

QDVSN MEETING ISSUES PAPER
FOR DISTRIBUTION TO OTHER NETWORKS
KEY ISSUES ARISING FROM QDVSN MEETING ON
4th and 5th June 2009, CDFVR, Mackay

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.

New QDVSN Convenor

Heather tendered her resignation as Convenor as her two year term of office had been reached. The group thanked Heather for her work and steering of the group over the past two years. Donna Justo was nominated by the group and graciously accepted the nomination as Convenor. Amanda Lee-Ross remains as Secretary.

QDVSN events

Candle lighting ceremonies were held across the state on 6th May 2009, with candles lit at 6pm. The QDVSN's press release was picked up by Steve Gray at AAP. Amanda did radio interviews with Peter Godfrey, ABC Adelaide and Debra Nowland, statewide ABC News. Other significant interest from Jimbuna Times (Logan), Tully Times, Qld Times, Cairns Post, Channel 9 News (Cairns), Channel 7 News (Cairns and Townsville), Townsville Bulletin and Brisbane radio and press. Diane is hoping that by May next year it will be national. If so, will need to standardise some parts of it. Diane also suggested putting together a short brochure about the ceremony and its history.

The video-taped interview with Ellen Pence commissioned by QDVSN was disseminated via Donna Justo. Donna updated that there will be a hard copy shortly and Amanda advised that she had tried to add it to the QDVSN web page but the quality was too poor. Once a better quality copy is received Amanda will upload to the QDVSN web page so people can download it.

Pay Equity / New Award pay rates

There was a discussion about the revised pay scales for the state award (Queensland Community Services and Crisis Assistance Award – State 2008). A couple of services are already on this award as they are not trading entities or original signatories to the old SACS award. 16th June is when the budget is announced. Not sure if we will get fully funded or not. Discussed issues regarding CSOs views on whether we are 'funded' or 'subsidised' to provide services. There was a concern that this could lead to services being cut.

Violence Prevention Team (VPT) Link up – Sue Coxon and Heather Lovett

QDVSN congratulated Sue on her appointment as Manager of the VPT and welcomed her back.

VPT advised that the surveys re DV Prevention Month will be coming out soon, and people are encouraged to respond to these.

OASIS

QDVSN asked Sue about the status of OASIS. Heather advised that all programs, the initiatives name and service number and measures are being loaded into OASIS as we speak. The department will do testing on all those before going live fully and will advise when PPRs are able to be reported on in OASIS. There is a particular problem for those who are funded under DV who have multiple grants and one service plan and number with amalgamated financials but separate PPRs. The department is trying to find a way forward for those in this position. Heather will go through Sue to let us know if anything changes.

PPRS - 8th May consultation

Heather advised that the feedback from the consultation has been collated and assessed by an advisory group and senior officers group. Heather is finishing a paper to be submitted up the line. This has taken on board the majority of the suggestions or improvements around counting rules, efficiency measure etc. Quality measure - quite a few comments re clarity of wording and it not being a true reflection. This has been somewhat amended and given clarity of what Heather thinks will meet most needs departmentally and for services. The paper will be sent to the Executive Mgt Committee and Director-General and will be considered on 15th June. An info sheet on the department's website giving feedback and an update on the finalized measures and any changes is being implemented.

Men's behaviour change professional standards and recommendations from national plan

QDVSN expressed a need for training, growth and development and monitoring of men's behaviour change programs and encouraged the VPT to 'keep an eye' on these things. Sue expressed that it is a really exciting and challenging time at the moment as so much is going on across all levels of government. The issue of on-going communication will be important.

Whole of Government Strategy on D&FV

Media release by Premier on 25th May but media release was more about DV Death Review and legislation review. Lot of change in personnel in the Strategic Policy team that will implement it, but a great deal of work is going on behind the scenes. More announcements expected around budget time. Claire Hyde is leading that team.

New Pay Rates for the State Award

The government is looking at ways to support the sector but no announcements as yet. Waiting for official announcement.

Pathways Project

Stephanie advised Sue that it was her understanding that the report had gone up to the minister but it has had very little input from the refuge sector and there is a belief that it is very one-sided. She thought that there may be consultations with the refuge sector. Sue advised that there is nothing definitive. She met with Gabe and Ana a couple of times but the ground has shifted so much in terms of the homelessness agenda. Discussions have been held about how the department can best progress this piece of work and they have just finalized a briefing paper that needs to be sent up the line as to how the pathways project could support the reforms.

Internships with colleagues in Gulf/Cape York region – (standing item)

Donna mentioned that the Hopevale Shelter has closed. Shelter is well staffed but the council has handed the money to the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS). Remote Area Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Care (RAATSICC) is looking at possibly auspicing it. RAATSICC is also looking at doing some expansion work around DV.

