



Global Brain Care Coalition & Mass General Brigham Brain Care Labs

A Transformative Collaboration • 2025 Year in Review



Jonathan Rosand, MD, MSc



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The Brain Care Score gives individuals a clear, personalized picture of their brain health habits, offering a simple starting point for taking action. Increasing your score by just one point, our research is showing, can positively impact your brain health in the long-term.

Dear Friends,

We launched the Brain Care Labs and the Global Brain Care Coalition with a clear and urgent goal: to leverage the best available science to make brain care easy, accessible, and impactful for individuals and families around the world.

This past year has been extraordinary. The power of the Brain Care Score – our brain health assessment tool – was demonstrated in 16 scientific studies published by our researchers, generating national and international media coverage, including in the *New York Times*, *Fox News*, *CNN*, and leading outlets around the world. Developed in partnership with patients, clinicians, scientists, and communities, the Brain Care Score gives individuals a clear, personalized picture of their brain health habits, offering a simple starting point for taking action. Our research has demonstrated that increasing your score by just one point, can positively impact your brain health in the long-term.

While we advanced our research, the Brain Care Score was deployed to underserved communities in Boston, individuals experiencing homelessness in Honolulu, and older adults at risk of dementia in Singapore. Across Mass General Brigham, Harvard University, and our growing network of global collaborators, we have advanced a model that connects scientific discovery to real-world impact – what we call “bedside to bench, and back again.” We use the real-life challenges of our patients to drive our science, translate what we discover into tools and programs that people can use in their daily lives, and bring their input back to improve our tools and programs, and to drive our research.

We established a Program Advisory Council chaired by Rochelle Walensky, MD, MPH, a Mass General Brigham leader, who assembled a diverse group of experts united by a shared conviction: that breakthroughs in research, the proven impact of prevention, and deepening global collaborations have created an unprecedented moment of opportunity. While the scale of the challenge remains significant, the progress we are seeing is inspiring. None of this happens without you. To the clinicians, scientists, community collaborators, government funders, charitable organizations, and, crucially, the visionary philanthropists who are helping drive this work forward – thank you. You are helping build a future where protecting brain health is routine, personal, and within reach for everyone.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Rosand, MD, MSc, and Christopher D. Anderson, MD, MMSc

A Growing Burden of Brain Diseases

We know one in three people is affected by dementia, stroke, or depression in their lifetime – making these conditions some of the leading causes of disability and death worldwide. They create enormous strain on patients and families, healthcare systems, and economies. By 2050, the cost is projected to exceed \$5 trillion in the United States alone and could surpass \$13 trillion globally.

Yet there is a real opportunity to change this burden. As many as 75% of strokes, 45% of dementia cases, and more than one-third of depression cases can be prevented by changing our lifestyle behaviors.

A New Model: Turning Brain Health Awareness into Brain Care

To realize the promise of preventing brain disease, Mass General Brigham neurointensivist and stroke specialist Jonathan Rosand, MD, MSc, established the Global Brain Care Coalition (GBCC) in 2024. Its goal: to translate research into practical tools that help people protect their brain health throughout life. Central to this effort is the Brain Care Score – a validated 12-item, 21-point tool that measures risk across three areas: physical health, lifestyle, and social and emotional wellbeing. The GBCC leverages the Brain Care Score not only to increase awareness but also to empower individuals to protect their brain and overall health through incremental changes.



This work is built on years of innovative research at Mass General Brigham’s Brain Care Labs. Led by Dr. Rosand and Dr. Christopher Anderson, Chief of the Division of Stroke and Cerebrovascular Diseases, the Brain Care Labs integrate neuroscience, clinical expertise, and data science to identify the drivers of brain health across patient populations.

Together, the Brain Care Labs and the Global Brain Care Coalition form a seamless pipeline from scientific discovery to real-world implementation across the globe.

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A Breakout Year for **Brain Care**

Daily behaviors and health factors strongly influence long-term brain health – even for people at high risk.

Brain Care Labs scientists and their collaborators published dozens of studies advancing our understanding of the brain across the lifespan, from the long-term effects of traumatic injury to the genetics of stroke risk. Many focused on the Brain Care Score, building a growing body of evidence that improving your score can reduce the risk of stroke, dementia, depression, and a host of other diseases at every stage of life..

