

TBI COORDINATOR

Inge H. Thomas, Ph.D.

Location: TBI Program GA139

The TBI Coordinator helps coordinate the overall care of veterans with traumatic brain injury. Services include coordinating evaluation, referrals, follow-up and care management plan. The TBI Coordinator also refers veterans to community and VA resources. The TBI Team has special skills for working with veterans who have traumatic brain injury.

PHYSICIANS/ NURSE PRACTITIONERS

Alice Fann, M.D., Ph.D.
Krish Sathian, M.D., Ph.D.
Beverly Rose, MSN, NP-C
Cathy Scully, MSN, NP-C

Location: Dr Fann, Physiatrist and Dr. Sathian, Neurologist are located in Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation.

Retired Major Rose and Ms. Scully are located in Audiology & Speech Pathology.

These providers are trained to assess the medical consequences of TBI. As the first step in your treatment, a TBI provider will interview and examine you to assess the impact of your brain injury on your physical, mental and social health. The provider, along with other members of the TBI team, will then develop a treatment plan. The treatment plan may include medications, referral to specialty clinics and referral to the other team members listed below. You may need to have tests such as magnetic resonance imaging studies (MRIs) and blood tests to look for other problems.

SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGISTS

Christina Huffman, M.A., CCC-SLP
Kathleen Kaminski, M.S., CCC-SLP

Location: Audiology & Speech Pathology

On your first visit, the speech/language pathologist (SLP) will assess if you have problems with speaking, listening, reading, writing, swallowing or cognitive communication abilities. Cognitive-communication processes include executive function, attention, processing of information, memory, visual and space perception, problem solving ability and psychosocial behavior. These problems can result from a head injury. The speech pathologist will review your goals to decide if you need more evaluation or treatment.

Speech Pathologists may teach you how to use memory aids or exercises to help keep you focused and remember important information in your everyday life. SLPs can work with you and your family members to make sure you understand how to use these methods in your daily activities. It is common for patients with TBI to have

problems learning new information or remembering older information. The goals of rehabilitation include plans to help manage time, set goals, stay organized, and choose good study habits for work or school. You may also be given home assignments. You may also be invited to participate in individual treatment or group activities.

TBI SOCIAL WORKER

Lyn Green, LCSW

Location: TBI Program GA-139

The TBI Social Worker is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker who helps you to locate resources (financial, housing/homeless, transportation, VA benefits/claims). The TBI Social Worker refers veterans/caregivers to community and VA resources and educates veterans/caregivers on adjustment strategies to help improve quality of daily living.

NEUROPSYCHOLOGISTS AND PSYCHOMETRISTS

Suzanne Penna, Ph.D., Neuropsychologist
Alyssa Braaten, Ph.D., Neuropsychologist
Judy Thurmond, B.S., Psychometrist
Milton Dotson, B.A., Psychometrist

Location: TBI Program GA-139

Neuropsychologists specialize in the assessment of cognitive functioning. They evaluate patients with known or suspected brain dysfunction including traumatic brain injury. There are several components to an evaluation by the neuropsychologist. First is a clinical interview, which assesses a patient's social, psychological, medical, and cognitive functioning. Next is the administration of neuropsychological tests which assess all areas of brain functioning including fine motor skills, attention, concentration, language, memory, visual-spatial skills, reasoning, and intellectual functioning. The assessment results are discussed with the patient, and treatment recommendations are made based on the information gathered.

Data from these tests can help determine if the problems a veteran is experiencing are the result of traumatic brain injury, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), or another medical problem based on the pattern of performance on these tests. The neuropsychologist may provide cognitive therapy or individual cognitive rehabilitation.

PHYSICAL THERAPIST

Location: Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation

Physical therapists (PTs) evaluate and treat patients who have movement problems. These problems may be due to your brain injury, or to associated medical nerve conditions. The physical therapist is trained to identify and treat these problems. PTs use several methods including exercise and manual therapy. These treatments will often help reduce pain, and improve flexibility and strength. The physical

therapist helps patients become as functional as possible.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST

Jeesa John Skaria, OTR/L

Location: Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation

An Occupational therapist (OT's) is a healthcare professional who evaluates the self-care, work, and leisure skills of a disabled or injured person. Occupational Therapists work with people to achieve Independence and to improve their quality of life. As a member of the TBI program, the Occupational therapist will complete a full assessment and provide the appropriate treatment plan, according to the patients needs.

AUDIOLOGISTS

Location: Audiology & Speech Pathology

An audiologist works with you to solve hearing problems. Your hearing ability will be tested. The audiologist will help you learn how to cope with hearing loss, bothersome sounds in your ears (tinnitus, balance and dizziness problems and auditory processing deficits). Hearing aids or other assistive listening devices may be provided if you need them.

TBI PEER VISITOR

Tom Houchins

Location: Audiology & Speech Pathology

The TBI Peer Visitor program provides trained brain injury survivors to visit with patients and their families. In addition to education and community support services, these volunteers provide hope and serve as positive role models.

COGNITIVE REHABILITATION

Cognitive Rehabilitation is interdisciplinary. The TBI Program offers cognitive rehabilitation through interdisciplinary interventions to ensure that individuals with TBI receive optimal care. Family and friends are encouraged to be an active part of the rehabilitation process. Recommendations for Best Practice in Cognitive Rehabilitation Therapy from the Society for Cognition Rehabilitation recognize that Cognitive Rehabilitation Therapy (CRT) is not a "stand alone" therapy but must be part of an approach that includes many specialties.

TRAUMA RECOVERY PROGRAM (TRP)/ MENTAL HEALTH/ PSYCHOLOGISTS

Location: Mental Health

The Trauma Recovery Program (TRP) provides specialized treatment to veterans who experienced trauma while in military service. Specialized treatment is available for veterans who have recent trauma, longstanding trauma-related symptoms, military sexual trauma, and specific treatment for women veterans.