "As we look ahead into the next century, leaders will be those who empower others." Collective empowerment is the feeling that fills my heart as I reflect on our two March On for Brain Injury events. On August 29th, the 2nd annual Hudson Valley March On for Brain Injury walk was held on the Walkway Over the Hudson. Hundreds of people traveled from across the state and stood together, unified, in one purposeful mission, to give voice to the silent epidemic of brain injury in order to achieve increased awareness, prevention, and improved intervention. The result was successfully raising almost \$60,000 which exceeded the targeted goal by almost \$20,000.

On September 12, we were also proud to expand March On to Rochester. In this first annual walk, so many wonderful people organized, and came together BIANYS - STRONG despite the rain, to raise over \$14,000.

There were so many exciting additions to last year's inaugural walk thanks to the teamwork between the hardworking volunteer committees in both regions, and the innovations and support offered by the dedicated BIANYS staff. It took a great deal of collaborative effort to plan and implement all of the features offered at these events.

I have to say that with all the wonderful components that were incorporated into both of these events, the most awe inspiring feature is owed to all the people whose lives have been impacted by brain injury either directly, or indirectly, and who came out to stand and "March On" with the resiliency of human spirit. Your energy, devotion and support is a wonderful reminder of the true mission of BIANYS...servant leadership to the brain injury community. As President, you have my pride and my gratitude.

During this holiday season

**Please support those impacted by brain injury with your year-end gift.
Be the voice of brain injury for you and those you love. Text VOICE to
91999 to pledge your support or donate at www.bianys.org.**

BIANYS Supporters Marched On for Brain Injury

The 2015 March On for Brain Injury program was an incredible success thanks to our passionate volunteer committees, youth and adult honorees, and their families, generous sponsors and hundreds of enthusiastic participants and supporters. The March On for Brain Injury Hudson Valley Walk presented by Q92.1 & Country 107.3 WRWD took place on August 29th at the Walkway Over the Hudson. The March On for Brain Injury Rochester Walk presented by 100.5 The Drive took place on September 12th, at Seneca Park, raising more than \$73,000 combined.

The March On events not only raised pertinent funds for the BIANYS, but raised awareness in communities throughout New York State thanks to our radio sponsors and passionate team captains who continued to spread the word day after day!

BIANYS staff were thrilled to receive phone calls and participation from individuals impacted by brain injury who are new to the BIANYS community as well as those who have been supporting us for many years.

Hudson Valley Youth Honoree, Michael Fisher, shared with the audience "The road I traveled has been cold and lonely. Thanks to the Brain Injury Association of NY State I know I'll never be alone. Focus on what you want, help as many people as you can along the way, and never stop believing in yourself no matter how hard life is."

Eighth Annual Journey of Hope Gala

This year's Journey of Hope Gala brought together distinguished guests in support of our Honorees and in celebration of the journey of hope and healing that all individuals with brain injury experience.

The celebration took place at the stunning Manhattan venue, Midtown Loft & Terrace. The evening's highlights included a wine tastings from NY State wineries, microbrew tastings from a variety of New York's finest breweries and silent auction items with travel experiences throughout the state.

The Brain Injury Association of NY State was honored to present the following awards:

The Corporate Citizen Award

This award recognizes the remarkable companies whose business has contributed greatly to improving the quality of life and care of those individuals living with brain-related injuries and challenges.

Distinguished Honoree: Avanir Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

The Leadership Award

This award recognizes noteworthy individuals who have shown incredible dedication and leadership towards achieving the mission and goals of BIANYS.

Distinguished Honoree: Geoffrey Hall, FACHE, MBA, MSW, LCSW Administrator, RUSK Rehabilitation NYU Langone Medical Center

The Victory Award

This award recognizes exemplary individuals who, despite the challenges of brain-injury, strive to lead independent and fulfilling lives.

Distinguished Honoree: Alexandra Kugler, Senior, Binghamton University, State University of New York

The rainy weather in Rochester did not keep away the passionate folks who support brain injury. BIANYS supporters came out with umbrellas and galoshes and left no puddle behind! Our partnership with Catholic Charities Community Services was a valued collaboration, increasing our ability to support the Rochester brain injury community.

