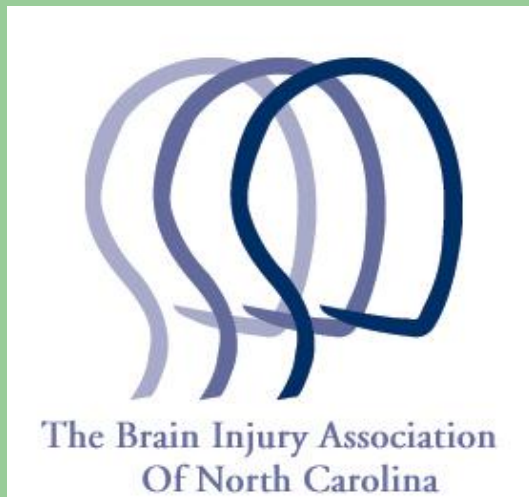


Program Overview




What is the purpose of the Brain Injury Family Ombudsman Program?

Why is it a good idea?

What is an Ombudsman?


An **ombudsman** (English plural: conventionally *ombudsmen*) is a person who acts as a trusted intermediary between an organization and some external constituency while representing the broad scope of constituent interests.



HRSA Grant Overview

- Survivors and Family representatives across NC have been identified and trained to serve as traumatic brain injury ombudsmen
- They represent and are available to families statewide who have a family member with TBI.
- A lead ombudsman has been identified to manage referrals and follow-up and participate in Advisory Council meeting(s) and may attend annual grantee leadership meeting and participate in teleconference calls.

Division of MH/DD/SAS


- The Division of Mental Health/Developmental Disabilities/Substance Abuse Services
 - The Division of MH/DD/SAS is the Lead agency for TBI in NC
 - TBI is a Developmental Disability at any age in NC
 - The HRSA grant goes through the Division to BIANC to help start the Ombudsman Program
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Basic Ombudsman Requirements


- Able to perform job requirements
- Meet Job Description and Skills needed
- Personal experience with brain injury
- Volunteer 4-12 hours per week
- Attend training

Work Space/Training provided by BIANC Brain Injury Resource Centers and Staff

Primary Focus of Ombudsmen

- Serve as links to families, helping families and people with TBI find resources, information and support.
 - Provide outreach activities aimed at greater understanding of TBI in the community, especially nursing homes and public school systems.
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Why is it a Good Idea?

- Ombudsmen can be a voice for brain injury
 - People with brain injuries and their families need more advocates
 - Help build grassroots network across NC
 - Help families make the connections they need
 - A conflict resolution and support tool
 - Educate Legislators/Community
- 

NC Brain Injury Advisory Council

The role of the Council is to:

- Promote interagency coordination among State agencies responsible for services and support of individuals that have sustained traumatic brain injury.
- Study the needs of individuals with traumatic brain injury and their families.

Brain Injury Advisory Council (continued)

- Make recommendations to the Governor, the General Assembly, and the Secretary of Health and Human Services regarding the planning, development, funding, and implementation of a comprehensive statewide service delivery system.
- Promote and implement injury prevention strategies across the State.

BIANC Board of Directors (BOD)

- BIANC Mission - Offer Help, Hope, and a Voice for people with brain injuries and their families
- Ombudsmen can help provide a Voice and help to create a grassroots movement across NC of families with a stake in brain injury
- BIANC BOD provides support for Ombudsman Program

Confidentiality, Ethics, and Boundaries

- Exhibiting professionalism in the face of difficult situations
- Ombudsmen will not be expected to fix all problems, but can be good listeners, remain non-judgemental, and share experiences
- Ombudsmen are volunteers who work for the good of the survivors and families dealing with brain injuries in NC

Confidentiality

- Ombudsmen do not reveal the identity of person making complaint without permission
- Database of Complaints and Outcomes will be maintained by lead Ombudsman
- When reporting information, identifying information on individual referrals will not be included, to protect confidentiality

Ethics for Ombudsmen

- Promotes self-determination and individual choice
- Protects from abuse and neglect or exploitation
- Seeks educational accommodations in schools
- Promotes quality long term care
- Provides personal advocacy unrestricted by personal belief or opinion
- Safeguards rights to privacy and access to records
- Knowledgeable on systems, service options, and regulatory and legislative information

Setting Boundaries

- Impartial in gathering information
- To maintain credibility, Ombudsman should avoid “taking sides”
- Look at your own values and biases
- Advocate for seeking resolution even if you don't agree with issue
- Do not assist in pursuing illegal activities
- Encourage others to act on their own behalf

BIANC Brain Injury Resource Centers

How does the Ombudsman fit into the existing information and referral structure?