Time for Action: National Council's Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children – Heather and Pauline

Heather spoke about the various papers that inform and make up the National Plan. The Plan itself is based on six key outcomes, 25 strategies and 117 actions. What is different about this plan is the central platform of primary prevention, rather than reacting (secondary and tertiary prevention), though it has actions related to all three. The Federal Government has committed \$42 million in initiatives (including a national 1800 domestic violence and sexual assault telephone and on-line counselling service and primary prevention initiatives) as an initial response; and to working through COAG to develop a Government Plan by 2010. Heather encouraged all to read the plan as it is an 'easy' read even though it looks daunting given the size.

Pauline mentioned that Tanya Plibersek is putting together an advisory group to look at the 1800 number and that Wesnet and NASASV have been invited on to this group.

Link up with WLA – Fionna Fairbrother, Lindi Hockings-Guy

Toni Bell – Dispute Resolution Service underwent two recent reviews. The internal review contained recommendations broadly covering reviewing all admin processes to do with conferencing (suggested sending one letter to clients instead of many, to simplify); the second review was of intake and screening processes to exclude appropriate matters or use other services eg. RA. Recommended Client Assessment sheet be completed by phone if necessary (as WLA do now) as clients often don't understand process, don't return the form, and conference is stalled. Confirmed the quality of the service; and a third to review worthiness of the statistics that LA captures. March – September 2009 implementation and mapping of reviews, October - December rolling out a subsequent review. External report being commissioned by the Commonwealth AG who are looking at all Dispute Resolution Services Australia wide.

KPMG Report April 2009 is on the web. Recommends some changes. Legal Aid Qld picked up on these in internal review. All commissions have access. We have done audit of stakeholders and training re: Best Practice Guidelines for DV and encourage questions, issues and problems to be raised with us.

Q. Certificates – LA use client's and solicitor's view of the level and content of violence before deciding whether proceeding to a conference, or how the conference might take place or giving a certificate that says they do not have to go through conferencing. They believe this is an appropriate way to decide.

R. All cases assessed on individual facts. Conference can still progress as shuttle or by phone with appropriate representation to advocate on the client's behalf.

QDVSN raised the concern that women from NESB have been listed as respondents on DVPO Police applications and that although interpreters were used through LA, an interpreter had difficulty understanding the lawyer and was unable to interpret the legal speak. Jo's worker had to 'interpret' the legal speak and then the interpreter fed this to the client. Fionna advised that LA needed feedback if it is a particular office and Jo advised that it was the Sunshine Coast.

The advice to the women was to consent or not contest and then that had implications for their visas, particularly if applying for FV in immigration regulations. It was felt that this LA lawyer may be advising around DV but without really knowing what the impact is for immigration. Should always recommend follow up specific legal advice from RAILS or similar. Systemic issues where ongoing should be referred to WLA. WLA propose to deliver Cultural Awareness Training as part of the approach.

Jo asked how the service could approach this issue as they were told they could make a formal complaint but if they did it wouldn't help with relationship building with their office! Fiona advised that it would be appropriate to give feedback to WLA (via Raquel - raldunat@legalaid.qld.gov.au) so that they can capacity build with the solicitor around how to work with interpreters and the client.

Fionna advised that WLA would like to be informed if we are seeing a trend of police not listening to the woman and not getting an interpreter for her and just taking out an order against her. It might be that WLA have to take on test cases to get appropriate decision by judiciary.

Lindy advised that she chairs the Women's Access Meeting at LA and that if QDVSN members would like to raise any issues at that meeting, Lindy could do that for us. Following on from the discussion above, Heather suggested that WLA should be able to get data that allows them to know whether women are aggrieved or respondents. Concern about women's access to Legal Aid grants when they are respondents. Confirmed that client's need corroborating statements. Can appeal to District Court if order made and ought not to have been. Refer to WLA to run as test case.

QDVSN asked what WLA's view is of the Best Practice FC guidelines March 2009. Fiona felt that they are written for people to understand what the judiciary has to decide when looking at families who have had FV or abuse. So, to explain what is in the judge's mind when making his/her decision. Fiona felt the format of guidelines are quite complex and not as user friendly for general public.

Concern about women being more readily breached by police than men. Needs to be raised at the next DVLO meeting and discussed with policy unit.

DV Death Review Action Group – Diane / Donna (standing item)

Donna distributed postcards as DVDVDRAG is still continuing its postcard campaign. They were pleased with the Minister's announcement (Monday 25th May on ABC news) that there will be a review board set up. The challenge for DVDVDRAG is how it will manifest – Ferrari model or pogo stick! Still lobbying as important to try and influence this process. Premier committed to this being an ongoing process. Will also come out to sector again in quest for funds.

Forum *Dying to be heard, reporting on domestic violence*, 21st July having breakfast at Parliamentary Annexe and inviting media. Invitations by email and written in a couple of weeks. Media kit being launched at the breakfast and Minister will do this. Paul Gray from Townsville, in relationship with woman who was murdered and he suffered injuries himself, has agreed to come and talk at the forum. Kerry O'Brien coming also.

