

QDVSN MEETING ISSUES PAPER
FOR DISTRIBUTION TO OTHER NETWORKS
KEY ISSUES ARISING FROM QDVSN MEETING ON
27TH & 28TH OCTOBER 2005

Background information

In the spirit of enhancing information sharing and collaboration between our networks, Queensland Domestic Violence Services Network (QDVSN) decided to distribute to other related and like networks and services, relevant issues arising from the QDVSN meetings. In addition, QDVSN recognizes 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.

Telephone link with Violence Prevention Team (VPT) – Jess Wilson

- DoC is developing a database that will include data from QPS, courts and other relevant government departments for 2006. Wanting to put all data into the same database to make things easier to collate and are hoping to include the CDFVR's data. At a previous meeting Heather raised with them the issue of confidentiality and that there are limitations regarding the 'usefulness' of the data for service development as it is not a complete picture of all the work DV Services do with clients. Jess informed the group that they were considering asking for non-identifying data – not service specific - and asked that if there were issues to get back to her.
- *Action: QDVSN should invite Jess to come to our next meeting and discuss this face to face.*
- Perpetrator Forum - DoC thought it was a positive thing to happen, and informed the group that the minutes will be sent to QDVSN. They are intending to run a forum again. QDVSN informed Jess that other services would have liked to have been able to go to the forum to get information.
- QDVSN queried what the purpose and plans for programs around men were. VPT doing a review of perpetrator programs and felt the forum was a way of finding out positive and negative aspects of perpetrator programs. It was queried whether there had been discussions with Corrective Services (CS) about perpetrator programs. Jess confirmed that there had and also discussion around MOU with CS. Practice standards for men's programs are part of the VPT's review too and they are looking to up date them.
- Tendering process for Men's programs - not sure when money will be available or the direction the government is taking at the moment. Jess will let us know when they know.
- DV month funding - information on DoC's website. VPT was aware there were issues with resources last year and lateness of them arriving. They are thinking of doing an order form for DV services and refuges. Not sure what resources will be but intending to have them ready in February. She confirmed that the campaign will be focused on men this year.
- TIS decision regarding paying for interpreters (see also agenda item 8.8) - VPT see this as an incredibly important issue for them to look at as it will affect all community organizations across the state. It therefore needs more than just their response so it has been taken up by the strategy

department to work on an across government response. Services need to raise with the VPT if they have issues of bills for TIS that they cannot pay. Annabelle confirmed that IWSS had already written to the Minister with such information and Jess confirmed that they had received it and a response was coming.

- Homicide review - Jess informed the group that from the VPT's end, it was seen as important and they had been providing information to the minister about it. Jess suggested that we need to continue to write to the minister or other ministers about this eg. Premier, Judy Spence, Corrective Services etc.
- QDVSN asked if the refuges are getting new service agreements. Jess stated that they would sign up to new ones as the old ones finish. The Regions are responsible for service agreements. QDVSN was concerned that some refuges say they are 24 hours but their hours of operation are not 24 hours. This issue needs to be raised to ensure they are monitored. Jess will raise with Adam Hughes, Homelessness. Annabelle also raised the issue of access and equity in regard to women from NESB who seem to be denied access to refuges.
- Update on Impact Evaluation surveys – bit of a delay with evaluation because of problems with database development. Surveys to come out hopefully in the next month. Will let us know.
- QDVSN informed Jess that Legal Aid wanted us to feedback that there has been an increased demand since change of legislation but no corresponding increase in funding. VPT are hoping to get specific information about this from services when they put the survey out.

TIS

- Annabelle informed the group that on the 6th October IWSS became aware accidentally that TIS would start charging for the use of interpreters. Federal government and state government signed SAAP 5 on 30th September 2005 and in this agreement there was no funding for free interpreters. Letters have been written to Kay Patterson and Warren Pitt about this issue as it is a statewide issue that will impact on all SAAP funded services.
- Action: *QDVSN to send a letter to Kay Patterson and Warren Pitt supporting IWSS and other SAAP funded services that require interpreter services.*

Service Agreements

- Diane informed the group that they have had their new service agreement and their board is currently negotiating. Diane noted that in the service agreement it is stated that in the future there will be an organisational audit carried out on the service and this is part of the Strengthening Non-Government Organisations (SNGO) initiatives. There is a website that helps prepare you for self evaluation towards the audit. They are expecting that the audit will become mandatory from next year and will be carried out by an independent auditor. This audit will include, for example, evidence of staff's knowledge of policies and procedures and that confidentiality and privacy information is given to clients. Diane also informed the group that www.ourcommunity.com has been a useful website for non-government services as it contains model policies and procedures.
- Amy reported that QCOSS has asked for an assurance from Minister Pitt that cuts will not come from community funding and that QCOSS wanted 'A Fair Price for NGOs' principles included in the SNGO initiatives.

Ministerial Advisory Council

- Gabriele informed the group that they had held the first council meeting on 13th August 2005. They will meet again in February 2006. Heather and Gabriele fed back to the meeting that the council would not be having any input on D&FV Month this year as the council had been established too late. However, they would take more control of it for the year 2007.

