

QDVSN MEETING ISSUES PAPER
FOR DISTRIBUTION TO OTHER NETWORKS
KEY ISSUES ARISING FROM QDVSN MEETING IN BRISBANE
6th – 8th October 2010

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.

D&FV Conference

Discussion about the possibility of a state wide conference. Linda-Ann and Gabrielle discussed the work they had done around a one-day forum and were happy to share this information. Initially looking at late 2011 – perhaps during the 16 days of activism. Should contact DoC and let them know we are interested in running a conference and check out if there are any funds available to assist. Perhaps get sponsorship from companies, including White Ribbon Ambassadors who are business people. Focus on violence against women so will include sexual assault. Everyone agreed that they would like to progress holding a conference.

- *Action: email the convenors of the other 7 networks regarding a potential conference and inviting them to attend an initial meeting at BDVAS on 24th November 2010, 10am to 4pm. Actioned.*

Letter to Kate Ellis

A motion was proposed to write to Kate Ellis requesting urgent action on finalizing the National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women. Moved by Heather and seconded by Jude.

- *Actioned. Letter sent.*

Helping Out Families project

Three pilot sites – Logan, Beenleigh/Eagleby and Southern Gold Coast. Linda-Ann and Donna are involved in these and are receiving funding for ‘enhanced’ DV services (adult and child counseling) - invited to submit for a certain amount of money that was allocated. Around double the current service size for WAVSS. Extra money that came out - \$55m in total. Includes Home Health Visiting programme, feeds into the Regional Intake Service, which feeds down in to the Family Support Alliance (Benevolent Society, Lifeline and Act for Kids were funded for these) which then feeds into the Family Support Programme. Goal is to intervene early with vulnerable families. Need to be ‘consenting referrals’.

Women’s Legal Service and Women’s Legal Aid – Pam Godsell, Angela Lynch and Lorna Goldring

Subpoenas – Stephanie mentioned that IWSS is receiving an increased number of subpoenas for client files. Policy response has been to look at each subpoena on an individual basis looking at what is being requested, what is in the file etc and then making a decision whether to challenge the subpoena or the scope of it. May be times when it is better to offer to write a report. Can negotiate with person who has done the subpoena to try and narrow the scope or to accept a report if there is information in the

notes that don't pertain to DV or who might make them less safe or others less safe. They can then cancel that subpoena.

Provocation law – Cameron Dick re proposed changes to the laws of provocation and accidental homicide. WLS still lobbying the government in terms of provocation and not had a lot of success. The group would value any info from WLS and WLA on this issue that may arise. Heather mentioned that they would be happy for WLS or WLA to submit an article on this for the Reader.

QDVSN asked if WLA or WLS had any updates on projects. WLA – two main projects. Pathways Project for priority appointments, being rolled out now in the Gold Coast. Issue of women and dowries – trying to get a dowry back but not being allowed by the courts in India. WLA would be interested to know about any cases of this happening.

QDVSN asked if WLA is able to help female respondents. Lorna advised that it depends on likelihood of success. Lorna mentioned the issue of increased numbers of male aggrieved and Brisbane court is about to open a men's safe room on the initiative of the police prosecutor.

WLS is in the process of instituting a new programme called Safety Net where all volunteers have training on identifying DV when a women presents. This will start next week.

WLS advised the group that the Commonwealth Attorney Generals department set up a DV and mediation pilot that WLS were asked to develop a model for. The model is completed and going ahead in 5 pilot sites in Australia soon. DV worker to do risk assessment and Men's worker from service with established standards for working with men, mediator, lawyer and possibility of child worker. Continuous risk assessment during the process. Acknowledgement that there is domestic violence in this family and that is why all the workers are there. Not a therapeutic model of mediation.

DVCAN update – had sub-committee meeting and have decided to ask for a training and resource unit that will look at roles, training needs, trends, what are men's groups doing in the courts etc. There will be a meeting with an advisor from Karen Struthers' office. Sub-committee helps progress things better between the short 6-weekly meetings.

Sexual Violence Prevention Program and non-government sexual assault service funding

Di McLeod had enlisted support from Heather in regard to the funding position of the sexual assault services. Heather wrote about this in the last Reader and also raised it with the Minister at the DFVSIAG meeting. Stephanie informed the group that services had now been advised that they would receive funding until December 2011. Discussions about where NGOs would sit ie. Department of Communities. Stephanie brought copies of the two response reports to the meeting. Perceive that Qld Health is taking acute service model focus. NGOs are funded to undertake some limited community ed activities and there have been some suggestion that DV and sexual assault should go together. However, there are concerns about this ie. DV will swamp sexual assault, all funding with one department. Struggled to get Department of Health to accept 'delivery' of the report; the report was actually handed to Minister Karen Struthers who accepted it on behalf of the government.

QCOSS – Sarah Coles

QCOSS have about 20 policy papers on various issues that make recommendations. Sarah was hoping to discuss the D&FV prevention paper to gain the group's feedback. QDVSN has significant membership of QCOSS.

