

Honorable _____:

Like most, I did not know what the term anoxic encephalopathy meant or how traumatizing the diagnosis could be on a family. Now I know and our family is devastated.

Anoxic encephalopathy is caused by a loss of oxygen to the brain for any length of time and has multiple triggers.

One fact I learned after my *(son, daughter, spouse, parent, other relative or friend)* was diagnosed with an anoxic injury is the lack of information and resources available to families. Neither DHHS, CDC, nor the NIH is documenting the number of anoxic injuries. Until they begin to document, people with an anoxic injury will continue to be ignored or denied basic treatment, valuable therapies, and most will either die prematurely or be forced to enter facilities where they are abused, neglected, or die of preventable things like infections or accidents.

The documentation of anoxic encephalopathy at point of diagnosis can be done in Congress by multiple methods. We are seeking your support with the following:

1. Report language - requires DHHS to begin the documentation for an annual report to Congress,
2. New legislation – creation of stand-alone legislation (similar to the TBI Act that would specifically focus on anoxic injuries (AnBI)).

The first step to opening the door to research and treatment begins with this documentation. Without that documentation, our loved ones face discriminatory decisions against their best health care needs.

Anoxic injuries can be caused by sudden cardiac arrest, and multiple other factors. Of late, the opioid crisis and an increase in the suicide rate is causing this horrendous condition to impact more Americans. The bottom line is an anoxic injury can happen to anyone at any time, even those who are healthy, drug and alcohol-free, etc.

I urge you to please join this extremely important effort to count anoxic brain injuries by doing the following:

1. On March 13, I am asking you to please drop by the Anoxic Brain Injury Advocates table in the Congressional Brain Injury Task Force tradefair for specific details on how you can help,
2. Likewise, we are willing to meet with you in Washington, DC March 11-13, or when you are back home. Please provide your availability.

I can't thank you enough for your consideration. Please let me know if I can count on you to ask that anoxic encephalopathy be documented at point of diagnosis.

Sincerely,

[Your contact information]