Bedside-to-Bench and Back

These research discoveries were made possible by the unique collaboration between the Global Brain Care Coalition and the Brain Care Labs. The Brain Care Labs serve as a research engine generating brain health and care insights through clinical, epidemiological, and data-driven science. GBCC investigators and their talented research fellows, lab coordinators, and staff use state-of-the-art approaches to translate these clinical and basic research insights into tools and resources that can be deployed in the community and healthcare

settings. The process repeats as patients and community members provide feedback on their experiences with these tools and resources, which informs improvements, creation of new materials, and future research questions. This drives the development, adoption, and expansion of proven strategies to protect brain health and prevent dementia, stroke, and depression.

Every Point Counts

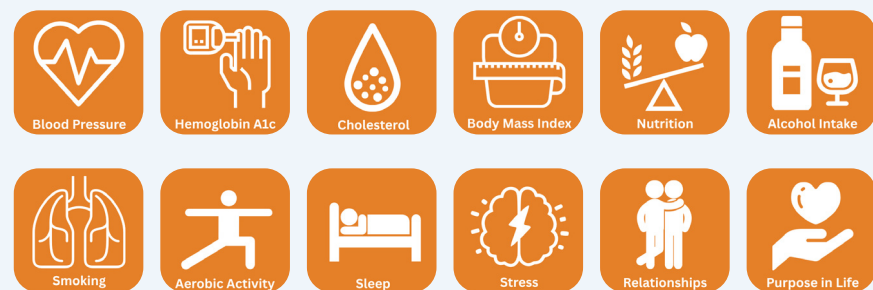
Our research shows that it is never too late to make a difference in lowering the risk of stroke, dementia, and depression as people age. Using data from the UK Biobank (2006-2019), Brain Care Scores were calculated for over 150,000 individuals, based on available clinical records on modifiable lifestyle

factors similar to the tool (e.g., sleep, diet, physical activity) and analyzed over time. Leading the analysis, Tamara Kimball, MD, found that every one-point increase in Brain Care Score results was associated with a 4% reduction in risk – and in some cases, improving your score offset genetic or stress-related risks.

Simple Steps, Big Impact

Taking simple steps can help boost an individual’s Brain Care Score and reduce their risk of brain diseases. A study led by Sanjula Singh, MD, PhD, MSc, found that being physically active, improving sleep quality, and maintaining an active social life can reduce the risk of stroke, dementia, and depression. Managing risk factors like blood pressure, weight, blood sugar, and cholesterol with a physician also had a major impact.

THE 12 BRAIN CARE SCORE AREAS



ARE TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURIES AND SPINAL CORD INJURIES CHRONIC DISEASES?

Brain and spinal cord injuries can affect health across the lifespan, long after the initial injury. A pair of studies led by Sandro Marini, MD, in collaboration with Saef Izzy, MBChB, found that patients who experience a moderate-to-severe traumatic brain injury face elevated long-term risk of brain cancer, and that chronic neurologic, psychiatric, cardiovascular, and endocrine disease risk remains elevated after spinal cord injury. The findings point to the need for proactive screening and coordinated, multidisciplinary care for patients with a history of these injuries.

“Addressing just one of these risk factors often leads to improvements in the others,” Dr. Singh said. “Picking one area of the Brain Care Score to focus on first, then taking it step by step, can make a huge difference for your long-term brain health.”

The benefits of a higher Brain Care Score also extend across gender, race and ethnicity, geography, and medical conditions. A study led by Nirupama Yechoor, MD, MSc, and research fellow Devanshi Choksi, MBBS, drew on data from more than 21,000 women and found that a five-point higher Brain

Care Score was associated with a 37% reduction in stroke risk. A separate analysis led by Dr. Singh and research fellow Evy Reinders, MD, drawing data from 10,000 individuals followed for an average of 16 years, found that higher Brain Care Scores reduced stroke risk among both Black and White participants. The greatest benefit was seen among Black participants, who began the study at higher baseline risk. The findings suggest the need for better understanding of what tailored interventions might be feasible to reduce health disparities.

“If you want to reduce the chances of developing dementia, stroke, or depression in the future, just improve your Brain Care Score. It’s not about where you are starting from – it is about what you choose to do tomorrow”

– CHRISTOPHER ANDERSON, MD, MMSC



The Brain Care Score **in Action**

Members of the Global Brain Care Coalition leverage insights from the Brain Care Labs' research to deliver tools that empower their communities to protect and improve their brain health.

