

*Commonwealth Neurotrauma Initiative Trust Fund*

**Meeting Minutes**  
**March 14, 2008-DRAFT**

**Members Present**

**Richard Bendall, Jr., MD** Monelison Family Physician, Lynchburg  
**Gregory Helm, M.D., Ph.D.** University of Virginia Medical Center, Charlottesville  
**Terry Glenn** Department of Corrections, Richmond  
**Doug Harris, J.D.** State Health Commissioner Designee, Richmond  
**Teresa Poole** Lakeview Blue Ridge, Blacksburg  
**David Reid, Psy.D., Chair** Comprehensive Health Systems, Fishersville  
*\*Via teleconference as an accomodation*  
**Jim Rothrock** Department of Rehabilitative Services, Richmond  
*(Ex-officio)*

**Staff**

**Kristie Chamberlain** Department of Rehabilitative Services, CNI Program  
Administrator  
**Patti Goodall** Department of Rehabilitative Services, Manager, BI/SCI  
Services

**Guests**

**Janet Niemeier, Ph.D.** Virginia Commonwealth University  
**Shy DeGrace** Virginia Commonwealth University

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The Commonwealth Neurotrauma Initiative (CNI) Advisory Board met for a regular quarterly business meeting in the Lobby Conference Room at 8004 Franklin Farms Drive in Richmond, Virginia. Commissioner Rothrock, as acting Chair, convened the meeting at 10:04 a.m. with introductions of meeting guests and board members.

**Public Comment Period**

A public comment period was held. There was no public comment.

**Approval of December 14, 2007 Minutes**

**Teresa Poole made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Approval of March 14, 2008 Agenda**

**The agenda was adopted as distributed.**

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### **Presentation from Janet Niemeier, Ph.D.-Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU)**

Dr. Janet Niemeier and one of her research assistants, Shy DeGrace came to the Board to present an update on the progress of their CNI Grant #07-060, *Virginia Clubhouse Vocational Transition program*. The grant is finishing up its second of three years of funding working with brain injury clubhouses across the Commonwealth to assist the members to become job ready and to train the staff at the clubhouses to implement the Vocational Transition program as trainers. As a result of the grant initiatives thus far, volunteering has increased substantially at each clubhouse and the transition model has been picked up for publishing and recognition on a national level.

### **Comments from the Commissioner of DRS**

Commissioner Rothrock gave a brief update on the status of the General Assembly.

- The General Assembly adjourned.
- The Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS) will get \$200,000 in FY'08 allocated specifically for brain injury service dollars (the specific intent for cola for current state contracts vs. award of brain injury service dollars to a new organization is being confirmed). The FY'08 \$200,000 will be used in concert with the Virginia Brain Injury Council's recommendations to the Commissioner. In addition DRS received \$200,000 allocated for FY'09 for brain injury services (again, intent to be confirmed by legislative services).
- The Trauma Fund (similar to CNI), managed by the Virginia Department of Health, had funds that were raided this general assembly by the Governor.
- Legislation was passed to end the practices around the brain injury registry (hospitals reported brain injuries and will not be required any longer). The Brain Injury Association of Virginia (BIAV), using CNI funding, is researching how to do outreach and coordination to the families of individuals with brain injury. The trauma registry data (related to brain injuries) located at the Virginia Department of Health will be shared with DRS via the legislation language starting in FY'09.
- The CNI Trust Fund Annual Report was moved from an annual report to triennial report. This will go into effect July 1, 2008.
- Department of Veterans Services is developing an initiative using between 4.5-4.9 million that will respond to the needs of returning veterans who have problems with post-traumatic stress syndrome, brain injury, mental health issues including depression and substance abuse. Five new staff will be allocated around the state to work with community service boards (csb) and the brain injury network members to respond to the needs of these returning veterans and their families. The new staff will receive referrals, complaints and purchase services from a brain injury service provider or the CSB to provide the services required to address the aforementioned problems.
- Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services is now Department of Mental Health, Intellectual Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services. The name change goes into effect July 2009.

