



Press Statement  
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**Brain Injury Association of America urges President Obama to include Cognitive Rehabilitation for returning service members as a part of TRICARE coverage**

WASHINGTON—With an estimated 20% of injured American soldiers who have been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan experiencing a possible traumatic brain injury (TBI), the Brain Injury Association of America (BIAA) has today called on President Obama to extend military health care coverage to include cognitive rehabilitation, a proven treatment for this signature injury of modern combat.

Senator Evan Bayh and then Senator Barrack Obama led a group of 10 United States Senators in issuing a letter on Aug. 4, 2008, to Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates urging coverage of cognitive rehabilitation within the military's TRICARE health insurance program. In a press release announcing this letter, then Senator Obama described cognitive rehabilitation therapy as “one of the most accepted treatments for TBI.” Congressional Task Force Co-chairs Congressman Bill Pascrell, Jr. and Congressman Todd Platts spearheaded a similar letter to the Department of Defense on Sept. 19, 2008, which was signed by 67 members of the House.

More recently, the Anthem Insurance Companies, Inc. (also known as Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield and Anthem Health Plans) determined that cognitive rehabilitation is a medically necessary treatment for patients with TBI. Anthem cited BIAA's position paper, “Cognitive Rehabilitation: The Evidence, Funding and Case for Advocacy” among the authoritative publications consulted. United Health Care followed suit in May 2009 with a similar decision covering cognitive rehabilitation for individuals with brain injury.

“There's no doubt that Congressional inquiries, the Anthem policy decision and other factors prompted the Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury to hold an April 2009 summit aimed at evaluating the efficacy of cognitive rehabilitation in treating traumatic brain injury,” said Susan Connors, president/CEO of BIAA. A report documenting the overwhelmingly favorable evidence is expected shortly.

In the letter to President Obama, BIAA respectfully urges him to “follow through on your commitment to ensuring that our nation's wounded warriors gain access to the best brain injury care this nation has to offer, and thus to direct Secretary Gates to immediately enact official TRICARE coverage of cognitive rehabilitation.”

**About the Brain Injury Association of America**

Founded in 1980, the mission of the Brain Injury Association of America (BIAA) is to be the voice of brain injury. BIAA and its nationwide network of state affiliates, chapters and support groups are dedicated to increasing access to quality healthcare and raising awareness and understanding of brain injury through advocacy, education and research. The association serves the 1.4 million Americans who sustain traumatic brain injuries each year as well as their families and the researchers, clinicians and professionals who provide treatment and long-term care. For more information about brain injury or BIAA, visit [www.biausa.org](http://www.biausa.org).