

QDVSN MEETING ISSUES PAPER

FOR DISTRIBUTION TO OTHER NETWORKS

KEY ISSUES ARISING FROM QDVSN MEETING ON 10TH & 11TH JUNE 2004

Background information

At a meeting of the Queensland Domestic Violence Services Network (QDVSN) earlier this year, it was decided to distribute to other related and like networks and services, relevant issues arising from the QDVSN meetings.

This is in the spirit of enhancing information sharing and collaboration between our networks. It is also in recognition that our networks are frequently responding to and discussing the same issues, and the strength that lies in coordinating and sharing information.

After each QDVSN meeting, the QDVSN Secretary can forward to your network/service the key relevant issues arising from the QDVSN meeting.

If you do not feel it is useful for your network/service to receive this information, please do not hesitate to let us know. In addition, if your network/service would like to similarly disseminate information relating to your network/service, we would certainly welcome this.

Review of amended DV legislation

Betty Taylor reported that a reference group will be formed to look at evaluating the impact of the changes in the near future. The group will be convened by the Violence Prevention Unit (VPU). They are looking for a representative from QDVSN as well as other groups.

Homicides and fatality reviews

Betty Taylor informed the group that fatality reviews were spoken about at the Qld Domestic and Family Violence Council (QDFVC). The reviews look at death once there is 'closure' of the incident (eg. after murder trial). They are not about blaming people but about finding out what has gone wrong. In addition to QDVSN and other services individually raising this issue, it was also put up to the minister from the council.

The VPU have also taken up this issue and the chief magistrate has given a qualified 'nod' to such a process. Minister Pitt has asked that his senior policy officer is involved to see how this might be progressed.

Domestic & Family Violence Database

Heather Nancarrow report that the CDFVR is getting requests from service providers for information that the database cannot provide due to the nature of the data collected. As issues come up they have been keeping a list. CDFVR will need to review the summaries after a year of data collection to look at what is useful and what is not. There will probably be a need to do a snap shot data collection and there needs to be discussion around what it would look like (useful questions) and how long it would be collected for. Heather proposed that at the end of the year CDFVR will set up a network meeting with all services doing the data collection.

Global summaries can be downloaded from the website, www.noviolence.com.au

CMC Report

Betty Taylor advised the group that the CMC report is due end of June, early July 2004 and that the QDVSN needs to be 'primed' for this and their recommendations. Kym Adams advised that she will let Betty know when it will be launched. It will be on their website for people to respond.

- *Action: QDVSN teleconference to be set up about one week after the report comes out to discuss response.*
- *Action: Betty will contact Kym and get a firm date for the report coming out. Contact Judy Spence's office to make arrangements for a meeting to discuss CMC report.*
- *Action: A rally or forum and/or meeting with the minister should be set up to coincide with the release of the report.*

Review of Domestic Violence and Family Violence Month

Betty Taylor informed the group that the QDVC is going to review the month. An evaluation tool will be developed for this and the minister has agreed to have a prevention month again next year. It has been noted that there needs to be more money for this, particularly for the violence prevention unit as well as community organizations. Betty also reported that the violence prevention awards had the highest number of nominations for a long time, and that dividing into categories worked well.

- *Action: Services are requested to send their feedback about the month to the violence prevention unit.*

QDFVC

Betty Taylor informed the group that the council has just reconvened in June 2004 after the election. The main issues are that the minister has asked the council to come up with a new model for how the council will look by their October meeting. The criteria for this are:

- council to include 10 members who are representatives from the 10 regions that comprise DOC; and
- at least two other positions catering for indigenous representatives but these could also be some of the 10 regional positions.
- Council suggested that a rep from Child Safety be on the new council.
- The Minister also suggested that he was looking at setting up two indigenous forums in Cairns and the SE corner and that those representatives would come out of the forums.
- A small allocation of funds would be available to those regional representatives to be able to dialogue and consult within the regions.
- However at the same time the minister mentioned calling for public nominations to the council. The minister made it clear he wanted people at 'grass roots', 'coal face' level.

Betty requested that if anyone had any good ideas that they pass them on to her.

During the council meeting there was also a discussion about a project proposal around research into men's programmes, with the idea that there may be a possibility of a project worker attached to the department. Heather suggested that the CDFVR could perhaps do this.

Women's Sector Community Engagement Project

Amy Stockwell informed the group about the project which is funded by the Office For Women (OFW). Linda Manning is the project worker and they are in the process of forming a steering committee. The project is aimed at developing the capacity of the sector to better advocate for cross-sectoral issues and improve engagement strategies with the government.

- QDVSN viewed as a best practice model.
 - Annabelle Allimant from IWSS is on the steering committee.
 - Forum to be held in Brisbane at the end of July to identify key priorities to shape the strategic focus of the project.
 - Will also have smaller forums in some SE Qld areas and with specific target groups.
 - Linda asked whether women from QDVSN would be interested in attending the smaller forums.
 - There was a concern that it was SE Qld (Brisbane) rather than all Qld from the outset, that the funding was only for 12 months and that its focus was too broad.
 - Betty suggested that OFW should either be invited to come to our November meeting or we should send a delegation to meet with them.
- *Action: Amy to feedback to Linda the above concerns and clarify its purpose and the rationale behind it being SE Qld.*
 - *Action: Ann to write to Kathy Mandler, OFW, to see if QDVSN can meet with them.*

Research concerning DV and abuse of companion animals

Dr. Nik Taylor (Central Queensland University) joined the meeting to talk about her research.