The Global Brain Care Coalition launched its Learning Exchange Program to support Coalition members through continuous learning, sharing, and solution activation. Already, the Learning Exchange Program includes more than 150 global investigators and community representatives dedicated to understanding brain health and delivering brain care models to improve health outcomes. The Exchange Program fosters bi-directional learning among Coalition members and provides a vehicle through which the GBCC can help translate their research and development efforts into real-world practice – generating implementation data and delivering tools that help communities protect and improve their brain health.

Building on this expanding foundation of research, the Brain Care Labs and the GBCC are working to apply what they've learned to populations around the world. They are studying the best ways

to deploy the Brain Care Score, counsel people on its use, and inspire healthy lifestyle changes that can protect the brain throughout the lifespan.

Learning Through Real-World Implementation

The Brain Care Score is increasingly being adopted by organizations that serve populations with distinct and urgent brain health needs. As part of a program launched by the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, called Guiding an Improved Dementia Experience (GUIDE) Model, GamePlan Medical adopted the Brain Care Score to help caregivers and their loved ones track brain health and find ways to improve it. There is tremendous potential to expand the use of the Brain Care Score among other healthcare providers participating in the GUIDE program to provide personalized guidance and care navigation to individuals caring for Medicare beneficiaries with dementia at home.



The Brain Health Advocacy Mission at the University of Alabama-Birmingham has integrated the Brain Care Score into its work in partnership with primary care practices to deliver personalized preventive brain care focused particularly on lifestyle habits and social and behavioral choices. Early results indicate the approach is feasible, effective, and well-received by both clinicians and patients in this setting, where time and resources are limited.

200+

LEARNING EXCHANGE MEMBERS

250K+

BRAIN CARE SCORES TAKEN

The Brain Care Score **in Communities**



The Family Van Brings Brain Health Home

For more than 30 years, the Family Van, a Harvard Medical School mobile health clinic, has brought care directly to Boston's underserved communities. Last year, the team began using the Brain Care Score to assess clients' brain health and provide guidance on reducing the risk of dementia, stroke, and depression – conditions that disproportionately affect the populations they serve.

For many clients, the Brain Care Score serves as a conversation starter, sparking meaningful discussions about how exercise, sleep, and diet can make a difference to their health. The Family Van

team also connects clients with local resources to help them act on what they learn. Many leave their Family Van care experience feeling motivated to make lasting changes.

"Many of our clients face food deserts, financial stress, racism, and live in neighborhoods that make healthy living difficult," said Yoseph Boku, an MD candidate at Harvard Medical School who served as a clerk on the Family Van. "The populations we serve face systemic barriers to optimizing their health. That makes it even more important that we have these conversations and partner with our clients to strengthen their brain health."

Kuma Ola Hou: "Life is the teacher"

At the Kumu Ola Hou Transitional Housing Shelter in Honolulu, Hawaii, the first 24 guests arrived in March 2025 with an average Brain Care Score of 2.8, the low score reflecting the toll that homelessness had taken on their brain health and well-being. Using key components of the Brain Care Score as a guide for their program design, the B+HARI Brain Program created a healing-focused community that emphasized emotional safety, relationships, and purpose.

Program participants were provided private living spaces and communal areas that encouraged connection, daily life skills, and participation in culturally grounded activities rooted in Hawaiian values. As residents began to feel safe and supported, they became more engaged in community life.

By the end of their stays, graduating guests' average Brain Care Scores improved by 11 points. None of the successful graduates have returned to being unhoused, and several have found jobs – a remarkable demonstration of the power of applying brain science to lived experience.

"We try to make each of the residents feel connected, we make them feel a part of a community or kaiāulu," said Garrett Kam, a Native Hawaiian culture practitioner who led the project's cultural programming.



Expanding Global Reach

The Global Brain Care Coalition spans more than 20 countries, with a focus on communities in low- and middle-income countries where the burden of stroke, dementia, and depression is highest.

Brain Care Score Pilot in Kosovo and Albania

In collaboration with the GBCC, two local champions representing Kosovo's Organization of Medical Students and the Albanian Committee of Medical Students led efforts to implement the Brain Care Score. The learnings created the foundation for a dynamic workshop with the medical students and Dr. Rosand that highlighted how culturally tailored, locally driven approaches are integral for improving brain health.

