

QDVSN MEETING ISSUES PAPER
FOR DISTRIBUTION TO OTHER NETWORKS
KEY ISSUES ARISING FROM QDVSN MEETING IN TOWNSVILLE
3rd – 5th February 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.

QDVSN Events

Previously QDVSN had wondered about pooling resources for generic advertising etc. Pauline informed the group that the main problem is coverage of Channel 7 as it is not the same the state over so there will not be equal coverage.

- *Action: To continue the discussion of the possibility of a TV advertisement electronically.*

Candle lighting ceremony update. Diane provided the group with a copy of the brochure they have designed for the ceremony and requested feedback on readings, poems etc. Diane also showed the group the revised poster. Ceremony start time is 5.30pm with candles lit at 6pm.

- *Action: Email Amanda with ceremony details by Monday 26th April 2010 including contact name and details of local spokesperson.*
- *Action: Amanda to arrange press release through Media Monitors.*

Women's Advocate role and possible breach of DVPO - update

Previously had received advice from the Cairns Magistrate's Court that if a respondent had a no contact order and, as a woman's advocate the partner was contacted by obtaining her details from the respondent (as many behaviour change programs around the state request), then this is technically a breach should the woman choose to press charges. It was agreed that this needs to be raised with the legislation review group, VPT and also with DVCAN. It was also agreed that it was useful to start gathering legislative issues now in readiness for any consultations around the legislative review.

- *Action: Amanda to draft letter to VPT and legislation review group. Actioned.*
- *Action: Amanda to email Pam Godsell at DVCAN. Actioned.*
- *Update: Amanda to send letter to Donna O'Donaghue, AG Department, Helen Warnecke and Cathy Taylor, DoC. Actioned.*
- *Action: QDVSN members to email any of these types of issues to Amanda who will collate and keep until needed.*

FLC certificates (standing item)

The Chisolm report was raised. Gabrielle wondered if we wanted to respond to some of the media responses to it. Donna has spoken to Pam Godsell and Katrina Finn who may be making some recommendations and feedback on the report. Good to link with them around this. Also important to discuss the ALRC review of family law. PowerPoint presentations from CDFVR's *Putting Safety First Forum* are available at <http://www.noviolence.com.au/seminarpapersafetyfirst.html>. The DVD from

the *Putting Safety First Forum* is available, at no cost, and copies can be ordered by emailing enquiries@noviolence.com.au<<mailto:enquiries@noviolence.com.au>>.

Management Issues (Standing item)

Industrial relations issues - Pauline raised the letter that was recently received from the ASU regarding the increased wages and felt that the questionnaire missed the point. It didn't ask the question 'Did you get enough money to pay your staff?' Stephanie wondered how people were going in terms of the implementation of the wages decision around the state.

Amanda W mentioned the D&FV Strategy Advisory Group – Expressions of Interest were sent in by Amanda W, Heather, Amanda LR and Pauline.

DV Death Review Action Group (standing item)

The group has been going since 2004. Gov introduced a preliminary group to look at DV death review panel. DVDRAG not campaigning at present but have been thinking of changing their direction and name. Diane will email members that are interested in joining.

Donna advised that the government preliminary panel have met three times and have been asking for a communiqué to be released from the panel to the sector so that the sector is aware of what has been going on.

Representatives for Pathways follow up meeting

Diane updated the group on how the Pathways report came about and the ramifications for outcomes. Clear that the department needs to be responsible for ensuring adequate resourcing, monitoring and accountability and that the follow up meetings must not be about setting up refuges versus DVConnect and other services. A higher level outcome should be about ending violence. DVConnect is represented and Stephanie will be representing IWSS. First meeting is 11th February 2010.

Violence Against Women Advisory Group

Heather updated QDVS on the VAWAG meeting and noted that there seems to be confusion about the status of Time for Action: The National Council's Plan for Australia to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children. It is not 'the' National Plan. Following Time for Action being put on the COAG agenda by the Prime Minister, a COAG Ministerial Council was formed to produce 'the' National Plan, based on Time for Action. Queensland is represented on the Ministerial Council by Karen Struthers (Minister for Communities and Housing and Minister for Women) and Cameron Dick (Attorney-General). Other state and territories have other portfolios represented. There is also a senior officials group below that that advises the ministers. VAWAG's role is advisory group to Minister Plibersek. COAG National Plan expected by middle of 2010.

