

QDVSN MEETING ISSUES PAPER

FOR DISTRIBUTION TO OTHER NETWORKS

KEY ISSUES ARISING FROM QDVSN MEETING ON 20TH & 21ST JUNE 2007 - BDVAS

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.

Amended Family Law Act and Consent for child counseling

Amanda updated the group that they are currently seeking expert advice from a barrister in relation to this. She also sent letters to DoC, DCS and local MP who is a member of Minister Pitt's backbench D&FV committee. The group felt that there does appear to be ramifications now around service delivery as child workers are seeing less clients. Cannot say for definite that this new policy is the reason for less clients but is worrying. 'Preparing women for mediation' written by Women's Legal Service – very useful brochure.

Legal Aid telephone link – Fiona Fairbrother

Update re: child counselling - The senior legal consultant at LA hadn't heard of any problems regarding getting the FLC order to state that the victim does not need to seek consent from the other parent for child counselling.

FLC changes - beginning in July 2007 for certificates to be required after family dispute resolution has taken place and the issues cannot be resolved. Legal Aid can do this dispute resolution work and provide the certificates, as long as the clients are eligible for Legal Aid. Bernadette Kasten (07 3238 3522) will be doing some information sessions in the regions regarding the FLC certificates or the exception category. There are four types of certificates that can be issued. She can also be contacted regarding specific clients situations.

Donna asked whether we could get a Women's Legal Aid support in all our areas and what resourcing would be required to make that a reality. Fiona said it was difficult because WLA was established to make sure women in DV had access to services and to take on file work, but it is not seen within LA to be a unit that would visit every region. However, if there was a demand for their services, with a model that could be shown that assists clients and makes the pathways through the legal process more effective, this model could be put up to the board to try and get it.

- *Action: Put on next meeting's agenda to discuss further and see if this could be progressed.*

Strategic plan 2005 to 2008 - new plan hasn't been done yet so continuing with the plan as set. This can be accessed on their website. LA will start the planning process again in October of this year.

Victims of crime compensation - Can only apply if perpetrator has been convicted in the district court. Fiona sends these to a special unit of LA.

Ministerial Advisory Council on D&FV Forum

Members of the group that had attended the MAC forum updated others on the day and process. Overall the council had worked hard and the recommendations they put forward were useful and thorough. It was hoped that all of the talk and ideas would move forward and be put into action but this would need strong commitment to resources. Helen Warneke, Senior Policy Officer with DoC is leading the 'Whole of Government Response' (WGR) to DV. This idea had originally been put forward by the QPS in response to the CMC recommendations on policing DV. The IR/Specialist DV Court group at the forum had suggested a Commission on DV which would fit well with a WGR.

There was a discussion about the makeup of the council and how representatives were selected. There was also a concern with the 'gagging' of the council members as it seemed to make the council isolated and also meant that council members could not get support back from their regional colleagues. Issues had been fed into the council but no information had come back out until the forum.

QCOSS Future of the Sector Peaks meeting

Chris attended the meeting in June. There was a lot of 'tweaking' of the wording in the 'Future of the Sector' document to do with terms around disability and the use of definitions. There was a teleconference with a person in Victoria who talked about how the Peaks Network worked there. Chris has not yet received further version of the documents but these will be passed on to the network when received. Next meeting is 2nd August and Chris will attend.

Periodic reporting and service plans

Previously there had been many discussions regarding the uncertainty and diversity of information regarding periodic reporting, performance measures and service plans. QDVSN raised this with Jess Wilson in February 2007 and decided to write to Karen Copeland, copied to Natalie Siegel, asking for a meeting with her and the Performance Monitoring head, to discuss a way forward. However, Jess contacted Amanda prior to the letter being written to suggest a meeting with her as she had been given responsibility (with another person) to look at the performance reports. Amanda, Ann and Heather attended a meeting with Jess where the performance measures (along with their inaccurate and inconsistent terminology and definitions) were discussed at length. (See also item 'VPT below.)

Violence Prevention Team (VPT) – Jess Wilson and Natalie Siegel

Service agreement reporting requirements - Amanda, Ann and Heather attended a meeting with Jess on 8th March 2007 to discuss the output specifications and data requirements. This had been a productive meeting with all issues about the reports thoroughly discussed. Jess updated the group that she has met with the funding management team and program logic team about this. They agree things need changing and this can be done. Lisa Sarago is working on these with Jess. Once legislation report is finished this is Jess's first priority. With regard to the Regional Offices re new service agreements, some issues not quite resolved yet – they think we need to do some PPR and separate budgets for service types. Jess advised us to 'go with flow' and sign agreements but commitment is to change the performance measures ASAP. Will show us first re-write to get agreement from QDVSN.

Child witness review and service system review – Some while ago it was decided that there would be reviews of the 4 service systems (healing services, perpetrators, child witness and women's services). Designed to look at service models and best practice. Looking at geographic, demographic and cultural gaps and demand for these services, so looking at adequacy of funding and output specifications. Strategic Policy Directorate has decided to take leadership for reviews of D&FV services. Child witness service system review is being undertaken by Denny who is a psychologist and worked in child

protection and was involved in the healing service review. Interview questions are designed to elicit gaps as mentioned above.

At present, VPT does not have a clear idea of what the Women's service system review will entail so that is why they have not spoken about this yet. This will not be done by VPT but be managed by another part of the Department. When further information is available about the process and form of the review, VPT will let QDVSN know.

