

**QDVSN MEETING ISSUES PAPER**  
**FOR DISTRIBUTION TO OTHER NETWORKS**  
**KEY ISSUES ARISING FROM QDVSN MEETING ON**  
**6<sup>TH</sup> & 7<sup>TH</sup> MARCH - IWSS**

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.

**Service Agreements/Enhancing existing services**

There had been a long discussion about the service agreements and the poor statistical requirements at the October meeting and QDVSN had still not heard back from Jess Wilson in regard to the draft of the new reporting measures etc. It was agreed that this issue should be raised with the new Minister and a letter was sent requesting a meeting to discuss these concerns. No response had been received in relation to the letter:

- *Action: Amanda to chase for a response.*

QDVSN members shared info with Ana Alvarez, VPT, that a CSO told them they had to redo their service agreement as it was a single one and needed to be multiple service agreements. They were told this was a directive from the VPT. QDVSN reiterated that we have been trying to engage with VPT about this issue for two years.

Ana clarified that the requirement for separate service plans is a funding policy not a directive from VPT. This means that an organization could have a single service agreement with multiple service plans if funded to provide different service models. This ensures that accountability requirements for different programs are met. QDVSN mentioned that they understood that the DG said we should all have single service agreements. Ana confirmed that reference to this advice has been made previously, however no official advice has been received about it.

- *Action: Ana to confirm funding policy advice in relation to separate service plans.*

Ana also indicated that there is a whole of department project on performance measurement. All the outputs specs have been taken by that team and they are working on the output specifications and definitions. They are considering all the feedback that has been provided by QDVSN via Jess and the data from the PPRs has been collated and analysed. Pauline Kennedy is project manager and QDVSN felt they should contact her directly over this issue.

**QDVSN events**

Donna updated the group re bringing Ellen Pence over to carry out training. Donna had met with Talia van Gils, Senior Project Officer, ISD who will be working with the peaks and will attend regular meetings. She felt that there might be some funding available for Ellen Pence. Donna estimated that we would need \$23K for Ellen Pence training. Need to set up a working party to progress this, suggestion for the event as part of DV Month 2009 and tie in with the candle lighting ceremony.

- *Action: Working party made up of Diane, Donna, Annabelle, Bec, Suzanne, Estrella, Jan and Chris.*
- *Action: Monetary contributions to be sent to Amanda so that it can be held as QDVSN Events funds.*

Candle lighting ceremony to be held again at 6pm on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2008. Amanda to send a letter to the other DV networks letting them know about the QDVSN candle lighting.

**Telephone link with Women's Legal Aid –Raquel Aldunate**

There is a fair amount of movement at LAQ as they are in the process of strategic planning. If want to influence anything then time to communicate this to the CEO Jenny Hardy or Marg O'Donnell (Chair of the Board). If QDVSN considers DV a specialist area and expansion of services to women victims important then it should be stated. Planning to look at Southport area in the near future and the model of working with resources they have.

Donna asked what Raquel's would see as the fastest possible link for a woman to understand what LA could offer eg. is it the website? Raquel mentioned that there is general info on their website [www.legalaid.qld.gov.au](http://www.legalaid.qld.gov.au) then click under publications but also can go to Best Practice Guidelines which has best practice for LA staff when working with victims of DV and this is useful for service providers. Been setting up protocols so that women can follow particular pathway into LA when referred by DV service providers. Got a referral pathway that identifies the steps for DV service providers to follow if they have a woman in DV seeking urgent legal advice. Going to start piloting in February but this has been delayed, hoping to finalise this month and will contact sector to trial it. If urgent and in Brisbane, best thing is to come to front counter but if in regional areas they only have a clinic once a week so appointments are needed. Can also use 1300 call center line – need to let them know it is urgent and they patch through to WLA or DV Unit and if woman can't ring back a solicitor has to be found within 20 minutes.

Raquel mentioned that the means test home equity threshold will be increased in July and will be reviewed annually thereafter.

Research project – WLA and Rural and Regional Access Strategy at LAQ identified that women may not be reporting DV to police due to their policy on reporting to the Department of Child Safety. LAQ contacted CDFVR and they have agreed to develop a research proposal. Hoping for external research funding for this. Have Police and Department of Child Safety on board too.

Amanda clarified with Raquel whether LA can provide certificates re mediation – this was confirmed and Amanda asked that Raquel lets LA in Cairns know this because she had been told that their staff are telling clients that they have to go to the FRC for certificates.

QDVSN asked whether MAP and proper funding for MAP should be mentioned in any submission to Jenny Hardy and Marg O'Donnell so that they might consider it in their strategic planning? Heather suggested to include in submission to LAQ.

Amanda mentioned that Cairns had sought a barrister's opinion about dual consent from parents for child counselling. This opinion is slightly different to WLA's opinion.

**Telephone link with VPT – Ana Alvarez**

Donna shared that QDVSN has taken leadership on statewide candle lighting ceremony and will be doing that again this year. Also looking at bringing Ellen Pence over in May 2009 to provide training

and have established a QDVSN working group on this. Dept has made contributions in previous years for conference so wanted to flag this as we would be making contact in the next couple of months for potential of departmental subsidy and/or sponsorship. Ana felt we would need to go a bit higher in the department and QDVSN confirmed we were thinking of the Minister and DG. Pauline suggested should mention to Doug Winten as Ellen Pence links in with men's stuff

Annabelle raised the issue of research tendered out to Hurriyet Babacan. IWSS has not been involved in this research and wanted to be, where is it up to? Ana stated that stage one has been completed – recruitment of researchers and development of instrument. March to 30<sup>th</sup> April will hold interviews and focus groups. Not managed by VPT so Ana not seen a list of who will be consulted but feels IWSS must be consulted and so will pass this on to the team running the project.

