

**BIS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PRESENTS ON CASE MANAGEMENT
AT THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERAN'S AFFAIRS
CONFERENCE**

Brain Injury Services' Executive Director, Karen Brown, had the privilege of presenting "Outpatient Case Management and Community Resources" on August 2nd in Las Vegas, Nevada. The Conference was put on by the Department of Veteran's Affairs Employee Education Service and was attended by almost 400 individuals from the Polytrauma Units from around the United States. The Polytrauma Centers coordinate the transfer and provision of healthcare for patients with traumatic brain injury between VA and Department of Defense and ensure timely access to veterans' benefits. They also provide specialized care for military service members and veterans who sustained multiple and severe injuries. There are four regional Traumatic Brain Injury Lead Rehabilitation Centers, located in Minneapolis, MN, Palo Alto, CA, Richmond, VA and Tampa, FL designated as Polytrauma Centers.

"More than 1,000 veterans and their families now share a unique struggle to regain their health after suffering what medicine calls traumatic brain injuries, but what individuals and loved ones find is a complex knot of physical, mental and emotional problems." This is a quote from a July 24th, 2006 article in USA today. This is something that Brain Injury Services discovered in 1989 and subsequently began the long journey of developing and implementing quality community-based services for Adults and Children with brain injuries. BIS Executive Director reflected after her trip that "I was amazed by all that the Department of Veteran's Affairs programs are doing for people with brain injury. It is our hope that we can partner more in the future with the Polytrauma Units and other VA/DoD programs in ensuring that quality services exist in the soldiers local communities so that there is some continuity of care as they return home."

Dr. Barbara Sigford, M.D., Ph.D, VHA National Director, Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center reports that the impact of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom on the VHA System of Care has increased demand for services. She continued to explain that over sixty percent of the soldiers screened at Walter Reed Medical Center screen positive for traumatic brain injury. Dr. Kenneth Lee, M.D. and Chief of Spinal Cord Injury at the Milwaukee VA Medical Center discussed in-depth his experience in Iraq from the perspective of the medical corps and the war wounded. Ms Brown commented to staff about the high quality of speakers and attendees at the conference.

The Virginia Brain Injury Council (VBIC) has a sub-committee chaired by Anne McDonnell, Executive Director of BIAV, that is presently working on looking at ways to work with the Veteran's Health Systems on better serving these veterans who have survived brain injuries and are returning to their local communities. VBIC recently was recognized in the Virginia Code as an Advisory Council to the Commissioner of the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services.