

QDVSN MEETING ISSUES PAPER

FOR DISTRIBUTION TO OTHER NETWORKS

KEY ISSUES ARISING FROM QDVSN MEETING ON 14TH & 15TH OCTOBER
2004

Background information

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 recognises 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.

CMC Report

- CMC report now expected end of November 2004.
- Action: QDVSN teleconference to be set up about one week after the report comes out to discuss response.
- Action: A rally or forum and/or meeting with the minister should be set up to coincide with the release of the report.

New proposed Service Agreements

- Bill of sale for new cars - New cars purchased with departmental funding require a Bill of Sale. Services must then get permission to sell the car as it "belongs to the department". This is in direct contrast to most service constitutions which states that in the event of closure, we sell the assets to pay liabilities and/or give to like minded agency. This issue has been brought to the attention of QCOSS.
- Another issue for services contained in the new Service Agreement is around information – the signing of the service agreement could mean that the department will have access to every piece of information including client files. QCOSS recommends that services notify their clients that there is "limited confidentiality as a result of this new policy.

Telephone link with Women's Legal Aid – Tracey de Simone

- Important that workers know that Legal Aid is available for Women in DV matters. Legal Aid cannot represent both clients 'in house', but funding for Legal Aid could still be granted. Legal Aid produces an information kit on how to apply for a DVO.
- The recent \$600.00 payment is not taken in to account as part of the means test. There is still an issue about Legal Aid for hearings.
- Heather suggested that Tracey write an article as a guest contributor in the CDFVR newsletter to highlight the issues around women getting legal aid for DV matters. Annabelle also suggested that Tracey put an article in IWSS's newsletter. The QCOSS network was also mentioned.

Telephone link with Violence Prevention Team (VPT) – Raquel Aldunata

- There has been a restructure and the Violence Prevention Unit has been changed to become one of four teams within Community Support Unit. This is part of bigger unit called Community Funding and Support. The teams fall under 'Program Management' rather than 'Strategic Policy'. The name has changed to Violence Prevention Team (VPT).
- QDVSN has expressed concern that this move may have "down graded" the unit in importance and ability to play a leading role around Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland.
- QDVSN queried the VPT's role in terms of framework development around Child protection (CP) and DV. Informed that CP framework will drive it. Child Safety Director has responsibility for this area (Mark Francis is Acting in the position). VPT has continued to do same work as in past such as training ICare people and having discussions with CP people.
- QDVSN discussed with the VPT the Queensland Police Service's child protection blueprint and the possible negative outcomes for women and children when police report children who are in a household when they are called to domestic violence, to the Child Safety Department. In these cases we need to ensure that the DV intervention still has the woman's safety as the top priority as well as looking after the children. The Police have requested feedback from DoC and CSDept about their changes.
- Legislation review – Reference group for evaluation met on 5th August for first time. Discussion around evaluation framework. Next meeting 4th November 2004.
- Availability of electronic forms on department's website – some magistrates will not accept the forms from the web. VPT is notifying magistrates and will notify DV sector soon.
- D&FV Prevention Month May 05 – Package of information and funding submissions will be available soon. The theme "There is no excuse for abuse" will continue. One target for the month will be young boys. No increase in funding. Submissions will close 10th December. The Minister has indicated he is happy with the month.
- Watch for information about \$10 million service delivery funding for child safety matters to be released soon.

Domestic and Family Violence Database – Heather Nancarrow

- Briefing was sent out prior to the meeting. Time to review the data collection to make it more 'useable'. Problems are partly due to how the questions are asked and compliance issues ie. not all services inputting data in the same way. Agreed that quarterly reporting was acceptable and that the 'snapshot' should reflect the need to answer a specific data requirement.

Legislation Review – Betty Taylor

- Discussion centered on whether ouster orders increased or decreased women's safety. There are some examples of when an ouster order contributed to greater risk.
- The issue of cross orders is being discussed at the Gold Coast and a project around 'mutual intervention' asks police to look at criminal interventions as well as civil interventions. It is important that police learn to recognize predominant aggressor and self defense injuries, otherwise women may have more criminal interventions against them as well as being a victim of violence. Some policy or legislative change is needed on predominant aggressor.
- A letter will be sent to Ministers Pitt and Spence about ouster orders and cross applications/predominant aggressor.

