

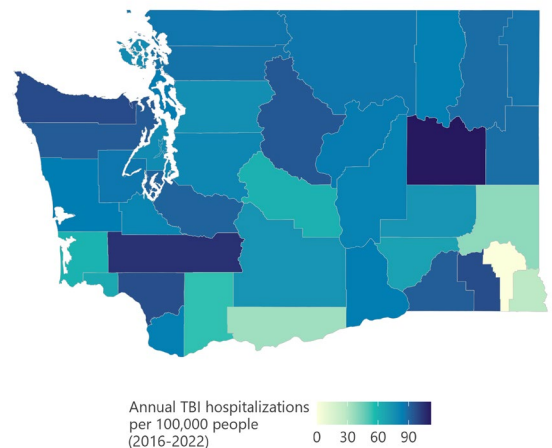
Traumatic Brain Injury and Long-term Services and Supports in Washington State

The 2023 Washington Legislature directed WSIPP to study the potential need for developing specialized long-term services and supports (LTSS) for adults with traumatic brain injury (TBI), including description of the demographics of adults with TBIs in the state, methods other states use to provide LTSS to adults after TBI, and a description of industry standards.

Background

Traumatic brain injury—damage to the brain caused by an external blow or jolt—is described as a chronic condition since its effects may persist years after an injury. TBI is a major public health issue: millions of US adults experience a TBI each year, and as many as half who survive a serious injury have lasting functional limitations. LTSS include a range of resources to help people with chronic conditions maintain their quality of life. Long-term needs following TBI vary widely—from help with daily tasks to support navigating relationships. For some, these challenges are lifelong. Adults with TBI often rely on informal caregivers, such as family and friends. Medicaid is the primary payer for professional long-term services and support.

Traumatic Brain Injury Hospitalizations in Washington State (2016-2022)



Findings

- Older adults in Washington have ten times the risk of TBI-related hospitalization as younger adults, but one-third of hospitalizations involve adults younger than 55.
- Medicaid-insured adults are hospitalized with a TBI at three times the rate of privately insured. Privately insured adults represent a larger proportion of outpatient diagnoses.
- Standards for TBI-LTSS are influenced by federal regulation, state budgetary constraints, and stakeholder engagement.
- Some states have Medicaid programs exclusively for people with brain injuries. In Washington, adults with TBIs receive support through programs that serve many groups, not just those with brain injuries.
- Washington's residential care facilities exhibit greater specialization than LTSS facilities in many other states.
- States moving adults with TBI to managed care LTSS use specialized programs to ensure continuity of support.

Assignment Details

Assigned in 2023 Legislative Session
ESSB 5187, Operating Budget

Full report available on WSIPP's website

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