

RESEARCH NEWS, HEALTH TIPS, AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES FROM THE
VIRGINIA TBI MODEL SYSTEM**NASEM Report: Examining TBI as a Chronic Condition**

The National Academy of Science, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) provides advice to the Nation for solving problems and informing policy. They brought together brain injury researchers, neuroscientists, medical professionals, persons with lived experience, caregivers, and federal partners in a workshop to gather evidence that identifies TBI as a chronic condition. The goals were to:

- View research on chronic TBI symptoms.
- Judge the quality of available care and services for individuals with long-term effects of TBI.
- Suggests ways to advance research and improve care for chronic TBI.

Dr. Kelli Talley, NASEM planning committee member, applauds the report because it will lead to more community resources that address the chronic needs of TBI for individuals and their families.

[Click here to read more!](#)



 **The Virginia TBI Model System has a new website!**

It's called the **Brain and Spinal Health Hub**. This site offers helpful tools and info for:

- People with brain or spinal injuries
- Their families
- Doctors and teams who support them

How Long-Term Health Problems Affect People with Brain Injury

Adults who had a traumatic brain injury (TBI) were studied to see how having many long-term health problems affects their mood, thinking, pain, and social life. People with more health problems tended to feel more depressed.

- The study looked at adults over 40 who were at least one year past their TBI.
- People were split into two groups:
 - High health problems (6 or more)
 - Low health problems (fewer than 6)
- Those with more health problems felt more depressed than those with fewer.
- Thinking and memory skills were similar between groups.
- Levels of pain were also similar.
- Social contact with friends and family was similar between groups.

People with TBI who also have many other health problems may need extra support for their mental health—especially depression. Taking care of emotional well-being is an important part of staying healthy after a brain injury.

[Click here to view the article!](#)

Virginia TBI Model System

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For all listserv and for paper newsletter requests, email us at:
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EXPLORE THESE WEBSITES FOR MORE UPDATES FROM
OUR CONTINUUM OF CARE:

TBIMS.VCU.EDU | SAI.REHAB | BIAV.NET | MSKTC.ORG



Virginia's Social Drivers of Health Network

The following list of needs link to service providers that are dedicated to supporting folks with brain injury and their families across Virginia.

- [Housing](#)
 - SPeaco@supportworkshousing.org or call 804 921-3466
- [Food](#)
- [Transportation](#)
- [Medical Care](#)
- [Medical Insurance](#)
 - requires account set up/login
- [Mental Health](#)
- [Return to Work](#)
- [Childcare](#)
- [Financial Assistance](#)
- [Utility Bill Relief](#)
- [Legal services](#)
- [Urgent Needs](#)

Community Support Groups

[Aphasia Support Group](#)

For Monthly Meetings, Contact:
community.engagement@sai.rehab

[Caregiver Support Group](#)

Visit the link for upcoming meetings

[BIAV Online and In Person Monthly Support Groups and Network Events](#)

Visit info@biav.net for updates

[Community Brain Injury Services Caregiver Support Group](#)

When: 2nd Thurs. of month, 6:00 pm
Where: 12725 McManus Blvd. Ste. 2E Newport News, VA 23602
Contact: **The Denhigh House: 757-833-7845**

[Clubhouse Program for People Living with Brain Injury](#)

Visit [the website](#) or call **804-261-7050**

How DARS Helps People Prepare for Work

Adapted from the [DARS website](#)

The Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, or **DARS**, helps people with disabilities get ready for work, find a job, and keep a job. This kind of support is called **vocational rehabilitation**, which means job training and help with employment. [dars.virginia.gov].

DARS provides many services, including meeting with a counselor, setting career goals, and creating an **Individualized Employment Plan**. People can also get help with job coaching, learning workplace skills, and finding the right job match. In Central and Northern Virginia, two community brain injury providers contract with DARS to provide employment supports to those with brain injury in those areas. You can explore these services on the DARS site under [Vocational Rehabilitation](#). [dars.virginia.gov].

