

PREA Stakeholder Work Group

Date: June 10, 2015

Attendees: Lori Scamahorn, Beth Schubach, Eric Crawford, Rick Torrance, Ned Newlin, Andrea Piper-Wentland, and Kelley Amburgey-Richardson

Welcome and Introductions: Participants introduced themselves and shared hopes for the benefits to their agency from participation the work group

Hopes included:

- Engage sexual assault centers with jails
- Learning about prison work done to date
- To make meaningful connections with advocacy groups for our institutions
- Do determine how we can further PREA work
- To break down misconceptions of advocacy
- Increase staff and inmate understanding of what advocacy is.

Overview of the Grant and Work Group Purpose

Ms. Amburgey-Richardson reviewed deliverable goals that the work group was responsible for informing and other deliverables outlined in the grant. These include:

- Development of a survey for corrections staff on understanding of sexual violence
- Fact sheets on the intuitions (Prison, Jail, and JRA)
- Webinar for advocates on general principles of serving incarcerated survivors of sexual violence. The training will be provided by JDI June 25, 2015 and is open to all institutions. Ms. Amburgey-Richardson will email the webinar registration to the work groups participants so they can attend if desired.
- Trainings will occur in the Fall, likely Nov 9-10th . Those 2 dates are currently being held. In developing these trainings, WCSAP will likely work with JDI to present. One day of the training will be specifically developed for advocates to support their understanding of all facilities and WA specific information. The second day is about understanding sexual violence and advocacy for corrections staff. Both are designed to be one full day per discipline.
- WCSAP will conduct two focus groups to ascertain how the current prison advocacy design is working and their understanding of advocacy. The first is June 23, 2015 at Purdy (WCCW) and the other at Airway Heights in the fall, specific date is yet to be determined.
- WCSAP through this STOP grant is available to jails, JRA, and Prisons as a consultant. WCSAP is available for consultation with field representatives, can review your PREA materials, and help develop materials for your facility related to advocacy and incarceration.

Ms. Piper-Wentland provided an overview of the role of the coalition as a statewide membership organization and handed out a map of the State of Washington that displayed all the community sexual assault programs in the state. This included:

- Review of services provided by local community sexual assault programs: information & referral, crisis intervention, system advocacy, legal advocacy, medical advocacy, specialized services: support groups, therapy
- Highlighting the national position WCSAP holds as well as how the PREA collaboration between the Office of Crime Victims Advocacy, WCSAP, and the Department of Corrections is seen as a national model for stellar collaboration and service delivery options for incarcerated persons.
- Funding for this work:
 - The work in prisons has been supported with funding from the department of corrections. The group briefly discussed the need for dedicated funding to not only develop, but sustain PREA work.
 - A brief overview of the expected increased VOCA funding in WA State was shared by Ms. Piper-Wentland and Mr. Torrance. As a state, we anticipate that there will be 4 times more funding from VOCA than there has been in the past. Currently, VOCA funds cannot be used to serve incarcerated persons and it is a prohibited activity under VOCA funding. The group commented how helpful it would be if the restriction were lifted and/or other funds were made available for incarcerated survivor services.
- Through conversation the group identified shared goals which included the desire to provide services in a safe and confidential manner for inmates and to increase facility safety for all persons.

Shared Goals - Promoting Facility Safety and Survivor Healing

Ms. Amburgey-Richardson presented and led the group in conversations about distinctions of roles in reaching the shared goals. Key points included:

- Confidentiality and the role of the advocate. Confidentiality is paramount in the advocate-survivor relationship. Advocates will not disclose information about the person they are providing services (except under mandatory reporting law requirements) to corrections nor will they report a crime. Provision of advocacy doesn't guarantee reporting, but it can contribute to an increase in persons reporting due to the increased support the person is receiving.
- Meeting with an advocate does not and should not trigger an investigation. It was identified by the work group that having ways to talk about this with their staff would be important to focus on.
- Can help inform about practices that while necessary may be triggering for victims. For example, daily practices in an institution like pat searches can be triggering for a survivor. With advocate support, the advocate can help provide coping mechanisms to that survivor.
- The group felt strongly that to generate most support for PREA victim services, it is imperative to start at the ground and work up with talking about advocacy is. They also stressed how

important it would be to highlight the community sexual assault services are also available to staff outside of the institution.

