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# Brain Injury & Behavioral Health

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## THE KEY IS SCREENING

Chris Miller

Director, Brain Injury Services Coordination Unit

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TBI has been called the “signature injury” of the current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Increasingly, soldiers are surviving nearby bomb blasts, which produce brain injury through pressure waves that “shake” the brain, which can cause symptoms ranging from dizziness and drowsiness to vomiting, severe headache and shock. If the injury is severe enough the damage can be irreversible, leaving lasting mental effects including depression, anxiety, personality changes, aggression, acting out and social inappropriateness.

*Courtney Reyers - NAMI Website - 3/21/2013*

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The opioid epidemic has resulted in an increasing number of non-fatal overdoses that can potentially result in lasting changes in cognition and behavior. Overdose can result in hypoxic brain injury (loss of oxygen to the brain). It has been estimated that in North America, approximately 23% of all IV drug users will experience a nonfatal overdose per year.

*Traumatic Brain Injury and Substance Use Disorders: Making the Connections*  
*Carolyn Lemsky, PhD, C Psych ABPP-CN, November 2021*

# Why Knowing about Brain Injury Matters

Brain injury is often an invisible disability, it is easy to miss and to misunderstand.

It's likely that several of the people you already support have a brain injury. When this is the case, there are resources that can help you support the individual.

Making accommodation for a person with a brain injury is not complicated. The accommodations you learn to apply for someone with a brain injury may benefit other people in your practices as well.

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Neurobehavioral consequences of TBI do not have to undermine the ability for patients to participate in and benefit from the vast majority of conventional treatments. Behavioral health professionals do not require extensive additional expertise to accommodate neurobehavioral deficits in how they communicate with patients and take into account cognitive and emotional abilities in the treatment process...Most accommodations in treatment are simple adjustments.

*SAMHSA Advisory - TREATING PATIENTS WITH TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY*  
*PUBLICATION NO. PEP21-05-03-001*

# The Importance of Screening

Many people may not think their brain injury is relevant to behavioral health or substance use concerns.

Many people may not have been diagnosed with a brain injury.

How you ask the question is important.

Have you every had a brain injury? – No

Have you ever been hit in the head so hard you lost consciousness? – Yes!

# OBISS

## Online Brain Injury Screening and Support System

The OBISS is an online screening system that determines a potential exposure to brain injury in someone's lifetime and identifies any associated problems that are present.

The OBISS uses tested and reliable tools: the Ohio State University-Traumatic Brain Injury-Identification Method (OSU-TBI-ID) and the Symptoms Questionnaire for Brain Injury (SQBI, formerly the Colorado Symptoms Questionnaire). The information is stored in a secure program.

DARS Brain Injury Unit will have a subscription to the OBISS. Other organizations can access the screener through a link and password generated specifically for them.

# Resources

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- ❑ SAMHSA Advisory - TREATING PATIENTS WITH TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY PUBLICATION NO. PEP21-05-03-001 <https://store.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/pep21-05-03-001.pdf>
- ❑ [Administration for Community Living Behavioral Health Guide: Considerations for Best Practices for Children, Youth, and Adults with TBI May 2022 https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/programs/2022-05/TBITARC\\_BH\\_Guide\\_Final\\_May2022\\_Accessible.pdf](https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/programs/2022-05/TBITARC_BH_Guide_Final_May2022_Accessible.pdf)
- ❑ [Traumatic Brain Injury and Substance Use Disorders: Making the Connections https://attcnetwork.org/sites/default/files/2021-11/TBI%20%20SUD%20Toolkit%20FINAL%2011.05.2021.pdf](https://attcnetwork.org/sites/default/files/2021-11/TBI%20%20SUD%20Toolkit%20FINAL%2011.05.2021.pdf)
- ❑ Substance Abuse Brain Injury Client Workbook (Dr. Carolyn Lemsky et. al) <https://www.brainline.org/article/substance-abusebrain-injury-client-workbook>  
<https://www.brainline.org/sites/default/files/SUBIClientWorkbook.pdf>



# Contact Information

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## **Chris Miller**

Director, Brain Injury Services Coordination Unit

Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services

804.662.7615

[christiane.miller@dars.virginia.gov](mailto:christiane.miller@dars.virginia.gov)