

THI/SCI TRUST FUND
ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

November 8, 2018

Attending Board Members: Andrew Kuyoro, Beth Arredondo, Jessica Mott, Michael Chafetz, John Fanning, Stephanie Fletcher, Sherlyn Sullivan, Dan Claitor, Gary Matherne

Agency Staff: Tonia Gedward, Tara LeBlanc, Anastasia Webb, Ayanna Wilson

Contractors: Kimberly Hill

Public: None

Call to Order: Andrew Kuyoro called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

Introductions: Board Members and others in attendance introduced themselves.

Minutes: The board reviewed the minutes from the last meeting held on August 9, 2018. Andrew asked if anyone had any comments about the minutes. The meeting minutes were approved as presented.

PROGRAM UPDATES

Financial Report – Andrew asked if there were any questions about the financial report. Senator Claitor asked was there a particular column or issue that needs to be reviewed. Tara stated OAAS is requesting an increase in **statutory dedication funds** so the program can open more cases and possibility eliminate the current waitlist. The financial report was approved as presented.

Program Status – Tonia Gedward

- Current Eligible Participants
 - Currently the Trust Fund is serving 635 participants.
 - Since January 1, 2018, the program added 58 new eligible participants. Of those participants, 27 were added since the last board meeting.
- Waitlist Applicant Update
 - There are 174 applicants on the waitlist.

- We are currently reviewing July through December 2015 waitlist applicants for eligibility. There were 44 applicants. Of the 44, 17 are complete and 27 are still under review.
- Changes to the Rule
 - The changes to the Traumatic Head and Spinal Cord Injury Rule have been approved and we are currently working to update the policy and forms to reflect the rule changes.
- Program Highlights
 - We continue to have bi-weekly meetings with the THSCI case managers, which helps with process improvement. We have improved several of our processes and continue to improve others. Now, we are focusing on improving customer service and quality. I have tasked the case managers, as well as THSCI staff, with following up on requests, inquiries, and complaints in a timely manner. I have also tasked everyone with making sure they follow up on documents needed to process payments as we are trying to maintain good working relationships with our vendors.
 - Since January 1, 2018, THSCI staff have received and reviewed 398 Participant Service Plans (120 since the last board meeting) and processed 878 payments (268 since the last board meeting). The huge increase in payments resulted from FY18 follow-ups.
 - We have streamlined internal processes to better manage participant files information. We have improved communication with participants as well as case managers. We are receiving fewer participant complaints as the case management directors and supervisors are now receiving the complaints and quickly responding.
 - We sent out letters to local former spinal cord injury participants last month in efforts to fill the last board member seat. We have not received any response yet.

Tonia asked for clarification on an issue with determining whether someone that has a spinal cord injury or a traumatic brain injury from a surgical procedure are eligible for the program. She read the definition of both injuries to the board. Andrew stated this question came up in previous meetings. He stated the word that really clarifies is the word “trauma”. Dr. Chafetz added. historically they have spoken about this issue over many years. He stated it is usually from an external trauma. He stated surgery is traumatic, but its purpose is to heal. He stated

historically the definition has been from an injury. Andrew stated we can do further research by contacting other states to see how it is defined. Tonia stated she researched this issue with some of the other states and it is covered. She also stated we should do some research. Dr. Chafetz asked Tonia if the other states have the same mission statement as we do. Tonia stated she did not look at their mission statements; she only looked at their definitions, which were very similar to ours. Tonia stated when trying to improve the program she always tries to look at what other states are doing. She stated this was something that came to her attention. She stated she would do some research/comparison to their mission statement and have that information at the next meeting. Dr. Chafetz stated that would be useful. He stated politically our mission statement and goals are legislative defined. He stated it is a matter of state law on how we operate. Dr. Chafetz stated if you want to help more people, he suggested maybe going to the legislature to ask and make a change to the mission statement. Tara stated at some point, we should go to the legislature and clarify the changes to the mission. She stated this year is not a good year to bring any changes due to it being the year each legislator can only have five bills. Tara informed the board of a pending lawsuit against the funding source.

Other Business

The Advisory Board Appeal

Andrew asked Kimberly to email her updates to the Board.

Next board meeting dates for 2019: February 7, May 9, August 8 and November 14.

Public Comment – None

The meeting was adjourn at 11:26 a.m.

THE DATE OF THE NEXT TH/SCI ADVISORY BOARD MEETING IS:

February 7, 2019 at 10:00 a.m. held at PACE, 7436 Bishop Ott Dr., Baton Rouge, LA 70806.