Telephone link with Legal Aid –Tracey De Simone

- Update re women's access in terms of DV - noticed in Rockhampton and Sunshine Coast there were high numbers of women being refused LA. Regional office reported it was women as respondents, not aggrieved. Unfortunately Gabriele was not present and so could not feedback to Tracey. Tracey will contact her directly. No other services reported any problems, but Tracey asked that we keep her informed should we notice problems.
- Research with Griffith University – interesting because research is showing that LA spends less time with DV clients than Family Law clients. Also, women from NESB have multiple contacts with LA. Tracey suspects that they have to come back because they don't understand information given to them. When the research is refined Tracey would like to present it to QDVSN.
- South Brisbane Immigration Community Legal Service (SBICLS) wanted to remind QDVSN that their service may be able to help clients who need assistance with DV visa issues. Annabelle fed back that there are quite a number of women who are being refused support, especially those not on spousal visas by SBICLS. Amy concurred that their service had experienced that SBICLS support had been fairly limited.
- QDVSN asked about the consultations – Civil Law gone into strategic planning process. CEO hesitant to make any changes to DV guidelines. Information so far is that it will remain the same. Tracey will follow up and talk to the CEO. Tracey thanked QDVSN for the submissions. Eligibility criteria consultation – not heard, will find out and email information to QDVSN.

Feminist Practitioner's Network

- FPN is made up of five people - Kim Daly, Serina McDuff, Lou Myers, Linda Manning and Annabelle Allimant – and came out of one of the areas of research in the women's sector engagement project. The FPN is exploring what could be done about recruitment issues in the women's sector. They are looking at partnerships with universities, to provide placements for social work students and looking at the curriculum to try and build a pool of future workers with feminist framework, understanding of DV, sexual violence and diversity. Annabelle presented QDVSN with a University Partnership Proposal and asked for our views.
- There will be an information session for the sector on Tuesday 15th November, 3pm – 5pm at YWCA, 147 Wharf Street, Brisbane.

Infrastructure re child safety referrals to DV Services

- At the meeting held in June 2005 Heather mentioned that Mike Reynolds has set up an advisory group about research on child protection issues and that she had queried with him whether there was DV expertise on this advisory group. It was felt that it would be good to have a domestic violence liaison person within DoCS area offices and a statewide framework.
- Heather informed the group that a meeting for the Child Safety practice framework was held on 26th October 2005 attended by various services. There will be four meetings. DV sector did manage to raise many issues including whether they are looking for protective factors rather than just risk factors and focusing on the perpetrator. Those who had attended the meeting seemed hopeful that the meetings will bring some positive results.
- Robbyn raised the issue that Child Safety does not get notification of when perpetrators leave prison and this is a serious child safety concern. Heather advised that she will feed this back at the next meeting.

DVConnect – Pet Care program

- Diane mentioned that the Pet Care was going ahead. All pets are transported to the RSPCA and in Brisbane they later go to foster parents. Unfortunately there are no foster parents outside of Brisbane but where there is an RSPCA shelter and they can get transport they are still able to house the pets.

D&FV Prevention Month

- Following on from the discussion held at June's meeting, DVConnect's project person Tanja had contacted IWSS but they have been a bit too busy to progress it so far. After much discussion it was agreed that there should be a QDVSN 'event' and poster focused on women. QDVSN will also keep a calendar of events to assist coordination.
- Action: *Amanda will keep a calendar of events and all services should email her with their events. The events calendar will be sent out by email at regular intervals to all QDVSN members.*
- Action: *Those able should contact Diane to help progress poster and event.*

DIMIA meeting

- At the June 2005 meeting, Annabelle reported that she had attended a meeting with DIMIA around women with limited income. From 1st July they are going to introduce an 'external expert' in Centrelink (this will be a Centrelink social worker) who will assess 'doubtful' claims. IWSS has not been consulted. OFW were and other government departments, but no community consultation. IWSS has concerns about this new process and the training they might have. It also calls into question the statutory declarations made by 'competent persons' and is yet another interview for women to go through.
- Action from previous meeting was that Annabelle and Gabriele draft a QDVSN response to OFW (national), Kay Patterson, Kathy Peut and MCA about the lack of consultation and our concerns.
- *Not actioned at present (October 2005) however, Annabelle informed the group that there had been meetings around this issue and that six people had accessed the provisions and been assessed as 'doubtful claims'. Annabelle felt that it was still important to follow up the action and write a letter.*
- Action from previous meeting was that Amy talks to Kathy Peut, National Social Work Policy Working Party. *While Amy was away her acting coordinator followed up. She got information from Kathy's perspective of how this system works. Acknowledged that it can be another 'hurdle' for women but saw major benefit of Centrelink social workers doing it because they are 'trained' in DV and can override the DIMIA assessment. There was a concern from the group regarding the training that Centrelink social workers had in DV. Amy offered to get back to Kathy Peut. Annabelle felt that this linked in to the letter that her and Gabriele needed to write above.*