Magistrates law amendment section 53 - VPT's concern was that they didn't know it was going to happen and to make sure the sector knew about it - pilot for judicial registrars to work in Southport, Beenleigh and Brisbane in lieu of magistrates for non-complex and uncontested matters. Their concern was, did the registrars know about DV in the first place and what training they would get? Amendment not been passed yet.

- *Action: Jess will keep us up to date with the progress of the pilot.*

Whole of Government Response (WGR) - The WGR strategy recently announced to DV re CMC recommendations will be led by Strategic Policy Directorate. Intention when VPT constructed it was two elements: WGR team sit in VP Unit with dual function – 1. interdepartmental reference group with consultation with paper to cabinet about the gaps across government eg. QPS policy around referral to DCS for kids in DV. Next phase would be to 'fix the holes'. 2. safety and accountability audit – like Ellen Pence's audit for WA government – follow 5 perpetrators, 5 victims and 5 kids through system, including possible fatality review as victims might die. Look at the gaps and fall out across the system. Next set of recommendations to cabinet to fix those gaps. However, VPT is providing content on the WGR team process not leading it. VPT will be leading the Safety and Accountability Audit process. Long time frames.

Natalie updated the group that they are translating resources into Sudanese, Arabic, Tagalog and Vietnamese. Holding focus groups from people in those communities and this has assisted them enormously. Printed by end of month for distribution in July and August. Next financial year they will do Mandarin, Korean and middle eastern Arabic. Also research into service responses for these communities. Other research on the cards - appropriateness of DVPOs for indigenous people, looking at what alternatives might be better for them (Chris Cunneen) and another piece of research looking at causes of D&FV in TSI so can tailor responses and services. Also, department in debt and looking at ways to adequately resource services in need. Been looking at corporate assistance – sponsor establishment of perpetrator service in Mt Isa. One of the mining companies seems to be interested and also looking at Bowen Basin.

DV month will be launched in Mt Isa next year. AFL kick start partnership is moving along and can finish off DVD.

Mobile phone muster – mixed responses to how helpful it would be to people. Hoping CEO challenge might lead it. Major obstacle is not getting the phone but whether the phone company give pre-paid cards to use the phones to access emergency numbers etc. QDVSN fed back that loaning phones would not work. Should be given to them.

CALD research – researcher needs to link with QDVSN. Natalie suggests that she does consult with major stakeholders, IWSS, QDVSN and CWRG about the framework for the research.

MAC Forum – QDVSN queried whether selection process for representatives will remain the same and wondered how we could ensure people are appropriate for the council. VPT advised that there will be

a period of review for this council. Talked about getting reps on particular issues eg elder abuse, NESB etc and that regional reps consulted better and were more representative of their area. Natalie suggested that if we have ideas about how it could be better constituted, send a letter to the Minister so it can be incorporated into the review. QDVSN fed back that the idea of a commission for DV was a great one and should be looked at further. Natalie reiterated that we should 'fathom it out' and put in a letter to all relevant ministers of WGR.

QDVSN wondered if VPT could feed key issues via secretary by email on a regular basis? VPT thought this was okay to do.

Viability of Emerald and Roma – Natalie needs to talk to Emerald about what they want as a mining company wants to assist within their area. Roma has issues with the auspicing body which is funded by the department for 8 other services. This makes it difficult if the auspice was to be changed. Was looking at some secondment to get perpetrator and victim worker. This was not agreed to.

TIS – QDVSN asked where the long-term strategy regarding TIS was up to. VPT advised that there was still not much progress on this issue although there has been progress within the department regarding the long term strategy for TIS. Still discussions about whether federal gov responsible. Will keep funding services to ensure they can access services. TIS was brought up in legislation evaluation too. Annabelle fed back her concern that the minister didn't seem to be committed to continuing the funding for TIS as he felt it was a federal issue. VPT stated that DG has committed to continuing funding TIS for services and this commitment is in writing.

Pathways project update – Gabe has started writing the report for this. Recommendations to the departments and DGs will come out of this report. Will need to work on how to implement these recommendations and may look at services that are not working to their agreements as well as needing to look at the refuge sector and its models as a whole. There will be a report given to the people involved in the process. All this will be clearer when VPT meet next week. Most of the issues identified in the project have not been new issues and mainly involved SEQ services.

Action: Jess will update QDVSN on timeframes after the meeting next week.

Internships with colleagues in Gulf/Cape York region

Donna reported that they had inter-state workers coming to the IR training and from the Cape. There is the potential for service exchanges of workers. Diane would like us to give some thought to worker exchange with DVConnect as their workers need to get away and go out and see the reality of the situation. Chris suggested a 'buddy' system where workers would spend time at the service and then bring that worker back to their service.

DV Month Candle Lighting Ceremony update and QDVSN events

We made the time later this year for lighting the candles. This seemed to go well as it was darker. Donna suggested we should have QDVSN events as a standing item so that we could look at doing various things throughout the year as a statewide event eg. bring Ellen Pence to Australia to undertake the safety audit and to engage in conferencing around the state. This would give staff opportunity to attend at much cheaper costs. It would send a strong message about QDVSN too. Diane asked if Donna could put a 'blurb' together about an event so that we could take it to our boards for support.

Subpoena issues

IWSS has been subpoenaed and they have sought feedback from WLA. There had been limited to no support from the child rep about this matter. Amanda mentioned that she was working with her DV counsellor to look at a brief to management about making it a policy of fighting subpoenas.