The **Division of Rehabilitative Services (DRS)** offers even more support, like [Assistive Technology](#), career training, and job placement to help people work independently and confidently. [vafamilysped.org].

DARS also teams up with families, schools, and businesses to make sure everyone has the tools they need to succeed. **Their goal is simple: help every person find meaningful work they enjoy in a supportive workplace.** Learn more on the [For Individuals](#) page. [dars.virginia.gov]



Brain Games for Fun!

Check out the games highlight for some fun exercises to engage your brain:



SCAN ME

Website: <https://freegames.org/>

How to use a QR Code:

Open your smart phone camera and center the QR code. A link should pop up on the camera screen. Click this link to be directed to our puzzle page.



Visit tbims.vcu.edu to access back issues!

NO: NEXT OPPORTUNITY

BY: JANNELLE CHARLEMAGNE

Our *TBI* journeys can inspire others going through similar situations. As we stay committed to evolving, and improving, we must stay focused on rebuilding our lives.

The challenges and setbacks we face are part of the process. It is our transportation to what we're going through to get where we're going to our **Next Opportunity** if we do not give up. It can lead to a great recovery.

Part of our difficulties are preparing for us to adapt, grow and learn even when the outcomes at times are uncertain. Nonetheless, open doors for transformation to our **Next Opportunity**.

When doubting ourselves, keep in mind "**can't never could.**" Therefore, take a 6-minute break to clear our minds while listening to one of the most motivational songs, "*Keep the Faith*," by Michael Jackson.

Please don't let rejections discourage us. For every rejection is redirection for us to have the ability to pause, reflect, reframe and refocus when we're told **NO**, or hearing the word **NO**, whether from an employer or from whatever the situation is about. It may only look like we're only taking a step back; however, a step back can be a set up for our **Next Opportunity**.

Let the word **NO** represent our **Next Opportunity**.

We all have a choice to view the word **NO** as a valuable lesson and understand that "*No*" is just our **Next Opportunity** to keep moving forward. Our *next opportunity* comes from the actions we take today, no matter how small, when we focus on our own journey.

Most of all, do not feel discouraged when our progress seems slow, but remind ourselves that we are capable to keep moving forward. Let us adjust our focus to develop long & short-term goals, while keeping ourselves open to our next opportunity. Create a set of goals for 3 to 6 months, or 6 months to a year, and revisit our progress every 3 months. Our mission is to motivate ourselves to leave room for improvement and growth while we keep attaining, growing and learning for our **Next Opportunity**.

Every accomplishment starts with the first decision we make. Every day is our **Next Opportunity** for a fresh start for new beginnings, and a chance to grow emotionally, mentally, and socially. Embrace a positive mindset for more to come.



DO YOU PROVIDE CARE FOR SOMEONE WITH A DISORDER OF CONSCIOUSNESS*?

DOC 101: A GROUP FOR CAREGIVERS OF SEVERE BRAIN INJURY SURVIVORS



FREE EDUCATION & PEER SUPPORT GROUP

- Open to individuals in the United States who have been providing care to someone with a DOC for at least one year Facilitated by
- Vanderbilt University Medical Center (VUMC) mental health providers



12-week group



Tuesdays
4:00-5:15pm CST



Meets virtually
over Zoom

WHY JOIN?

- Learn about topics that are important to caregivers of people with a DOC
- Connect with and receive support from caregivers and mental health professionals
- Recognize that you are not alone in your experience

*WHAT IS A DISORDER OF CONSCIOUSNESS?

A DISORDER OF CONSCIOUSNESS(DOC) IS A CONDITION THAT FOLLOWS

A SEVERE BRAIN INJURY.

PEOPLE WITH DOC HAVE NOT RECOVERED THE ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE OR MAKE DECISIONS. THEY REQUIRE A CAREGIVER TO ASSIST WITH ALL PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL, AND COGNITIVE NEEDS.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, EMAIL:

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Scan here to complete our interest form!



CRITICAL ILLNESS, BRAIN DYSFUNCTION,
and SURVIVORSHIP (CIBS) CENTER