



## 2022 Legislative Priorities

Brain injuries affect at least 2.5 million children and adults in the U.S. each year. Any brain injury, regardless of severity, can change the way a person thinks, acts, moves and feels. Even so-called “mild” injuries can have devastating consequences that require intensive treatment and long-term care. The Brain Injury Association of New York State (BIANYS) advocates for brain injury survivors addressing access to the services they need and deserve. In a year that has been like no other, and a new study from NYU Grossman School of Medicine showing that older patients contracting COVID have more signs of brain damage than people who develop the neurodegenerative disease, the brain injury community needs attention. The following are our priorities for 2022.

### **Continuum of Care for Resource Facilitation**

New Yorkers with brain injuries deserve to get the help they need from the time of their injury to the time they integrate back into their community. So many brain injury survivors and their families are left to their own devices to make decisions on continued services and care taking requirements. BIANYS is asking for \$800,000 in the Executive Budget to address the needs of the brain injury survivor and caretakers:

1. Enhance public knowledge of traumatic brain injuries and their impacts
2. Improve access to community-based services
3. Provide service coordination for non-Waiver participants
4. Enhance TBI provider training to improve diagnosis and treatment
5. Provide information about local resources, services, and supports
6. Help to create a plan and provide ongoing support
7. Partner with individuals and their families to help ensure that they can continue to access resources, services, and supports after completing the program.

These recommendations will be achieved through:

**Prevention and Outreach:** A statewide outreach and education campaign focused on connecting New Yorkers with brain injuries to the resources they need.

**Treatment and Rehabilitation:** A care management program that fosters a community of excellence amongst health care providers.

**Support Services:** Make sure people with brain injuries return to the least restrictive setting in their communities and give them the care management services that will keep them there.

## **Pass S1074A/A2564A The Concussion Management Awareness Improvement Act of 2021**

The 2011 Concussion Management Awareness Act should be updated to focus on identifying and implementing paths to achieve a successful return to education for all New York students that have sustained a concussion. These changes will address the current disparate nature of brain injury services and strengthen advisory and coordination channels.

Proposed changes include:

1. Apply the law to non-public schools.
2. Mandate Concussion Management Teams in all school districts.
3. Require academic Return-to-Learn policies such as having a student return to a full class schedule without academic adjustments or accommodations.
4. Require continuing medical education to be completed every two years by school coaches, physical education teachers, nurses, athletic trainers, all medical directors, physicians, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants.
5. Recommend schools to retain access to an Athletic Trainer to all students.
6. Identify and report annually the number of concussions that occur each year to applicable district superintendent or chief school officer, board of education or governing body.

### **TBI Trust Fund [A1003 (Cahill)]**

The Brain Injury Trust Fund would be the payer of last resort for New Yorkers with brain injury, providing a financial safety net to assure improved access to needed services. In addition, BIANYS proposes that funds be utilized for a public information campaign detailing information and resources about brain injury.

### **Bring New Yorkers Back into our Communities**

There are many New Yorkers with brain injury institutionalized and it is imperative that service networks be developed across the state to provide the support needed to assist these New Yorkers in their home communities. We are working with the Legislature to present solutions on how the current service delivery system can be expanded.

BIANYS is also working with Legislators and decision makers to find solutions to community housing issues and to increase services for all New Yorkers with brain injuries. Services and issues include independent living skills training and development, structured day programs, substance abuse programs, intensive behavioral programs, community integration counseling, and environmental modifications.

#### **For more information:**

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January 2022

**THE VOICE OF BRAIN INJURY**