Safety Upgrades Pilots

Pauline updated that they have signed their contract. Have visioned the project, written a brochure, met with the magistrates etc. Not yet got a client to actively work with but are documenting clients that could perhaps have a safety upgrade but who subsequently don't, including their reasons for not using that service. There will be a phone link-up with the evaluation team for all the pilots.

Robyn updated that they signed their contract and worker started early February 2010. Using current male court support worker to deal with the male aspect of the project. Working with Caloundra court, and not just ouster conditions but women with hardship. Feel there are huge complexities around this project especially if clients are living in private rental properties.

Donna updated that they have signed their contract and are using existing staff. Still visioning the project and hoping to run a focus group of women who are past service users. Hardship clause allows a degree of freedom around when and how to assist a client.

Police DV Training

Gabrielle informed the group of their involvement in the new police training. They have looked at the draft package and specifically at chapter 2. Gave some feedback on the framework contained therein and the input and co-facilitation of DV services during the actual training. Donna advised that Mike Hennessey is at the Academy and is working on process for 1st year constables. Mark Wheatley is the new head of the DV Unit. Could be real opportunity for influencing the training. Mike Hennessey is hoping to be able to link in with us at our next meeting.

Legislative review

An open consultation process is to be tacked on to the end of the DVCAN conference 20th -21st April, with consultation on 22nd. Queried whether managers should be going to this, not just our workers. Need to ask Sue Coxon if other consultation taking place.

Qld Health Review of Sexual Assault Services

Stephanie updated the group on how the KPMG report was released. Based on feedback received there has been a review of the report in terms of getting feedback from the sector on what was included and whether it accurately represented the issues and an effective way of moving forward. Consultations by Spall and Watters took place across the state late last year and a feedback paper has just been released. However, the feedback report seems to be watered down. Advisory Group to Qld Health will be set up, but not sure how well this will work. QSAN are also looking at commissioning a consultant within the next few months to write a response.

Women's Legal Service Alert on Self-Defence Bill

Donna spoke about the alert sent to us from Angela Lynch at Women's Legal Service.

- *Action: Donna will telephone Donna O'Donoghue and express QDVSN's concern regarding the rejection of the complete defence of self-defence.*
- *Action: Donna will telephone Angela and thank her for the alert.*

VPT Link up – Sue Coxon, Liz Boyd, Deb tokay and Cecilia

D&FV Strategy Implementation Advisory Group

Sue advised that VPT does not have responsibility for this, but knew that an email went out just before Christmas seeking expressions of interest. The Advisory Group is quite different to the old MAC style. Stephanie advised that IWSS had not received an email directly. Sue advised that she will feed this back.

Deficit for salaries and implementation of the subsidy

QDVSN raised that as the years go on with the application of wage increases, there will be more 'pain' to come, including loses of service delivery etc. Deb responded that they knew it would be an ongoing process that will take some time. QDVSN also mentioned that we are getting different messages from regions about how we can meet our obligations and wondered if there is more flexibility now. Deb responded that there is no change from where they sit – up to regions and individual CSOs to discuss with services.

QDVSN wondered whether Deb could provide any comment on government's direction on the wage direction and if it has been documented and monitored? Deb was not sure if that was being done as it is at a higher level, but will follow up for us.

Different regional messages

QDVSN raised the issue that we get different messages eg. some services told by CSOs that there is no flexibility between shifting funds between programs, but others told it is quite possible. This makes it confusing for us as a group over what we can and can't do. Deb responded that the shifting of funding across programs is still being looked at centrally. Will take this message back to the department.

