

BostInno

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On Friday afternoon, the Massachusetts Bar Association held a press conference in which they expressed deep concerns over how the [One Fund Boston](#) was distributing financial aid to victims and survivors of the infamous Boston Marathon bombings over a year ago.

According to a new protocol drafted by the One Fund, those affected by the bombings in the form of traumatic brain injury, hearing loss and other invisible wounds will not be receiving direct financial charity the way others with more visible, though of course equally if not more devastating, injuries such as amputation are.

Rather, money will be put towards funding programs dedicated to aiding these types of suffering though many who fall under this category deem it insufficient.

In fact, in a letter to Lori van Dam, executive director of the One Fund Boston who stands to receive \$450,000 in compensation, Ann Gilmore Hall, executive director of [Hearing Loss Association of America](#), wrote the following:

"We find the proposal for the 'innovative programs' inadequate at best. In fact, it is hard to imagine any program for people with hearing loss actually happening... We have yet to see a 'program' providing rehabilitation that also provides hearing aids or cochlear implants."

It's not that people suffering from hearing loss, traumatic brain injury and similar ailments are trying to downplay the injuries that have received more monetary attention, you have to understand. It's that they're being terribly misrepresented and sadly underfunded. These people aren't looking to take anything away from other victims and survivors, but more so instill leadership in the One Fund so that they, too, can receive the proper care in hopes of continuing to live their lives.

But as testimony from the panel of experts revealed, living with these injuries despite receiving little-to-no charity from the One Fund is difficult enough. In fact, Dr. Murdo Dowds, formerly of Spaulding Hospital where he dealt with head injuries, said bluntly, "You don't get your pre-injury self back."

Sadly enough, hearing loss only scratches the surface of the kinds of issues convalescents have to deal with on a daily basis. As mentioned by Dr. Kaaren Bekken, a neuropsychologist now in private practice, people who suffer from these types of injuries also agonize over "higher instances of depression following a head injury," not to mention the "profound effect on the person's ability to manage social and emotional choices."

Colonel Robert C. Morris, Jr. (retired), founder of [Partners International Foundation](#), also wrote to van Dam making the following recommendations as to how the One Fund can, and should, proceed with those injured from improved explosive devices:

- Form a working group to develop recommended protocols and compensation criteria – report in 90 days
- Partner with veteran service organizations, government centers of excellence.
- Deliver a list of compensable IED related injuries not adequately covered by the One Fund; associated claim evaluation guidelines; and applicable evaluation criteria with actionable recommendations.

According to a fact sheet on data provided by the One Fund, the organization gave victims with serious and significant brain injuries and hearing loss \$0 or \$8,000. The One Fund gave persons who spend only one day in the hospital \$125,000 regardless of the injury.