- Mr. Newlin shared about an organization called Safe Call Now as a potential other resource for support and vicarious trauma. He proposed thinking about how community programs may want to connect with Safe Call Now to know how to refer and understand what they do.
- The group affirmed that it is very important in furthering understanding of each other and building trust that advocates go to facilities. Making the personal connection, and seeing the space where inmates/residents live, is vital.

History of PREA partnership in WA State and Current Services

Ms. Piper-Wentland and Ms. Schubach shared about the history of the partnership and collaboration between victim services and the Department of Corrections.

- Benefits to victim services and corrections were discussed.
- Ms. Piper-Wentland highlighted the current advocacy services for incarcerated persons and the phased approach to implementation over the last few years.
- Discussed logistics of the hotline (first phase) - OCVA advocate answers the hotline, does initial screening and crisis intervention if needed, can facilitate handing off to the local community sexual assault program for ongoing advocacy and potentially setting up an in-person meeting
- The second phase was having advocates respond to hospitals for victim accompaniment at forensic rape exams.
- The third phase of services is in a readiness phase with advocates and facilities and that is for in-person services. In-person services are set to begin by October 1, 2015.

Understanding Advocacy and Designing Services for Success

Members of the work group had questions about qualifications of advocates who provide the services.

- Ms. Amburgey-Richardson and Ms. Piper-Wetland shared that advocates must have certification to provide services. They go through a 30 hour certification training program, plus specialized training on serving incarcerated survivors, and are required to have 12 hours of ongoing training each year.
- Work group participants felt it would very important to share the professional requirements of advocates with staff at facilities.
- Work group participants brought up that community sexual assault programs should plan for auditors to be contacting program members to verify services, qualifications, and relationship with correctional entity.

Ms. Amburgey-Richardson reviewed advocates' confidentiality obligations and the advocate-victim privilege law:

- Community sexual assault program receive VAWA and VOCA funding that contains confidentiality obligations, restrictions to releasing victim information.
- Reviewed privilege (RCW 5.60.060) and records laws (RCW 70.125.065)
- Advocates are mandated reports for children under 18 and vulnerable adults. Also may make reports in cases of imminent harm to self or others.

Work group members stressed the importance when sharing information about confidentiality to use statute language as that appeals to law enforcement in particular.

Ms. Amburgey-Richardson reviewed the role of an advocate. Key highlights include:

- Believe and support victim/survivor in their ability to make decisions. Advocates use an empowerment model and victim-centered approach to service provision.
- Advocates provide options and information to survivors so the survivor can make informed decisions.
- Advocacy differs from therapy. Advocates do not diagnose clients or use mental health modalities. Although some community sexual assault programs employ or contract with therapists, this is a separate service and most advocates are not licensed mental health providers.
 - Mr. Crawford shared that this explanation will be helpful in communicating about services to JRA staff.
- Legal advocacy is not legal advice. Advocates provide information about the process and support survivors during legal processes. Advocates will not insert themselves into an investigation – their role is as a support to the victim/survivor.

Discussion among work group participants ensued about advocacy services, and the following questions were answered:

- What is the frequency of advocacy?
 - A: Varies from individual to individual.
- How is advocacy different than what we could provide?
 - A. Community advocates are specially trained professionals offering external confidential support.
- Would be helpful to share out “what is advocacy document” with the stakeholder group.
 - A. Yes, the group wanted this document to be shared.