Ana also informed the group that they are still awaiting approval from the Minister for membership of the MAC.

### **Senior Level Meetings**

QDVSN identified a number of issues around the funding body that we felt should be discussed at a higher level than the VPT. This included the Pathways project and service agreement reporting requirements. So, this was around funding and accountability. Seems to be this sense that because they fund us they can direct us what to do = loss of independent community services. Donna also expressed that terminology does not help eg NGO rather than community org or not for profit. NGO makes us seem like a part of the government. No problem with being accountable for public money but there still needs to be a level of autonomy as orgs have legal entitlements and obligations. Heather asked if some of these issues would be addressed in the Compact. Chris mentioned there was issues around the wording of what obligations we have to gov and what obligations they have to us in the Compact as well as some fair level of funding.

- *Action: QDVSN should target Linda Apelt as the DG on these issues requesting a meeting. Important to let Linda know the things that we have not been able to progress with the department eg. Letters not answered etc.*
- *Action: Once a year when meeting in Brisbane try to set up a strategic meeting with whoever is the highest person in relation to that particular issue.*

### **Management Issues (Standing item)**

Donna raised industrial issues around staffing and the difficulty of finding staff and being able to retain them. DCS has 'lost' all of their 2006 intake. There is a need to pay workers a base level of \$25 per hour to help them meet the rising economic costs. Also disparities around superannuation eg departments paying 12+% and services only being able to pay 9%.

There was a discussion about the difficulty of implementing coordinated responses without additional funding and to meet the practice standards for working with male perpetrators.

There was a discussion about the progress of SNGO standards in services and the self-assessment letter with funding allocated. QCOSS is starting to do workshops around this. Townsville services are holding a meeting to see if they can negotiate a joint project to work on the SNGO standards together.

### **Brian Sullivan's Forum idea**

General discussion about the forum. Overall view was that it was interesting, especially the pre-forum questionnaire. Seems to be an interest in the peak body but no resolution about the way forward. There was talk about setting up a working group and individual networks were going to talk about their views regarding this and who might attend. Felt it would make for a powerful lobby group especially if

the academics came on board and there was funding for a coordinator to pull it all together. Chris mentioned that this would also give us more effective lobbying in the QCOSS Peaks forum meetings. Felt that it would be good to have a DV secretariat for the DV sector like that of NSW.

Discussed what QDVSN might do participating in a peak body –value in having non-funded voices in addition to funded bodies and also academics working in organisational politics eg Catherine McDonald because Department is dictating to us what we are doing. A number of QDVSN members had put their name down to progress a working party.

### **D&FV Unit, QPS**

QDVSN welcomed Inspector Paul Fogg to the meeting. Paul has met with the CDFVR and some other services and has already shared with QDVSN his strategic plan and a ‘tool kit’ for police. He had been sent the Joint Women’s Services response to the CMC report on *Policing DV in Queensland*.

Paul detailed his many years of service. D&FV Unit started in October 2007 coming out of the CMC report. His brief is to improve the strategic focus of DV in the QPS. Will take about 18 months to see Paul’s improvements. First piece of work was D&FV strategy that was signed off about a month ago and given to all police. Four focus areas: protection and investigations, prevention and early intervention, partnerships and performance. Current issues for Paul are repeat calls for service, trends re breaches, trends re private/police apps and breakdown of relationships involved.

Doing a review of training around D&FV to improve quality responses. Hoping to use reference group of police, academics and service providers to ensure relevant training. Paul’s unit is endeavouring to develop and provide clear leadership on domestic and family violence issues. Working on external website to give better info re what police do with D&FV – core police info how we act, what services we provide, and reference to specialist services. Also trying to bring focus more up front on the website. Paul can’t solve individual problems in areas but can look at big picture issues. Starting to work with Annabelle re interpreters.

QDVSN fed back that we are very pleased that training is a key issue as we had discussed that previously. Diane mentioned that she is happy for all police to know the one phone number for DVConnect which is not the public number. Will give that info to Paul for him to disseminate.

Rebecca asked how the Unit interacts with the DVLOs in the regions. Paul has no line control over anyone outside of the unit and generally communicates with them by email and a conference once a year.

Heather mentioned the QDVSN’s plans for Ellen Pence and that it would be valuable for QPS and that QDVSN is looking for contributions as well as attendees. She wondered if Paul’s area might consider this? Paul felt it was something they could look at.

There was some discussion with Paul about engaging more police officers in the Remembrance ceremonies and Paul agreed to send out info re all of the venues and details .He also offered to provide support for the Brisbane ceremony in the form of a police piper and Chris and Diane will liaise further with him.

QDVSN stated that we are committed to faxback partnerships still. Paul felt that it was one strategy for the unit and that if it is working, will continue to do it. His strategic plan is to go to case management and involve services but struggling with legal hurdles at the moment. Will require legislation for this because of privacy concerns.