

Idaho State UNIVERSITY

Institute of Rural Health

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Blue Cross of Idaho awards Idaho State University grant to help screen for traumatic brain injury

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Adults screened for traumatic brain injury through Idaho State University's Traumatic Brain Injury Program will be eligible for \$50 vouchers for additional treatment, thanks to a \$500 grant from the Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health.

The vouchers will help defray out-of-pocket expenses for uninsured clients referred to physicians for further evaluation after an initial assessment through ISU-Meridian's community health screening program. People with limited health insurance are also eligible for the vouchers which can help cover copayments.

"I am grateful to Blue Cross of Idaho for its financial support and willingness to assist people experiencing traumatic brain injury," said Russ Spearman, who heads ISU's Traumatic Brain Injury Program.

Spearman notes that more than 35,000 Idahoans are living with a severe traumatic brain injury or [TBI](#), caused by head trauma often sustained in car crashes, military combat or playing sports. In 2014, TBI screenings were added to the services offered at six community health screenings offered in the Treasure Valley annually and sponsored by ISU-Meridian, Ada County, the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, Central District Health and the Idaho Foodbank.

The TBI screening consists of a [structured interview](#) conducted by ISU-Meridian health professions students and faculty. Of the 304 individuals screened since fall 2014, approximately 35 percent have screened likely for a TBI, Spearman said.

For more information, contact Spearman at (208) 373-1773.