Access to Interpreters Working Group - Stephanie

Continuing to monitor how each government department implements their access to interpreters funding for organisations. They are seeing very different responses across departments. Two workers attended an inter-departmental meeting and had about 10 minutes to present to the meeting about the

group's role and work. Also carried out a 'Survey Monkey' to services about availability of interpreting services. 130-140 responses received back. About 30% stated they would rarely or never use interpreters; 36% not aware they had access to free services; and only 20% said it was easy to use reimbursement model. Department of Housing is one of the better departments for information sharing around accessing interpreters.

Stephanie advised that there was still difficulty from some departments regarding finding out about what their process is eg. justice, education and child safety. Looking to arrange another meeting with Anna Bligh to feed back how well this strategy is being rolled out across departments.

Service updates

Working Against Violence Support Service, Woodridge

Gayle (Manager) has resigned and will leave in August.

North Queensland Domestic Violence Resource Service, Townsville

Trend seems to be that Qld Health is poaching staff for 3 month locums. Launched a billboard campaign for DV Month with the service, Women's Centre and Shelter in Townsville. Extending their faxback to include sexual assault and this will be sent through to the Women's Centre.

DVConnect

Having an 'away day' for staff on 22nd July. Been given recurrent funding for the Men's Line.

Working Against Abuse Service, Roma

Waiting to hear who will get the auspice for the service. Had a safety issue in St George where they had to withdraw their services for a week due to stalking. Sponsoring 20 indigenous youth 'at risk' to go to Airlie Beach scuba diving.

Domestic Violence Service of Central Qld, Emerald

DV Month was successful with 120-150 people at the candle lighting. The Central Qld News has a ball each year and this year the proceeds from the ball will go to the service to help pay for the house. Now have a full compliment of 6 staff. Currently working in collaboration with Central Qld Indigenous group to look at different programs.

Ipswich Women's Centre Against Domestic Violence

Now have a full time community development worker who coordinates DV Month. Couple of funding applications in regarding faxback and a community solicitor that they are waiting to hear about. Fund raising concert for the service has been organized by a couple of young women – "I fight like a girl" – hoping it will go ahead in late October.

Domestic Violence Service Mackay

Good DV Month with march led by police. Vacancy for child and adolescent counsellor.

Domestic Violence Prevention Centre Gold Coast

Donna circulated a draft from Prof Geraldine McKenzie – doing research into unlawful killing and provocation. Any feedback can be provided to her at Bond University. Judicial Registrars (JRs) – Brendan Butler came and spoke during DV Month. He argued a good case for integrated responses and valued the services on the ground. He believes there is a place for JRs, but best placed in responding to small claims, mediation and tribunal work. Review of the JR pilot is not completed yet. Adam

Holland, Dept of Justice has been great support especially for data. Excellent conference around Homicides coming up in Canada later this month.

Caboolture Regional Domestic Violence Service

Candle lightings went well. Launched 'the ripple' campaign which included advertising on buses. Concerns around increases to QCSACA pay and if any further funding available.

Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service

This year nine of the Cairns Integrated Response members paid for a half page advert during DV Month. The first *Communication and Alternative Coping Techniques Under Stress* (CACTUS) group for women has finished and the whole program is being evaluated. Expect that the length of the group will increase. May run CACTUS in Kowanyama, but early days yet. The service now has a volunteer Family Law solicitor who is also available to assist at DV court should police prosecutors pull out. Delighted to have Libby Lloyd launch DV Month in Cairns.

Immigrant Women's Support Service

Unsure of continued Sexual Assault funding as Qld Health has extended all services for 6 months only. Looking at the possibility of applying for funding through DIAC for new and emerging issues eg. women on temporary partner visas. Involved in a resource project with CWRG which gives information to women about refugees and this will be translated into 12 languages. Undertaking further research with ADFVRC. Stephanie has been involved with a reference group looking at the implementation of the white paper. Concerned with the lack of specific reference to the needs of people from NESB in the white paper.

Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research, Mackay

The centre held its 6th annual FV Prevention Forum. 160 people attended. Have partnered with AIATSIS (and waiting confirmation from SNAICC and Charles Darwin University) to hold a national event that will probably be triennial. Forum report will be on the website soon and a piece in Re@der. Two new staff members at the centre.

Domestic and Family Violence Prevent Centre, Toowoomba

Fully staffed. Successful DV Month with an activity each week including a children's art launch by children who had been affected by DV and those who had not been affected by DV. Rolling out to all the regional libraries. 'Toowoomba says No to Violence' group sponsored Mal Meninga to come to an event in which a football was raffled.

Womens Domestic and Family Violence Services SCOPE

Successful DV month activities including the candle lighting, although disappointed in the lack of police involvement.