Heather mentioned that the National plan of action has not been finalized through COAG but it is close. Important that national plan is used to hold the states accountable around their actions to prevent D&FV. Also, lack of gender analysis in the Qld State's strategy so important to use the National Plan as this has gendered analysis. It was noted that the front page of the QCOSS paper does not have reference to women (apart from the UN Resolution) – paper is written gender neutral. Reference to HN on page 5 – but there is no reference as to where it is from.

Sarah advised the group that she was happy for us to keep emailing her any comments and will feedback through Amanda LR.

Sarah mentioned the Helping Out Families – new DoC child protection programme – and that QCOSS is keen to get feedback from services about how this is working or not.

Department of Communities – Nigel Noall and Narelle Shannon (Violence Prevention Team)

Feedback from the Safety Upgrades Projects – Budget bid for additional funds was put in to extend the trials to gather more information to better inform the review. Still not sure whether there might be some additional funding for the projects, perhaps for another six months. Slow take up of the Men's brokerage across the trial sites – most have other options they can use ie. stay with family/friends.

Update on Rockhampton trial – 9 months of data – 568 referrals, roughly 20 a week, most from police, some from courts and child safety and some from a few other places. 172 clients participated in face to face consultations with CCT. About the same number who have subsequently declined services. Reasons: engaged with other services; relationship ended and problem solved; don't wish to participate as reconciled; situation is resolved; and relocation. Case managers have received 34 referrals from CCT. Mid-term evaluation currently underway but not sure if this will be released publicly.

Helping Out Families – new initiative started 4th October 2010. New model for assisting vulnerable families with children in a more coordinated way. Combines child safety sector and secondary services. Additional funding to enhance some DV services. New Regional Intake Services assess the notifications and if they need statutory protection they will go into the statutory system; if not, will be referred to a Family Support Alliance Service. Families have to consent to engagement with FSAS. Legislation has changed the Child Protection Act so information can be shared by the RIS with the FSAS without the family's consent. Expect that most will be referred to an Intensive Family Support Service for case management, who may then refer to DV services if this is what is needed. Beenleigh/Eagleby/Nerang and Logan commenced 4th October and South Gold Coast will start on 30th January 2011.

D&FV Legislation Review – over 200 submissions received and 22 community consultations held. More than 350 people attended these. Minister has been briefed on the themes. The issue of predominant aggressor has been taken seriously. Working party is working towards proposed policy positions for Cabinet which are aligned to the five themes in the *For Our Sons and Daughters* DV strategy.

IJIS – Delivery of co-facilitated training with child safety staff is a big opportunity. Planned role out for rest of the state with two trainings in each of the regions as a 'train the trainer' type format to senior level staff ie. senior practitioners who will then roll out the training to other staff. Round table discussions are critical to influencing child safety staff. Important to let our networks know the training is on.

DV Month – Funding submissions due by 25th October 2010. Total funds of \$65,000 with \$20,000 allocated to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Theme is linked to the Act as One campaign. QDVSN reiterated that ‘merchandise’ is actually a real engagement tool for us rather than brochures which are rarely used.

Domestic Violence Strategy Implementation Advisory Group (DVSIAG)

This group met for the first time on 8th September and met with the Minister for about an hour. There are seven members including Heather Nancarrow (Chair), Amanda Lee-Ross, Donna Justo, Paul Monsour, Colleen Wall (Deputy Chair), Rebecca Shearman and Shirley Slann. There have also been two telephone conferences that have looked at the policy papers coming out of the DV legislation review.

DV Practice Forums

Second of three practice forums have now been held. Last forum focused on specific needs for women with disabilities, CALD and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background. Also revisited some of the issues from the previous forum. Attention to some of the system issues and some attention to individual/practice issues.

IWSS

Been involved in developing a paper for ACSA Rap which will be released towards the end of October on sexual assault and women from NESB, especially refugees. Will be three workshops run on 25th, 26th and 27th October in Melbourne and looking to see if they will be offered in Queensland too.

WAVSS

Service is now covering the Cleveland court. Have also linked into the Beaudesert CCR and undertaken a planning day with them. Have been very busy with the Helping Out Families project.

Gold Coast

DV Interagency Group (DVIG) has been set up – core group of people who are also part of the IR. Putting a lot of energy into a universal MOU for the IR and reviewing processes of the Police Assisted Referrals. Have been working on the Beenleigh Helping Out Families project.

Ipswich

Redeveloped website should be going live on 11th October. Now have a Facebook page with about 60 fans and this has been great for letting people know about events. Betty Taylor and Debra Walsh have agreed to be regular featured writers in the service’s newsletter. Invited by DoC to be part of an unfunded project – Cultural Capability project.

Mackay

Service has now moved in with the Women’s Centre. Working towards getting a perpetrator programme instituted which will be based on the Duluth model, working with Lifeline and RA. Inviting men to take part in Reclaim the Night this year and will see how it goes.