### **Smart Home for Individuals with Cognitive Impairment**

Commissioner Rothrock recently received a written proposal from Virginia Commonwealth University, PI-Tony Gentry, Ph.D., OTR/L in the amount of \$22,756 to be used over one year (April 2008-March 2009). The proposal was submitted in accordance with the legal authority of

the Commissioner of the Department of Rehabilitative Services to reallocate CNI Trust Fund dollars for research grants, There is current budgetary language that allows for such an award:

*Page 311, after line 54:*

*"2. Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, the Commissioner may reallocate up to \$500,000 from unexpended balances in the Commonwealth Neurotrauma Initiative Trust Fund to fund new grant awards for research on traumatic brain and spinal cord injuries."*

The proposal is requesting funding to implement the first research of its kind in the Commonwealth of Virginia, examining the use of home accommodation hardware and software designed to improve the safety and accessibility of the home environment for individuals with cognitive disability. Currently rehabilitation practitioners do not typically use smart home technologies with this population, so this research may lead to an entirely new set of resources to improve independence and safety for these individuals.

Researchers will assess the cognitive function of participants using the Rivermead Behavioral Memory Test – Extended (RBMT-E) and the Test of Everyday Attention (TEA), both ecologically valid instruments. They will test the functional independence of participants utilizing the Canadian Occupational Performance Measure (COPM) and the Functional Assessment Tool for Cognitive Assistive Technology (FATCAT) prior to the intervention and at the conclusion of the intervention. Additionally, participants will be interviewed for qualitative information regarding the usefulness of this technology in their lives. This project will involve the occupational therapy department at Virginia Commonwealth University, the rehabilitation therapy team at Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center, rehabilitation engineers employed by the Virginia Department of Rehabilitation Services and the Brain Injury Association of Virginia, as partners in its execution and dissemination activities.

The grant award includes moneys for the training of rehabilitation providers and engineers in the utilization of smart home technologies with individuals who have cognitive impairment. This training will include face-to-face workshops, an informational website maintained at VCU and a catalog of smart home technologies appropriate for this population. Additional funding will be sought at the conclusion of this project to extend this research into the community and track behavioral change among consumers and providers who utilize these technologies.

The Commissioner briefed the Board on the request and requested their endorsement or support to use unexpended balances, \$22,756 to fund the mini research project through Tony Gentry/VCU. The Board unanimously supported the project and furthering research on the use of smart home technology to assist consumers with brain injuries.

### **Financial Report**

Kristie Chamberlain, staff to the Advisory Board, provided an overview of the CNI Trust Fund finances. Since its inception in 1998 through February 29, 2008, total revenue into the Fund is \$12,313,760.77. The Trust Fund has actually awarded \$14,615,108.30 in grant awards (including \$398,273.32 in administrative services since July 2003). The Fund currently has an obligated balance of \$2,301,347.53 (revenue minus grant awards), with an available balance of \$1,278,926.90 (revenue minus expenditures). The current monthly average in fees and interest into the Trust Fund in Fiscal Year (FY) 2008 (began July 1, 2007) is \$100,486.06 per month.

### **Neurobehavioral Services**

Patti Goodall updated the Board on a request from the Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) invited DRS, BIAV, MCV-Rehabilitation, Dept. Mental Health, Secretary's Office, a consumer and a company called Quality Behavioral Solutions (QBS) which was operating a specialized nursing unit for folks with brain injury out of state to bring neurobehavioral services to Virginia (QBS is medicaid approved, are nursing facilities that specialize in brain injury). DMAS was interested in the idea around it so they are establishing a work group to look at bringing it to Virginia. Patti Goodall will keep the board apprised of progress with the work group and will invite Terry Smith, Director at DMAS to come talk with the CNI Board at the June 13 board meeting to give a snapshot at the prospect of neurobehavioral services in Virginia.

### **Release of any Request for Proposal in 2008**

The Board has postponed a decision on releasing any RFP in 2008 until a later meeting.

### **Term Dates for Drs. Bendall & Helm**

The first four year term dates for Drs. Bendall & Helm will expire in June 2008. Rick Bendall, MD has expressed interest that he cannot continue being a board member due to professional restrictions. A new board member will be appointed by the Governor July 1, 2008. Dr. Bendall has offered to be a connection to the State Academy of Family Practice to share information on brain injury and the clubhouses etc.

Gregory Helm, MD, Ph.D. has expressed an interest in serving a second term and has notified the Secretary of such intent.

### **Future Meeting Dates**

Friday, June 13, 2008

**Commissioner Rothrock, Acting Chair adjourned the meeting at 11:34 a.m.**