Thank you to all who participated, donated and supported the March On events! Visit our website (www.BIANYS.org) to view photos and we look forward to seeing you next year!

Photos Courtesy of Ann Marie Todd



The Champion of Hope Award

This award recognizes outstanding individuals whose efforts have contributed greatly to improving the quality of life and care of those individuals living with brain-related injuries and challenges.

Distinguished Honoree: In memory of Dr. Joshua B. Cantor

BIANYS is thankful to our Journey of Hope guests and to all those who donated to or sponsored this inspiring annual event. Special thanks are extended to our Honorary Committee Chairs, Andrew and Randi Siegel; our Honorary Committee members; Presenting sponsors Rusk Rehabilitation – NYU Langone Medical Center, Siegel & Coonerty LLP, and NFL Network; and to all of our 2015 Journey of Hope Sponsors. Thank you for joining BIANYS on our journey of hope!



Photos Courtesy of Evan Lauber

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BIANYS

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Southside Hospital rehabilitation programs
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rehabilitation programs: Inpatient rehabilitation: **(631) 968-3446**
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WE THANK BIANYS AND ITS DEDICATED STAFF FOR ALL THEIR GREAT WORK. AND WE CONGRATULATE EILEEN REARDON AND TISH CZACHOR FOR MAKING THE 2015 JOURNEY OF HOPE GALA SUCH A HUGE SUCCESS!

Traumatic Brain Injury never discriminates.

Each of us is vulnerable to unforeseen circumstances.

We close our eyes to such unimaginable possibilities until a harsh reality forces them open.



At this turning point, knowing how to reach out to Andy Siegel is of critical importance.

Andy is a personal injury lawyer who has dedicated himself to representing TBI survivors and their families.

He understands compassion and admiration is due those who must struggle—in the wake of sudden tragedy—to restructure their lives in an ongoing battle to recover.

What Andy also understands are the obstacles TBI survivors and their families frequently face from the legal system, made more painful by hostile, seemingly uncaring insurance company response. For this reason, he goes to battle.

Andy's courtroom victories are won not just because he's experienced, and not only because he's fully committed, but because he simply refuses to give up until he has achieved an outcome fully satisfying to his sense of justice.

With over SIXTY MILLION DOLLARS in jury verdicts, Andy has proven his excellence in representing TBI survivors.

When selecting an attorney, *results matter.*

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Andy has been selected as a Superlawyer 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015



10 Colvin Avenue
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FACTS Program in New York City

BIANYS was sad to share the news this spring that Maggie Ornstein, Manhattan FACTS Coordinator, had resigned after many years of support and advocacy. We wished Maggie a bright future and bid farewell as she focused on completing her doctoral work. We also started to reassess the needs of New York City and took this as an opportunity to change the way we serve New York City.

On October 26, we welcomed Dana Iannizzotto to the FACTS program staff. Dana is a native New Yorker, a graduate from the College of Saint Rose, a Certified Brain Injury Specialist, and has extensive experience working with individuals with brain injury. She has a passion for compassion and is eager to advance the mission of BIANYS.

Dana will be supporting the needs of the New York City area and serving as FACTS Outreach Coordinator. Our two veteran FACTS Coordinators, Jan Wollney and Ellie Bibawy, will serve the needs of individuals in the FACTS program and collaborate with Dana on events and outreach. We have an excellent program that offers family support, information, training, and advocacy. Dana's main role will be to promote the Association and the FACTS Program across NYC so more people will be aware of the resources that are available to individuals with brain injury. Dana will be exhibiting at events, speaking at conferences, and introducing the organization to a variety of schools, programs, and community partners. We look forward to this new program model and encourage you to reach out to Dana as she becomes part of the BIANYS family.

2016 Annual Conference!

New Look!
New Location!
New Excitement!

Brain Injury Association of NYS
Is Pleased to Announce

34th Annual
“One Voice for Brain Injury”
Annual Conference

June 9-10, 2016

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