

NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services and Head Injury Association of North Dakota

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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March is Brain Injury Awareness Month

Traumatic Brain Injury Awareness, Treatment, and Recovery Focus of Two-Day Conference

BISMARCK, N.D. – A traumatic brain injury can happen at anytime, anywhere, and to anyone. The **“Mind Matters 2012” Brain Injury Conference** on March 7-8, 2012, at the Radisson Hotel in Bismarck, aims to educate medical and other treatment professionals, veterans, brain injury survivors and their family members, and others about the prevalence and effects of brain injury and the recovery process. An entire day will be dedicated to traumatic brain injury issues facing men and woman serving in the armed forces.

“A brain injury can have a dramatic impact on a person’s life, as well as the lives of family and friends,” said Richard Ott, executive director of Head Injury Association of North Dakota. “This conference offers dialogue from a variety of perspectives to better understand brain injuries and their long-lasting effects.”

The morning keynote presentation on March 7 features Harvey Jacobs, Ph.D., a psychologist and behavior analyst, who will provide an in-depth look at behavioral changes caused by traumatic brain injuries. Afternoon presentations include recognizing the causes, consequences, and challenges traumatic brain injuries have on individuals, families and communities, long-term rehabilitation, pain control, transition planning for community living, and more. There will also be a panel discussion featuring three people living with traumatic brain injuries from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. on March 7.

The second day of the conference will examine the diagnosis, treatment, recovery, rehabilitation and re-integration to community living for military veterans with traumatic brain injuries. Three veterans with traumatic brain injuries will share stories of their road to recovery during a special panel discussion from noon to 1:30 p.m. on March 8.

“Traumatic brain injuries have been called the ‘signature injury’ of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars,” said JoAnne Hoesel, director for the N.D. Department of Human Services’ Mental Health Substance Abuse Services Division. “It is fitting to make this topic a major component of the conference so everyone becomes aware of and learns about this growing threat to all soldiers.”

The conference is sponsored by the University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Services, Head Injury Association of North Dakota, the N.D. Department of Human Services, and the N.D. Protection and Advocacy Project.

Continuing education credits are available for psychologists, social workers, and licensed addiction counselors. Registration will be accepted at the door. For more details or a schedule of events, go online to www.braininjurynd.com/pdf/brain_injury_conference_brochure.pdf.

The N.D. Department of Human Services is the lead state agency serving people dealing with traumatic brain injuries and their families. For more information about brain injury services and supports, contact the department’s Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services Division at 701-328-8920, toll-free 800-755-2719 or ND Relay TTY 1-800-366-6888.

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