

# **NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services**

## **600 East Boulevard Avenue, Bismarck ND 58505**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**March 21, 2014**

For more information, contact: LuWanna Lawrence at 701-328-1892, or Heather Steffl at 701-328-4933

### **New Resource Offers Support to Individuals with Traumatic Brain Injuries**

*Gov. Dalrymple proclaims March as Brain Injury Awareness Month*

BISMARCK, N.D. - The N.D. Department of Human Services has contracted with the Center for Rural Health at the University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Services to launch a statewide network that offers supportive services for individuals who have sustained a traumatic brain injury and their family members.

The North Dakota Brain Injury Network is designed to be a single point of contact for individuals interested in learning more about traumatic brain injuries and what services and supports are available to individuals with brain injuries and their loved ones.

“Navigating the path of recovery after a traumatic brain injury can be confusing and stressful for individuals and families,” said Rebecca Quinn, program director for the North Dakota Brain Injury Network. “This network will provide support and understanding to people who might be struggling with issues relating to a brain injury.”

The North Dakota Brain Injury Network has three resource facilitation coordinators located in Bismarck, Grand Forks, and Towner, N.D. Each coordinator works one-on-one with an individual who has a brain injury and their family to provide support and identify services and resources in their communities. They will assist to make referrals to public and private providers who can help them live as independently as possible. The coordinators also help connect individuals with others who have experienced a brain injury for peer-support. The coordinators are available to conduct educational trainings to organizations, businesses, and communities to increase awareness of brain injuries.

Quinn said the resource facilitation coordinators will network with medical-related organizations and professionals to increase awareness about the network.

“This effort is really about working towards a unified and collaborative system of support to meet the unique needs of individuals with brain injuries and their families,” said Susan Wagner, program administrator with the N.D. Department of Human Services.

The North Dakota Brain Injury Network also offers a variety of brochures, pamphlets, as well as other resources including DVDs on traumatic brain injuries. All materials are available at no cost.

For more information on the North Dakota Brain Injury Network or to connect with a resource facilitation coordinator, call toll-free 855-866-1884 or visit [www.ndbin.com](http://www.ndbin.com).

The 2013 legislature provided additional funding to the N.D. Department of Human Services, the lead state agency serving people with traumatic brain injuries, to enhance a support system for individuals living with brain injuries and their caregivers.

**-MORE-**

According to the Centers for Disease Control, about 13,000 North Dakotans are affected by a traumatic brain injury. The leading causes of brain injuries are falls, motor vehicle and traffic accidents, and sports-related injuries.

The Brain Injury Awareness Month proclamation is online at <http://governor.nd.gov/media-center/proclamation/brain-injury-awareness-month-2>.

###