



Commonwealth Neurotrauma Initiative (CNI) Trust Fund Advisory Board

Meeting Minutes * March 17, 2023 * 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Members Present

- Kathryn Hayfield, Commissioner, DARS
- David Cifu, MD (Chair), VCU Department of PM&R
- Raighne (Renny) Delaney, JD, Bean, Kinney & Korman PC
- Heather Funkhouser Board, Virginia Department of Health
- Joshua Sloan, Bankruptcy Analyst, Truist
- Richard Bagby, Executive Director, United Spinal Association of Virginia

Members Absent

- David Reid, PsyD, Neuropsychologist, Augusta Psychological Associates

Staff

- Jacole Thomas (staff), CNI Trust Fund Program Specialist, DARS Brain Injury Services Coordination Unit

Guests

- Chris Miller, Director, DARS Brain Injury Services Coordination Unit
- Carolyn Turner, Director, DARS Office of Disability Programs
- Stephanie Lau, Transition Training Associate, VCU
- Betsy Civilette, Communications Director, DARS

Welcome and Introductions

David Cifu, MD, Chair, called the meeting to order and roll call was taken. Renny Delaney attended virtually as he is 60+ miles away and Richard Bagby attended virtually due to a personal matter.

Public Comment Period

No public comments.

Grantee Presentation

Dr. Stephanie Lau presented Project Achieve, Final Report. The purpose of the project was to provide specialized services to assist women with traumatic brain injury (TBI) and/or spinal cord injury (SCI) who are pursuing post-secondary education or training. This was done by adapting Project Career, which used Cognitive Support Technology (CST) through iPads and individualized apps, and individualized case management. A total of 17 students were enrolled

and final findings indicated participants increased their confidence the most in finding their ideal job, preparing a good resume, and identifying employers in their field. One participant was quoted as saying “Project Achieve has definitely help improve my quality of life and enhanced my confidence in myself working towards my Master's degree in Social Work. My first semester prior to enrolling in the project, I was struggling and was considering dropping out of the program because of the challenges I faced with memory, organization, and time management. Once I was enrolled in Project Achieve, my support grew as well as resource availability and my knowledge/awareness of how to address challenges in my program with being connected with my case manager and working with the SAEO for support. I had a great experience and I wish the project was extended until I complete my program next year. Thank you for your support and help building my confidence with technology and academically.”

CNI Update

Jacole Thomas discussed raising CNI’s visibility and that she and Chris Miller met with the communications team (Betsy Civilette and Rick Sizemore) In February to discuss a marketing plan to address this. Betsy then addressed the Board to discuss in more detail. The Board was also provided a draft post featuring Ricky Jones, a Sportable participant, highlighting Sportable’s adaptive sports program supported by CNI. The Board was excited about this initiative.

Recent Services RFA fully executed on 1/12/23 with Awards going to Sportable for their project: Reducing Barriers to Participation in Adaptive Sports & Wellness Programs for Underserved, as well as Anderson Music Therapy Services (AMTS). AMTS proposes the use of out-patient individual and group music therapy services in our clinic, community facilities, and in homes as well as through teletherapy to address the sensori-motor, communication, cognitive, and social-emotional aspects of TBI and SCI. Online and in-person music therapy support groups for family members will also be established to support affected families, as a caregiver’s psychological wellness has a significant impact on the survivor.

A General Information Feedback Session was held on March 3, 2023, for Non-Awarded applicants to provide feedback on their application with the aim for them to reapply in the future with improvements and receive a grant award.

A seven-year CNI Financial Projection was provided to the Board with details that CNI staff projects there will be enough funding to award ten grants at maximum level (\$150,000) between SFY 2024- 2027 and ending SFY 2029 with a projected revenue of approximately \$626,000. The Board approved of the financial projection format.

The Board agreed the next RFA will be a combination of Research and Services and expressed a desire to really make it clear in the RFA that a concentration on access to services for marginalized populations as well as sustainability and implementable research are key. CNI Staff will work on a revised Statement of Needs along with additional descriptors throughout the RFA. The goal is for the next RFA to be fully executed January 1, 2024.

Other Business

The Advisory Board reviewed the December 2, 2022, Meeting Meetings and there was a quorum present. Without a request for any changes the December 2, 2022, meeting minutes were approved and adopted.

Adjourn

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 10:39 am.

DRAFT