Child Protection

- Discussion around how services work with women who have child protection issues.

- CMC report suggests that police will move to mandatory reporting. Each district has to report to the child safety director in the police what they are doing in their area.
- Services need to be proactive around this issue to safeguard the women and children who may be caught up in this.
- It was noted that we need to safeguard women's interests too when policies are being made and there was concern that local initiatives are taking place rather than statewide initiatives/consultations. Frameworks need to understand and support women in keeping themselves and their children safe.
- Caboolture is doing training with their Area Offices around child protection and DV and what their service's policies and procedures are when working with women and children affected by DV.
- Action: Heather, Jan and Betty - write to Warren Pitt, Mike Reynolds, Judy Spence and Peter Beattie re Child Protection/DV Policy Framework.

Police issues

- Interpreters – Annabelle mentioned that police are not using trained interpreters when responding to DV matters. IWSS have raised this issue with Warwick Jacques and the Multicultural Advisor within the Police Commission but with little success. There is a language policy but operational police do not seem to be aware of it. Police need training in this area.
- Action: Annabelle to draft a letter and forward to Amanda to send to Ross Patching and Judy Spence after CMC report comes out and we have checked whether this issue is being addressed in the report.
- Action: Amanda to invite Ross Patching, State Domestic Violence Coordinator, to be a regular telephone link at QDVSN meetings.

QDFVC – Betty Taylor

- Betty informed the group that the term of the council finishes this year. Minister has asked the council to put up a new model. This will be presented to him on Tuesday 19th October.
- Proposing ten regional reps that need to be linked to regional networks, permanent place for *dvconnect* and CDFVR, plus someone from Child Safety. Any legal reps must also be linked to a service that has significant experience in the DV area. Want to invite FLC to participate also.
- There will be a significant cost increase to bring in more people from around the state.
- Developed some criteria for representatives and will look at how QDVSN can continue to be represented on the council.

Homicide Reviews

- Betty has met with Judy Spence and has a meeting coming up soon to discuss multidisciplinary group. Strong commitment to this process. Dionne Dalton is giving a lot of support to this.

Body Shop DV Project

- The group discussed this project and were pleased with how it had gone.

National Violence Against Women Campaign

- Most services had received cheques from Lifeline. Di informed the group that she had been told that the telephone service would eventually out-source to Lifelines around the country.
- Some services had received complaints about the service delivery eg. being put through to a male counselor.
- Action: individual services to write letters of complaint to Lifeline.
- Action: QDVSN to see if the national campaign is being reviewed by the Commonwealth Government and if we can feed into it. Amanda to write to the Minister, Kay Patterson.

Court Safety

- Amy informed the group of some of the problems the Ipswich service was having at Gatton court. The court and the waiting area is separate from the Registry and so workers and clients are at risk. They also have no security guard.
- Action: Amy happy to draft a letter to Paul Marschke on behalf of QDVSN around these bigger issues and also take this up with DVCAN.

Safety issues

- Blocking telephone numbers of DV services does not appear to work for mobile phones. A client ringing WAVSS on her mobile phone still had the number itemized on her bill which her husband could then trace. Amanda confirmed that this happens too when she uses her mobile phone to ring her office.
- Action: *dvconnect* will draft a letter to Telstra around this issue.

Perpetrator programs

- The QDVC has written a research proposal around mandated programs. Proposal drafted so far – scope and around how it works, lit review, legislative implications, funding applications, programs where there is ‘voluntary’ attendance versus mandated, and practice standards.
- It was suggested that we should be looking at what are the various responses used for perpetrators. Should not be ‘one size fits all’.
- Action: Raise this issue with the Minister.
- Di informed the group that *dvconnect* are toying with the idea of changing the hours for their men’s line possibly to 11am to 8pm. Not happy with the 9am to 5pm timeframe.
- PADV standards – document by Donna Cheung is not out yet but Betty has seen a draft. This contains acceptable, optimum and unacceptable practice standards.