

**BATTERERS INTERVENTION PROGRAM STANDARDS
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

Meeting of August 7, 2006 DRAFT

Open session

Minutes

Voting Members Present (6): Stephen King, RI Supreme Court, Vice Chair; Sage Bauer, RI Coalition Against Domestic Violence; Kristen Meuse, RI Justice Commission; Beatriz Perez, RI Department of Health; Ed Degnan, Kent House/BIPs Representative; Emily Daniels, Justice Assistance.

Seats Not Represented (7): RI Department of Corrections; Governor's Office; Urban League; Supreme Court Domestic Violence Training & Monitoring Unit; RI District Court; RI Police Chiefs Association; Domestic Violence Unit/Office of the Attorney General.

Additional Participants (3): Laura Jaworski, BIPSOC; Kim Seebeck, RI Family Court; Kathleen Carty, Vantage Point.

Materials Distributed:

Meeting Agenda: August 7th, 2006

Meeting Minutes: June 5th, 2006

Renewed Comprehensive Certification Summary: Vantage Point

Stephen King, Committee Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:05 pm. He noted for the record that Sisan Smallman, Committee Chair, is unable to attend as she is on vacation this week. Attendees were asked to introduce themselves.

Review of Minutes

Minutes from the meeting of June 5th, 2006 were reviewed and adopted.

Kristen Meuse made a motion to adopt the June 2006 minutes. Ed Degnan seconded the motion. All votes in favor; none opposed; one (1) abstention (Sage Bauer, RICADV). Motion carried.

Rules & Standards Subcommittee Report

Laura reported that the Subcommittee continues to meet on a regular basis. There are no changes or proposals to present today that would require review by the Oversight Committee. Laura noted that the August 8th meeting has been cancelled; the next meeting is scheduled for September 12th.

Review Subcommittee Report

Renewed Comprehensive Certification

A program summary was distributed and reviewed by group members. Vantage Point, Inc. is a private for profit agency. Kathleen Carty, Ph.D., M.S.W., LICSW, functions as agency President, supervisor, and seasoned facilitator. Currently there are 19 batterers intervention groups offered in Coventry, Cranston, East Greenwich, Johnston, Pawtucket, Providence, Warren, Warwick, West Warwick, Westerly, and Woonsocket. Sixteen (16) of these groups are for men, with the remaining three (3) groups for women. All groups are offered in English. Vantage Point provides services to approximately 200 clients. In addition to Ms. Carty, there are 5 batterers intervention program facilitators (four female facilitators and one male facilitator). Vantage Point offers 20 week and 26 week program formats, each with an intake session. The 20 week program meets weekly for 2 hours/session, while the 26 week session meets weekly for 90 minutes/session. Laura stated that the Vantage Point facilitators that were observed demonstrated particular skill in holding the offenders accountable and incorporating check-in behaviors with the group discussion.

Sage Bauer made a motion to award renewed Comprehensive Certification to Vantage Point, Inc. Beatriz Perez seconded the

motion. Five (5) votes in favor; none opposed; one abstention (Ed Degnan, BIP representative). Motion carried.

Agencies scheduled for upcoming certification renewal

Laura reported that the application for renewed comprehensive certification application for RIBIP will be mailed out in October 2007. Current certification is scheduled to expire in April 2007.

Program in Block Island

Steve reported on a request/situation presented to Sisan, as the chair of the BIPOSC. Sisan asked Steve to bring this unique situation to the attention of Oversight Committee members so that they would be made aware of her decision. Steve stated that Sisan was contacted by Paul Boorum, Jr., regarding providing batterers intervention program services to an individual who is a year-round resident of Block Island and court ordered to attend a batterers' intervention program. Mr. Boorum currently provides counseling services in various statewide locations, including Block Island, and he is in the process of completing a Provisional Certification application. However, he will be hard-pressed to meet the BIPSOC requirement for group intervention within the time frame that would assist the current court-mandated client. Ordinarily, the Oversight Committee would not allow an offender to fulfill court mandates with a non-certified provider, however maintaining this position in this unique situation appears to pose an unreasonable burden on an individual who is a full-time, year-round resident of Block Island and does not routinely

or regularly travel to the mainland. Sisan considered it reasonable to make every effort to work with the provider, who is available and willing to adhere to as many of the BIPOSC standards as possible, rather than have no viable services available for the resident. The Review Subcommittee will be following up with Mr. Boorom's application, once it is received.

Steve stated that this is an exceptional circumstance, and in a limited number of similar situations over the past eight years, exceptions have been made (i.e. military personnel who have been deployed, long distance truck drivers, fishermen, non-English speaking clients, etc.). Steve reported that he contacted Janice Dubois in order to determine the number of domestic violence incidents that had been recently reported by Block Island law enforcement through the use of the DV/SA forms. Of the reported incidents in 2005, three (3) individuals reported to be year round Block Island residents. However, it was unknown if these individuals regularly left the island, and therefore, could avail themselves of a certified program on the mainland. Beatriz questioned whether this issue is addressed in the Comprehensive Standards. Laura stated that the Standards address the issue of appropriateness for a group setting; if an individual is determined to be inappropriate for a group setting, then this information is relayed to the referral source, typically Adult Probation and Parole. These exceptions are usually brought to Sisan's attention as well. Coincidentally, the Rules & Standards Subcommittee has been, in fact, working on clarifying the language around this issue in

the revisions. Emily Daniels stated that in her experience at Justice Assistance, there have been instances where individuals are inappropriate for a group setting, generally due to cognitive impairments. She typically will obtain documentation from a qualified professional for her records. Beatriz stated that as batterers are typically skilled in manipulation, she feared this decision may be used against the Committee in the future. Laura reported that these decisions are made on a case-by-case basis, and usually in coordination with multiple professionals.

Ad Hoc Legislative Subcommittee

Steve informed the Committee that Maureen Keough, Subcommittee Chair, was unable to attend the meeting as she is on vacation. Steve reminded members that the Subcommittee was created to address the feasibility of an individual being given credit toward his/her court ordered batterers' counseling based on attending a batterers intervention program within the ACI.

Laura reported that first meeting of the Subcommittee was held last month and focused mostly on the complexity of the issues presented by the proposed legislation. The next meeting is scheduled for August 24th and will begin the process of discussing the Comprehensive Standards in relation to implementing a program in the ACI. Members at the last meeting were mostly focused on whether or not a funding source has been secured by the Department of Corrections for future programming. Laura did some follow-up work

and is still seeking a definitive answer, but still feels that it is important to move forward with the goal of the Subcommittee. Steve emphasized that while the ACI is an artificial setting and much different than daily life in the community, the Subcommittee will be looking at going forward and establishing an effective format for programs to follow both now and in the future.

Member Issues/Announcements

No announcements at this time.

Upcoming Meetings

Review Subcommittee:

TBA

Rules + Standards Subcommittee:

September 12th, 2006, at 2:30pm in Bernadette Building, 15 Fleming Rd., RIDOC, Cranston.

Ad Hoc Legislative Subcommittee:

August 24th, 2006, at 2:00pm in the Attorney General's Office, 150 South Main Street, Providence

DV Critical Cases Review Team:

September 19th, 2006, at 2:00pm in Pinel Building, Top Floor/Left Wing, Cranston DOC.

Oversight Committee:

TUESDAY, October 3rd, 2006 at 2:00 at DOA, Conference Room C.

Meeting Adjourned

Sage Bauer made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Beatriz Perez seconded the motion. All votes in favor; none opposed; no abstentions. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Laura Jaworski, Project Services Coordinator

Batterers Intervention Program Standards Oversight Committee