

Healing traumatic brain injury (TBI) in Arizona veterans using Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT).

What is HBOT

HBOT provides pure oxygen to patients at 1.3 to 2.2 atmospheres in one-hour sessions (dives). The oxygen is provided in chambers from small (one person) pods, to large (12 person) chambers. Typical treatment for TBI may take 20 to 80 sessions, depending on the severity of the condition. An 80-session protocol is recognized as providing a full brain reset, i.e. restoring the brain to its pre-damage condition. The benefits are extensive and may include the virtual elimination of many symptoms, including PTSD. Many veterans and athletes with TBI have been using HBOT since the 1960's and have reported significant improvement in their conditions. The empirical data on HBOT is extensive, with many positive outcomes and substantial cost savings.

What is Arizona doing to help

The U.S. has lagged behind other countries in this area. There are 15 approved conditions for HBOT treatment in the U.S., but TBI is not among them. Russia uses HBOT for 74 conditions including TBI. China has 5000 chambers for treating various conditions including TBI. In Israel, it is the standard of care for active duty members and veterans. Japan has ambulances with pods for patients with stroke (a version of TBI) and heart attacks. In Europe, it is used for many applications, including TBI. The Veterans Administration has not approved the therapy for TBI treatment.

Realizing that the Federal Government is not supporting HBOT and may not do so, a number of states have undertaken a grassroots effort to provide it to their veterans. Oklahoma was the first, establishing a Patriot Clinic in 2014 and treating over 400 patients since then. Texas passed the Patriot Clinic Act in May 2017. Twelve other states are evaluating doing the same, including Arizona.

Arizona's approach is slightly different. The effort is being made to set up a Private-Public partnership to provide funding for treatment of veterans at two six-person chamber locations, one in Tucson (NorthStar Hyperbaric) and another in Cave Creek (HBOT of Arizona). These two large-capacity chambers can treat close to 300 patients annually.

The first phase in Arizona will be to utilize **charitable contributions to treat 50 AZ veterans** and document the results. If the results confirm what the empirical data over the past 60 years has shown, the treatments will be offered on an on-going basis using both private and AZ State funding. Healing Arizona Veterans has been set up to collect \$600,000 to treat the first 50 veterans at the two facilities. It is a charitable organization in the state of Arizona and Federally (501(c) (3) designation).

Please visit <http://www.healingarizonaveterans.org/> for more information on the topic.