- Bringing over some research ideas from Britain from a group she worked with that was a charity that looked after animals for women fleeing DV situations. Nik ran an animal sanctuary and was regularly approached by people needing foster care for their animals. Mainly had to turn women away. They remained in violent relationships because of this.
- Trying to get research off the ground to find out if there is the same issue in Australia. Anecdotally, it appears so. Also, to ascertain what additional service needs are required for women and children in this situation.
- Nik has a one year grant and is hoping to do focus groups, in-depth interviews and then based on that data, a questionnaire. She would eventually like it to be Queensland wide and then Australia as a whole. Original grant is

for three different areas Rockhampton, Mackay and Emerald. However, if other areas are more interested then perhaps she could use them.

- Nik needs help networking and making contacts to get to the women who can be interviewed as she is new to Australia. People can contact Nik directly (Tel. 4930 9433) and she can contact QDVSN through Heather.
- Nik also informed the group that other countries have trained animal workers to be aware of DV and respond to that as well as the animal cruelty. She would like to see multi-agency collaboration eventually.
- It was suggested that Nik should talk to the shelters as they do more in-depth assessments than regional DV services and to *dvconnect* as they might have data on this already.

Issues for women travelling to refuges

A discussion was held about the issues around transporting women to refuges by DV services, especially when public transport is not available or inappropriate, and the lack of flexibility of pick up points by some refuges.

- *Action: Jan to link with Deidre to see if she can raise this at a CWRG meeting.*

National DV campaign

- Launched Sunday 6th June 2004. Concentrates on physical violence only rather than including emotional violence. The phone help line is a counselling line. If it refers to another service then that service is supposed to get \$100.
- Most of the group had seen one or two of the adverts on the TV and had a positive reaction to them. However QDVSN was unsure how the money would filter to the referral services and felt that the States and Territory help lines had been left out of the process.
- During the meeting, the Minister for FACS, Kay Patterson visited the Cairns office and was invited to meet the QDVSN members. QDVSN gave the minister a positive reaction to the national campaign, but raised concerns about the additional 'layer' made by a national 1800 number. The minister welcomed the feedback on the campaign.

Telephone Link with the Violence Protection Unit

Kym Chandler and Cecilia Barassi-Rubio – Thursday 10th June, 3.30pm.

DV Prevention month:

- A very successful communications campaign. Launched in Townsville in conjunction with Townsville DV Service. Awards held on Gold Coast with DV service there. High standards for the awards so very difficult decision for the panel.
- There was a general sense from the group that it had been successful and more media than ever before, with the funding and resources arriving earlier too.
- Betty reminded the group that feedback would be helpful especially around having to last a month on the same budget and to highlight the 'real' cost.
- Cecilia noted that this may be included as a question on the evaluation.
- Kym informed the group that the VPU is hoping to promote the award winners and some nominees as part of 'good practice' by a promotional booklet around those models.

Legislation Evaluation

- Kym updated the group on data from the Justice Department which gives the VPU more demographic information than previously. Court data showing about 50% increase in DV applications. Majority are spousal – 72%, then family at 18%. Informal care is very low 0.2% and IPR is low too at about 8%. Suggested that Informal Care is low because it is not appropriate to do order or they are also in family relationship so get counted there. IPR – reflective of narrow definition that court gives to that category.
- There will be a reference group of government and non-government agencies for the evaluation. Will look at data from police, courts, JAB, legal aid and non-government data. Qualitative surveys of police, magistrates, solicitors, DV services and maybe clients as well.
- Kym noted that there is a current issue for court support workers in terms of sharing information between courts, court support workers (CSW) and police. Came primarily from Beenleigh court. Degree of inconsistency between what info is shared between CSW and police and courts. Directive from Commissioner ordered PPs not to let CSWs look at their applications and more registrars are withholding court lists from CSWs. VPU is trying to negotiate but may need a legislative change to make it clear in the act for the need to share some info.

National DV campaign

- Kym reported that she had given the minister feedback that the VPU had not been involved in the set up nor with providing info for the national hotline.
- There was a concern about the national hotline duplicating state lines and whether women would have to make another phone call.

- There was little information about the hotline's referral database, how they refer people, whether they are qualified counsellors, men or women, how the state based services are supposed to monitor increases on their services, or the \$ amount.
- Kym requested that services telephone or email her with information around the hotline and any impact it is having on services. She will brief the minister on this.
- Contact details for Lifeline national office (the hotline's organisation): Chris Waldron, 0418 669947, chris.waldron@lifeline.org.au or EVAW-Campaign@pmc.gov.au

Restructure of department

- Kym advised the group that the department is still in a state of flux as the model has not been released for the department yet. However, it is looking like the VPU will stay the same.
- Kym also advised that there is a great deal of interest in DV from the DG and Minister so it is a good time to be raising issues with the dept.

Telephone Link with Women's Legal Aid

Tracey De Simone, Friday 11th June 10.30am

Tracey restated that the purpose of these link ups was tell QDVSN what is going on at Legal Aid and to inform her about problems with clients accessing legal aid.

- Won an award for Filipino resources.
- Gender equity report will be sent out shortly.
- Research exploring women's access to LA is still ongoing. Services will be contacted by researcher Jane Barthgate next year.
- Seen an increase in number of women seeking advice but not in applying for grant of aid.
- Low number of young women and women with a disability accessing LA.
- Training has been carried out in Townsville, Mackay and Ipswich on how to get a legal aid grant. Coming to Cairns and Rockhampton shortly. Tracey asked if anyone else wanted training. Gabriele asked that her region be included.
- Issue of equity in housing being used as an asset was raised again. LA was looking at this. Tracey to follow up on this and email QDVSN.