Additional suggestions made by work group participants included:

- Mr. Torrance suggested that if feasible corrections staff could view a part of the WCSAP advocate core module on confidentiality as he found it helpful in understanding the distinct type of protections advocates have.
- Discussion of the importance of having administrators on board, and understanding the role of advocates and the benefit of external victim services as part of PREA response.

Facility Overviews – Structure of Each Correctional Entity Statewide

Ms. Amburgey-Richardson reviewed results of WCSAP's Advocacy with Incarcerated Survivors State Assessment (2015) regarding needs expressed by advocates and questions they had about working with incarcerated survivors. A full summary was provided in hard copy format to participants. Key findings of the assessment included advocates' desire to:

- Understand the culture of each facility type
- Define roles of each partner
- Understand inmate/resident restrictions and access
- Learn what services are available inside
- Figure out how facilities can convey information about advocacy to staff and inmates

Mr. Crawford provided an overview of the structure of juvenile facilities in the state. Key highlights provided include:

- There are 8 community facilities. These facilities house low risk residents and are “front door unlocked” facilities.
 - Ridgeview is the only female facility.
 - There is one facility that specializes in drug and alcohol treatment.
- There are four higher security institutions:
 - Green Hill School has the most serious offenders. They have approximately 180 residents in 8 different units.
 - Echo Glen is the only institution that has female and male residents and has younger kids. They have approximately 210 residents in 10 different units.
 - Naselle Youth Camp collaborates with the Department of National Resources to offer a forestry work program and aquaculture program

Work group participants discussed how a resident at a juvenile facility would contact a victim advocate:

- Participants discussed the option of writing to an advocate. Pros and Cons were presented and there was significant concern from victim services and others.
- Phone advocacy and in person services were also discussed. Discussion about access raised the following key points:
 - Resident could call, but staff have to dial a number for them
 - Staff can't ask questions about why they need to dial the number for the youth
 - There are private rooms where an advocate could meet with a resident

Mr. Newlin provided an overview of the structure of jails in Washington State:

- There are 50-51 city/county jails in Washington State
 - Most are county facilities, with 12 – 13 city facilities
 - Most are run by the local Sheriff's Office. There are about 5 jails that are under County Commissioner's Council.

- Populations range from 20 beds to approximately 3000.
 - They vary from new state of the art facilities, to older buildings or modular units.
- Phone access:
 - Depends on the housing situation, daytime hours would be do-able.
 - Small jails do not record inmate calls. Large jails do, but it would be relatively easy to program in the number of a community sexual assault program as a number to not record.
 - Some facilities have time limits for calls.
 - Phone calls are at a cost to inmates, but could program in number of community sexual assault program as a free call
- Inmate mail: Outgoing mail is not looked at. Incoming mail is looked at.
- Guidance for Jail Operations
 - RCW 70.48 – City & County Jails Act
 - WASPC has jail accreditation standards for voluntary accreditation (not a requirement for jails)
- Length of stay
 - Jail could hold pretrial for many years.
 - Post sentence is 1 year and 1 day means they go to prison. Anything less than that stays at the county.
 - City jails - usually not longer than a year. They typically will not hold a pre-trial felony.
- PREA implementation in jails
 - Point of contacts in jails & level of knowledge and priority varies
 - Vast majority want to meet the intent of PREA standards and are working towards that
 - Contracts from DOC to jails to say to be in substantial compliance
 - Will be very county to county specific
- Mr. Newlin suggested WCSAP may want to attend/present at the jails meeting at the WASPC conference.

Next Steps

- Ms. Amburgey-Richardson will email the webinar registration link, what is advocacy document and, link to the issue of Connections publication that focuses on Advocacy with Incarcerated Survivors of Sexual Violence in Washington State.
- Attendees to email WCSAP materials used to train staff and orient inmates about PREA
- WCSAP will email any additional questions or needs in the interim
- Next meeting date is July 21st from 1-4 at the Office of Crime Victims Advocacy unit at the Department of Commerce.