- BIANC provides information and referral to other services/supports and Training
- Ombudsmen have personal experience
- Staff and volunteers work as team
- Work Space and Support provided
- Resource Rooms/Resource Books available

Making the Connection

How will the Ombudsman make connections with families and persons with brain injury?

- Overview & Contact information on website
- Article in BIANC Newsletters
- Ombudsman make contacts in Community during visits or training sessions
- Outreach Coordinators make referrals
- Lead Ombudsman assigns each new referral

Why contact an Ombudsman?

- A concern about quality of care or quality of life
- Survivor or Family member needs support and someone to talk to who has personal experience
- Violation of rights or dignity
- Poor quality of care, lack of access to services
- Improper transfer or discharge of patient to inappropriate or restrictive setting
- Physical, verbal or mental abuse, deprivation of services necessary to maintain physical and mental health, or lack of reasonable accommodations
- Need more information on brain injury or training

Collecting Information

- A data collection system has been designed to capture information on inquiries, concerns, issues and outcomes
- Each case or complaint and each outcome will be documented and reported to BIANC BOD, to the NC BI Advisory Council, and to the Division of MH/DD/SAS without identifying information for confidentiality

Cases can be Consultation or Training or a Complaint

Consultation: Provide peer support, information or assistance to an individual, family member or facility. This could involve Training or Referral to another agency.

Complaint- Concern brought to or initiated by the Ombudsman relating to access, safety, rights etc.

Case- Each new referral is a Case. Includes one or more complaints or consultation/peer support or training needs brought to or initiated by the Ombudsman which the Ombudsman is involved in, investigates, and works to resolve

Verifying Complaints

- Some cases will involve a complaint
- Ombudsman will attempt to verify complaints
- They can work to resolve complaints whether the complaint is verified or not
- Each complaint may involve a different issue, and will have a “disposition or outcome code”
- A case is closed when the consultation or complaint requires no further action by an Ombudsman or training need met.

Possible Complaint Issues

- Abuse, Neglect, Exploitation
- Access to Information or Services
- Educational Accommodations/IEP violation
- Admission/Transfer/Discharge from Services
- Autonomy, Choice, Exercise of Rights, Privacy
- Resident Care (Nursing home, Group home)
- Quality of Life
- Environmental or Safety related
- Problems with Agency/System or Person

Documenting Outcome of Case

Disposition or Outcome Possibilities

- Legislative or Regulatory Action Required
- Not Resolved
- Withdrawn
- Referred for Resolution to another agency
- No Action Needed or Appropriate
- Partially Resolved
- Resolved

Case Examples

- Family member is not satisfied with nursing home placement for their person with traumatic brain injury
- Survivor needs to be able to talk to someone who has personal experience with brain injury
- Parent is concerned about the lack of educational accommodations offered to their child with a traumatic brain injury within school system
- Person with brain injury being treated in a psychiatric setting which family feels is not appropriate
- Family member is providing care for newly injured family member at home and needs support

When a call or referral comes in...

- Referral or Call goes to Lead Ombudsman
- Lead Ombudsman assigns to Ombudsman
- Ombudsman completes the Intake form
- Monthly Case Note Forms document activity
- Discharge/Outcome Form when case closed
- Lead Ombudsman then follows up each case to determine satisfaction

Resource and Referral

- Determine what services or supports are needed
- BIANC BI Resource Centers and staff can help
- Learn when to refer to another agency:
 - LME/Division of MH/DD/SAS
 - ECAC (Exceptional Children: School issues)
 - Long Term Care Ombudsmen
 - Disability Rights NC
 - Veterans Service Officers

Using the Internet

- To find resources and educational information

- Websites to explore:

www.bianc.net

<http://www.ncdhhs.gov/mhddsas/tbi/index.htm>

<http://biaa.org/>

Volunteer Appreciation

- Thanks to each of you for your time and consideration
- We appreciate your desire to help others
- We want to support you as future brain injury Ombudsmen or Peer Support Volunteers
- If interested, complete an Ombudsman application and let us know the skills or experience you have

Contact Information

Lead Ombudsman: Betty Lilyquist
2440 SW Cary Parkway #104
Cary, NC 27513

- Fax No.: 919-468-0861
 - Email: sunzon@nc.rr.com
- To Make a Referral:
- Phone No.: 919-651-9760

Contact Information

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