Undiagnosed Brain Injuries in Wyoming’s Prisons

Prepared for
The Wyoming Department of Health
Division of Developmental Disabilities

By
The Brain Injury Association of Wyoming

Introduction

• Department of Health Receives HRSA Grant
  – Funds ABI Task Force
  – Funds Wyoming Gaps and Needs Study
    • Complete
  – Funds Insurance Study
    • Complete
  – Funds Adolescent Study
    • Report being developed
  – Funds Prison Study
    • Report being developed

Prison Survey

• Surveyed in Men’s and Women’s Prisons
• 144 Men & 51 Women
  – Proportional to men and women in prisons
• Performed in the prisons
  – Rawlins
  – Lusk
• Groups and individuals surveyed
• Different levels of security risk

Survey Tool

• Brain Injury Survey Questionnaire (BISQ)
  – Dr. Wayne Gordon
  – Department of Rehabilitation Medicine, Mount Sinai School of Medicine, NYC
  – Fill in the dots
  – Machine scored
  – 17 pages
Survey Tool - continued

• Data Gathered
  – Demographics
    - Age
    - Gender
    - Ethnicity
  – Education
  – Income
  – Injuries experienced
  – Symptoms experienced
  – Medical history

Survey Tool - continued

• Results generated
  – Probability of brain injury
    - 1 = highly unlikely
    - 2-3 = low probability
    - 4 = moderate probability
    - 5 = high probability
  – Description of significant symptoms
  – Accommodations to address significant symptoms

Study Challenges

• Institutional Review Board (IRB)
  – Finding one (Dept. of Health)
  – Passing review
    - Confidentiality requirements
    - Informed consent
• Time to get surveys processed
• Changes in staff
• Format of the processed data

Study Challenges – continued

• Security at the prisons
  – Taking Photographs

Dorothy & Stacey set up

Dorothy at prison gate

Stacey jokes with inmates

Dorothy administers BISQ

Violated Wyoming Statute WS152.24.6a

No humor Allowed!
Prisoner Demographics

- Men
  - Age: 17 – 82 (avg ~37)
  - 78% White, 22% Minority
  - 30% deny DOC data
  - Education
    - 17% no High School diploma
    - 45% High School diploma
    - 28% Some past High School
    - 8% AA/BS degree
    - 2% Post degree work

- Women
  - Age: 20 – 58 (avg ~36)
  - 91% White, 9% Minority
  - 59% deny DOC data
  - Education
    - 30% no High School diploma
    - 38% High School diploma
    - 28% Some past High School
    - 19% AA/BS degree
    - 4% Post degree work

Results Sampler

- CDC statistics indicate about 3% of Wyomingites live with brain injuries

Wyoming prison study results are shown below:

Results Sampler - continued

% Reporting 3+ Abuse Incidents

Results Sampler - continued

% Reporting 3+ Assaults
Results Sampler - continued

**Most Reported by WOMEN with Moderate/High Probability of Brain Injury**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause of Blow</th>
<th>Percent Reporting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Car/van/truck/bus crash</td>
<td>91.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being physically abused</td>
<td>82.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falling during a drug or alcohol blackout</td>
<td>Each category was reported 69.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being assaulted or mugged</td>
<td>61.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falling down stairs</td>
<td>42.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>While playing on playground</td>
<td>47.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Many respondents reported numerous injuries/blows to the head, so the % reporting will = more than 100%)

**Most Reported by MEN with Moderate/High Probability of Brain Injury**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause of Blow</th>
<th>Percent Reporting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Car/van/truck/bus crash</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being assaulted or mugged</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falling during a drug or alcohol blackout</td>
<td>Each category was reported 42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being physically abused</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>While playing on playground</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In sports (football, baseball, basketball)</td>
<td>Each category was reported 38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>While biking</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>While on the playground</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falling from a height</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results Sampler - continued

**Percent by Ethnicity with Likely Brain Injury**

Results Sampler - continued

**Percent with Likely Brain Injury by Education**
Recommendations

- Brief screening of all incarcerated persons
- BISQ screen when first screen indicates
- Neuropsychological exam when BISQ indicates
- Appropriate referrals as indicated
- Training of DOC staff
- Support groups for prisoners
- Release planning for brain injured inmates