



## Working Together Promoting Brain Injury Awareness Month

### NASHIA Celebrates March Brain Injury Awareness Month: Spotlight on Maryland

During March, the National Association of State Head Injury Administrators (NASHIA) is featuring articles about the impact of brain injury on individuals and families; state resources and services; and initiatives promoting awareness and improving service delivery. This week, NASHIA features the work in Maryland on the relationship of opioid use and brain injury. Also featured in this issue are examples of State and local organizations promoting March Brain Injury Awareness Month. Have a story to share? Send to Susan Vaughn at [publicpolicy@nashia.org](mailto:publicpolicy@nashia.org). Meanwhile, you may access NASHIA's Awareness Campaign materials [here](#).



### Maryland Health Department Develops New Resources on Opioid Use and Brain Injury

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) has developed a [new resource](#) to help Overdose Fatality Review Teams identify evidence of brain injury in those who have died by overdose. The brain injury-informed strategy includes a new checklist of medications, family history, hospital care, and law enforcement records and one-pager to help Overdose Fatality Review Teams. These teams conduct “social autopsies,” recording information about the deceased to critically analyze individual cases of drug overdose, identify preventable risk factors

The long-term goal is to incorporate this resource into prevention efforts and use it as a tool to keep people alive. The tool was developed by Anastasia Edmonston, BHA federal TBI Grant Project Coordinator who is working with prevention specialists, including MDH's Brooke Holmes, Administrator--OFR Manager, and Dr. Billina Shaw of the Prince George's County Health Department to integrate this tool into the Overdose Fatality Review Teams. [A fact sheet](#) has also been created for individuals with brain injury and families to help them understand their risk of

and missed opportunities for intervention, and prevent future overdose deaths.

developing an Opioid Use Disorder and possible risk of overdose.

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### Did you know?

- *People who have a history of a moderate to severe traumatic brain injury (TBI) are 11 times more likely to die from an overdose than those without a history of TBI.*
- *Researchers report that people with TBI are at a significantly greater risk for opioid misuse and overdose.*
- *Contributing to this risk, 70-80% of people with TBI are discharged from inpatient rehabilitation with an opioid prescription.*
- *If the brain is starved of oxygen for more than 5-6 minutes due to an overdose, people who survive their overdose may sustain an Acquired Brain Injury (ABI).*

Click [here](#) to review a PowerPoint on "Overdose Fatality Review in Maryland," June 26, 2019.



## Promoting Awareness from Coast to Coast!

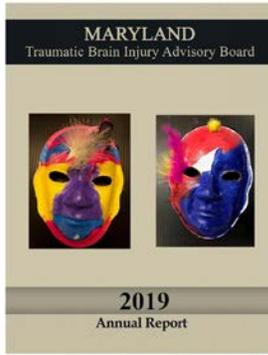


**North Platte, Nebraska**, Mayor Dwight Livingston declared March as TBI Awareness Month this past week. The proclamation was arranged by the North Platte Brain Injury Support Group. Judy Nichelson, Nebraska Brain Injury Advisory Council Chairperson, is also the North Platte Support Group leader.

The **North Dakota** Brain Injury Network, funded by the North Dakota Department of Human Services, has developed a March Brain Injury Awareness Campaign, featuring graphics, messages, and examples of activities to promote awareness. You may click [here](#) to learn more about the campaign. North Dakota Governor Doug Burgum has proclaimed March 2020 as Brain Injury Awareness Month.

The **San Diego** Brain Injury Foundation is hosting its 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Survive HEADSTRONG for Brain Injury Recovery walk on March 21, 2020. Nearly 1000 individuals attend to celebrate the achievements of survivors and their families and friends as they all take steps on their journey to recovery from brain injury, as well as to promote March Brain Injury Awareness Month.





The **Maryland** TBI Advisory Board incorporated the Unmasking Brain Injury Initiative into an [annual report](#) to the Governor and State legislature to highlight personal stories of Marylanders with brain injuries, in partnership with the Brain Injury Association of Maryland (BIAMD). As part of BIAMD's Unmasking Brain Injury 2.0 project, Marylanders with brain injuries and their caregivers were asked to create masks to put a face on this "invisible epidemic." BIAMD then asked them to tell their story and describe their mask. Throughout this report are photos of masks and a QR code which can be scanned with any smartphone or tablet camera app which will take you to a short video to let the individual personally tell you their story and describe their mask.