



Press Release

Human interest story July 2023

GBIA Global Public Awareness Event

Globally, sixty-nine million individuals are estimated to suffer Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) each year. (1) Most injuries are caused by road traffic incidences and falls.

These injuries cause health loss and disability for individuals and their families and represent a burden to healthcare systems and economies through lost productivity and high healthcare costs. (2)

There is little public awareness of how few people receive adequate care and treatment following an injury to the brain.

Caused by trauma or disease, a brain injury is a life-changing condition that can have life-shortening and severe health consequences when left untreated.

While most countries have medical guidelines for evaluating and treating brain injury, there is no country-specific or global standard of care, resulting in patients falling through the medical net. The outcomes of inadequate recognition are well documented, including people losing their jobs and businesses, families torn apart, bankruptcy, and homelessness. Research shows that up to 87% of US prison inmates report a previous TBI.

General practitioners do not receive adequate training to understand, diagnose and treat concussions/traumatic brain injury (TBI). Patients are sent home without information or follow-up care. They struggle alone with many symptoms and changes to cognitive functioning without the opportunity to understand their injury or the consequences. Without information, people become more confused because there is no diagnosis or treatment. There is a false expectation, especially from families, that recovery will be imminent.

Lack of awareness and insight are common consequences of TBI. Individuals struggle to understand what has happened to them, what has changed, and what they need to do to get support.

Research tells us there is a 'secondary' injury, an inflammatory cascade, and when unaddressed leads to a disease state. Increasing evidence indicates that TBI is an important risk factor for neurodegenerative diseases, including Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, and chronic traumatic encephalopathy. (3) It is critical to spread awareness of these serious outcomes and how to use diet and exercise to support the recovery process.

GBIA INC addresses these public health and economic issues through the Brain Injury Global Picnic. This one-day worldwide event, happening this July 23rd, increases the necessary general understanding of the outcomes and effects of brain injury.

This event, inaugurated in 2012, is supported by those with lived experience, dedicated brain injury organizations, and the community of specialist professionals who support them worldwide.

GBIA is a nonprofit dedicated to improving survivors' brain injury care paths and is actively involved in the global standardization of brain injury diagnosis and treatment protocols.

The 'Global Picnic' public awareness campaign highlights many gaps and inadequacies in treatment protocols bringing understanding to the disastrous and overwhelming life consequences and struggles.

Annie Ricketts, co-director of GBIA INC, said, "All the while people are unaware of the prevailing gaps in the medical system, they also suffer the same kinds of experiences as millions before them. We want to create public understanding, so everyone knows there is help available and where to find it. Creating necessary awareness is vital so everyone, including families, receives the help they need to maximize their health and well-being. Comprehensive rehabilitation supports people back to living a purposeful life. Organizations and individuals come together because the messages we share are incredibly important to them. We all know there is a need for change. Every person affected or working in the field wants the opportunity to talk about this."

Further information and contact details are available on the GBIA website and open community page on Facebook.

www.globalbia.org

[\(20+\) Global Brain Injury Awareness | Facebook](#)

1. [Dewan MC, Rattani A, Gupta S, et al. Estimating the global incidence of traumatic brain injury. *Journal of Neurosurgery JNS*. 2019;130\(4\):1080-1097. doi:10.3171/2017.10.JNS17352](#)
2. [The Lancet. *Neurology*, 18\(1\), 56–87](#)
3. [Xiong Y, Mahmood A, Chopp M. Current understanding of neuroinflammation after traumatic brain injury and cell-based therapeutic opportunities. *Chin J Traumatol*. 2018;21\(3\):137-151. doi:10.1016/j.cjtee.2018.02.003](#)