Rockhampton model (from business arising)

QDVSN asked if there was any other information or documentation on Rockhampton and where the department might see the role of regional services within this model. Sue responded that there was information and that they needed to get info out and is on their priority list. Hoping to do regular updates for this. Cecilia going up to Rockhampton next week as Betty Taylor is doing training up there, bringing together all the key stakeholders, government and non-government. NGOs all given their funding, 5 NGOs to provide 7 services. QDVSN wondered if we could have a phone link up at our next meeting with the Rockhampton case coordination team.

OASIS

QDVSN raised the issue that the capability is still not in the system yet for Regional DV Services to input PPRs. Liz advised that they will get in touch with us as soon as we can do this – probably by April 2010.

Legislation Review

QDVSN asked if there are other consultations planned apart from the one proposed at DVCAN. Sue will find out and feed back to us. QDVSN advised Sue that our next meeting is 2nd, 3rd, and 4th June in Ipswich and it would be good to meet with her and the legislation review team.

D&FV Prevention Month

Work is under way. Consultation meeting run before Christmas around the proposed concept - "Act as 1" which focuses on community rather than victims or perpetrators. Publishing an information booklet. Hoping to get resources out as early as possible. Nominations opened for DV Prevention Month Awards in January 2010 and these will take place at the end of the month of May. Jude mentioned that it would be good if QDVSN had more input regarding the type of resources that are put out. Gabrielle mentioned that we had been looking at TV advertising and how economical it was in relation to posters. Sue stated that the department is building a campaign over the next three years so will be useful to get feedback on how they can build this.

Police Prosecutions

The issue of what is happening with police prosecutors was raised eg. huge turnover, contracted private PPs, not motivated around D&FV etc. QDVSN felt it was important to raise this with Sue as part of the VPT because as a central person, this information can be contributed to other things such as leg review.

Womens Legal Aid telephone link up - Lorna Goldring

Stephanie mentioned that there has been a referral pathway project between BDVAS, IWSS and RAILS, this is now extended to include IWCADV, DVConnect, and Women's Legal Service. Works like a faxback into Legal Aid in which referring agencies can fax referrals to specific areas of Legal Aid depending on the needs of women e.g. DV Unit, Family Law Team, WLA, etc. Stephanie sees that the key benefits to women have been immediate access to legal advice and improved communication between the solicitor, the woman and the service. Additionally women are assisted with applying for legal aid grants and often represented by in-house solicitors as opposed to 'preferred suppliers'.

Stephanie asked Lorna if the referral pathways project has been documented in terms of evaluation. Lorna advised that they were just getting feedback at the moment and collating that. She assumes there will be a document in the future. Stephanie advised that her service would be very happy to participate in that documentation.

Amanda W asked if the referral pathways project would be rolled-out around the state. Lorna thought that was the intention for the future. Going to roll-out to Ipswich and then see how that goes before possibly rolling it out statewide.

Lorna updated the group that WLA are keen to take on a test case to anti-discrimination regarding the use of interpreters. Any services that experience discrimination against their clients in getting an interpreter, please refer to WLA to see if they can make a test case. This can be faxed or emailed to WLA and they will let us know what info is needed and arrange to speak to the client during the Thursday afternoon clinic. Donna asked if they were also taking up cases where police don't use interpreters. Lorna advised that they were as it was a whole of government issue. Stephanie mentioned that the legislation review could be used to push for the use of interpreters to be enshrined in law and wondered if WLA's work could be used in that.

- *Action: Lorna will find out and feedback to QDVSN.*

Donna raised the issue of women attending court not being rep by police prosecutors when taking out DVPOs and wondered if WLA could represent them. Asked Lorna to feed this up to her various committees.

Lorna shared info about conferencing and family law. The conference organisers will send one letter to the other person and then telephone, if no contact within 24 hours will send second letter, but after that, they will let applicant know they could not organise a conference. Stephanie wondered what the process would be if the person was of NESB and could not read the letter.

- *Action: Lorna will find out and let QDVSN know.*

Client assessment sheet has been reviewed. If anybody has any feedback from clients or workers, please let WLA know.

Donna asked if when WLA make a submission regarding the leg review of DV act, could they share that with QDVSN.

- *Action: Lorna will put that to Fiona.*