

# Alabama's Head and Spinal Cord Injury Trust Fund

## REPORT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017

Every year, 1.7 million individuals in the U.S. sustain a traumatic brain injury (TBI), and more than 10,000 of those are Alabama residents. The nature of TBI requires specialized providers and individualized supports. Without timely access to expert care management and customized services, these children and adults are unable to live healthy, independent, satisfying lives.

In response to this need, the Alabama Legislature in 1992 gave the Impaired Drivers Trust Fund Advisory Board the responsibility of facilitating a comprehensive system of services for Alabamians with head and spinal cord injury. The following year, the Legislature passed Act 93-323, establishing the Impaired Drivers Trust Fund (IDTF) and imposing an additional \$100 fine on persons convicted of driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, with proceeds allocated to the IDTF. Each year, these proceeds are used as payer of last resort for costs of care provided to Alabamians who live with TBI or spinal cord injury (SCI). County clerks collect the money and deposit it into the state treasury. The funds are included in the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS) budget, and ADRS disperses monies in accordance with criteria established by the board.

In 2016, the law was amended (Act 16-259) to change the name to the Alabama Head and Spinal Cord Injury Trust Fund to more accurately represent who is being served with the revenue. Case management, counseling, pre-vocational services, cognitive remediation, family education, community resource provision, respite care, recreational supports, and attendant care are provided by programs within ADRS and the Alabama Head Injury Foundation. These services are made possible by the trust fund and enable Alabamians with TBI and SCI to strive for and achieve an improved quality of life following injury. While the name change was an important first step, more action is necessary to ensure that individuals and families continue to receive these critical supports. Additional revenue is needed to meet the growing demand for services for individuals who are newly injured; without it, Alabamians will be underserved.

## Advisory Board

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Dear Legislator,

We are pleased to present the 2017 Annual Report for Alabama's Head and Spinal Cord Injury Trust Fund (AHSCITF).

Alabamians with traumatic brain injuries (TBI) and spinal cord injuries (SCI) are better equipped to strive for and achieve an improved quality of life following injury thanks to the services made possible by the AHSCITF.

These vital, life-changing services are the result of collaboration between the AHSCITF Advisory Board and public and private organizations, including the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, the Alabama Head Injury Foundation, and the Alabama Department of Public Health.

Please join us in thanking the partners and staff who labor unceasingly to better the lives of all Alabamians with traumatic brain and/or spinal cord injury.

Jane Elizabeth Burdeshaw, commissioner  
Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services

Reyn Norman, chairman  
Alabama Department of Insurance

## What is traumatic brain injury (TBI)?

Traumatic brain injury (TBI) is damage to the brain that results when the head is hit, strikes a stationary object, or is violently shaken. A TBI can occur without any outward physical evidence of trauma. Damage to the brain may occur immediately, or it may develop as a result of swelling or bleeding following injury. Common consequences of TBI can involve sensory, cognitive, behavioral, and/or emotional impairments. Brain injuries are classified as mild, moderate, or severe depending on the type of injury or pressure and changes in the brain, and can be temporary or lifelong.

## Service Component

Through funds provided by the AHSCITF, specific programs have been created and implemented to address the needs of people with TBI and SCI. In FY 2017, these programs provided the following services:

### **Information and Referral - 1,002 callers received immediate information**

The Alabama Head and Spinal Cord Injury Registry Helpline, **1-888-879-4706**, and The Alabama Head Injury Foundation's toll-free helpline, **1-800-433-8002**, provided immediate information to 1,002 callers. Requests for information were also followed up on locally, with referrals as necessary.

### **Resource coordination - 722 consumers/families served**

This program helped 722 consumers and their families find and access the coordinated, community-based assistance they needed.

### **Interactive Community-Based Model (ICBM) - 143 individuals transitioned from hospital to community**

Through the efforts of this five-phased rehabilitation program, 143 consumers transitioned from the hospital to home and the community, reducing cost of post-acute care and increasing average salary income for those returning to work.

### **Respite care - 64 families served**

Services were provided to 64 families, relieving them of the around-the-clock responsibilities of caring for a family member. More than 4,490 hours of in-home care were provided.

### **Recreation - 193 support group meetings held**

There were 193 support group meetings in 15 different locations statewide, with more than 3,241 in attendance.

**Service Linkage System:  
1.888.879.4706**