"Our vision is to empower individuals to take charge of their brain health. Through accessible, personalized tools and actionable insights, we aim to support people in making brain health a lifelong priority."

– DR. TAN LI FENG

Q-Brain Pilot: Preventing Dementia in Singapore

Nearly one in four residents of Queenstown, Singapore, is aged 65 years or older, which reflects the country's rapid progression toward a super-aged society and underscores the urgency of prioritizing long-term brain health at the community level.

In 2025, Assistant Professor Benjamin Tan, MBBS, a vascular neurologist, returned from a postdoctoral research fellowship with Brain Care Labs and joined Tan Li Feng, MBBS, MMed, a senior geriatrician, and other colleagues from the Singapore National University Health System to launch the Q-Brain pilot. This pilot is part of the IMPROVE-COG programme, which works to bring together artificial intelligence, community partnerships, and global expertise to promote brain care.

In partnership with the Health District @ Queenstown, the Q-Brain pilot leverages a digital, app-based implementation of the Brain Care Score to identify individuals at risk of cognitive decline and deliver personalised, AI-driven recommendations targeting modifiable risk factors such as physical activity, diet, and smoking. The platform also enables longitudinal tracking of behavioural changes and risk profiles over time. Importantly, the team is



Signing Ceremony for Brain Care Scholars Program.

working closely with community partners and Singapore's public health ecosystem to ensure the intervention is culturally contextualised and aligned with local resources.

"Our vision is to empower individuals to take charge of their brain health," said Dr. Tan Li Feng. **"Through accessible, personalized tools and actionable insights, we aim to support people in making brain health a lifelong priority."**

Investing in Future Leaders

In January 2026, the **Global Brain Care Scholars Program** was launched as a collaboration between the Global Brain Care Coalition, the Ban Ki-moon Foundation, the Paris Brain Institute, and the Vascular Brain Health Institute of Bordeaux, and was formalized at a signing ceremony at Sorbonne University in Paris. The program is designed to foster the next generation of brain health leaders in the Global South, with a particular focus on reducing the burden of stroke, dementia, and depression in underserved communities. Selected scholars receive training, mentorship, and funding to design and implement prevention projects in their local communities. The program reflects a shared conviction among its founding partners: advancing brain health equitably requires collaboration that bridges scientific research, clinical expertise, and global development, and that locally driven solutions – led by local champions – are essential to making that vision real.

Future Plans and Resources

LEARNING EXCHANGE

The Global Brain Care Coalition's Learning Exchange program has gained excellent momentum in supporting Coalition members in continuous learning, sharing, and solution activation through a monthly online forum for peer-to-peer learning and collaboration. Topics include, but are not limited to, sharing implementation experiences, discussing strategies for fostering social connection among older adults, and exploring healthcare models that promote brain health in high-risk populations.

TOOLKIT

From the lessons learned through its collaborations, the GBCC developed a toolkit to support clinicians, scientists, and community organizations in using the Brain Care Score to establish new brain health programs or complement their existing work in any field. Ranging from scripts to talk about the Brain Care Score to measuring program outcomes, the toolkit serves as a resource to provide Coalition members with a starting point to promote brain health in their work or community.

BRAIN CARE COMPANION

The Brain Care Companion is a digital platform that will bring the Brain Care Score to a national audience for the first time via smartphones and tablets in fall 2026. Users will assess their health habits across the 12 key areas and receive personalized recommendations for improvement. They can build an action plan, track their progress over time, and see how small lifestyle changes impact their score.

CATALYZING 2025 MOMENTUM

Over the past year, we have made excellent progress in demonstrating the power of combining scientific insight with practical tools to improve brain health. But we are only at the beginning of what is possible. The opportunity ahead is both urgent and extraordinary.

With the right science, accessible tools, and a growing global community of collaborators, we can fundamentally change how brain health is understood, protected, and sustained across the lifespan. Together, we can move from awareness to action, and from action to measurable impact at scale.

We invite you to be part of this movement.
To learn more or support this work, visit globalbraincare.org



Our Team

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“Brain health is not only one of the defining health challenges of our time, but one we can meaningfully address. Many factors driving dementia, stroke, and cognitive decline are modifiable. Prevention, early awareness, and healthier choices can reduce risk for millions. The Global Brain Care Coalition is addressing this public health imperative by translating science into practical tools that empower people and communities.”

– ROCHELLE WALENSKY, MD, MPH

