

**BATTERERS INTERVENTION PROGRAM STANDARDS
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

Meeting of December 4th, 2006

Open session

Minutes

Voting Members Present (10): Stephen King, RI Supreme Court/Co-Chair; Maureen Keough, Domestic Violence Unit/Office of the Attorney General; Ed Degnan, Kent House/BIPs Representative; Sage Bauer, RI Coalition Against Domestic Violence; Kristen Meuse, RI Justice Commission; Toni Roderick, Urban League; Janice Dubois, Supreme Court Domestic Violence Training & Monitoring Unit; Chief John LaCross, RI Police Chiefs Association; Honorable Elaine Bucci, RI District Court; Joseph Ben, Justice Assistance

Seats Not Represented (3): Governor's Office; Department of Health; RI Department of Corrections.

Additional Participants (2): Laura Jaworski, BIPSOC; Dr. Kathleen Carty, Vantage Point.

Materials Distributed:

Meeting Agenda: December 4th, 2006

Meeting Minutes: October 3rd, 2006

Schedule of Meetings: 2007

BIPSOC Member List: Contact Information

Stephen King, Committee Co-Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:10 pm. Attendees were asked to introduce themselves. Members welcomed Joseph Ben as the newly appointed designee for Justice Assistance as John Brennan has since retired.

Review of Minutes

Minutes from the meeting of October 3rd, 2006 were reviewed and adopted.

Maureen Keough made a motion to adopt the October 3rd, 2006 minutes. Sage Bauer seconded the motion. All votes in favor; none opposed; Chief John LaCross, Janice Dubois, Steve King, Joe Ben, and Judge Bucci abstained. Motion carried.

Review Subcommittee Report

Laura reported that RIBIP is the next program due for renewed comprehensive certification. The application package is expected to be returned at the beginning of January 2007, at which time the review process will begin. Current certification is scheduled to expire in April 2007. Laura will update members as more programs are due for renewed certification.

Rules & Standards Subcommittee Report

Laura reported that she and Sisan have been working to streamline current draft versions of both the Comprehensive Standards and the Rules of Practice and Procedure. The next Subcommittee meeting will be held next Tuesday, December 12th, 2006.

Ad Hoc Legislative Subcommittee

Steve reminded members that this Subcommittee was created to address the feasibility of enabling sentenced inmates who begin a batterers intervention program in the ACI to be given credit toward their BIP requirement when they enroll in a community-based BIP after release. Steve turned the discussion over to Maureen Keough, Subcommittee Chair.

Maureen reported that the immediate goal of the Subcommittee was to develop alternate draft legislation that addressed the issue of batterers intervention in the ACI. The secondary goal was to identify the Comprehensive Standards that are impacted by such a program and work to make those revisions. The next step of the Subcommittee is to determine what is to be done with the proposed draft legislation.

Members of the Subcommittee were asked to discuss potential sponsorship of the legislation with their respective agencies and report back at the next meeting. During the 2006 legislative session, the proposal was sponsored by the Public Defender's Office and introduced by Senator Levesque and Representative Almeida. At the most recent Subcommittee meeting, Michael DiLauro indicated that the proposal would be met with more reception if it were introduced by the Attorney General's Office. Maureen reported that she is awaiting a response from her office. Sisan Smallman had reported that the Department of Corrections was also unable to act as sponsor. Maureen has since worked to develop a draft of a letter to Senator Levesque introducing the alternate proposal to the original legislation, as well as to provide an overall update on the work of the Subcommittee.

Judge Bucci questioned why the Subcommittee feels that participants in the batterers intervention program in the ACI would only be eligible for credit of "half" of the hours attended. Kathy Carty reported that there are limited stressors in the prison setting as opposed to the community. Therefore, the participants are unable to practice the skills and utilize the tools that are being learned in the ACI program. Further, the participants in the ACI are typically incarcerated for multiple domestic violence offenses or for particularly heinous crimes. Judge Bucci asked if consideration was given for the length of an inmate's sentence in determining the number of hour to be credited for program attendance. Janice

Dubois believes that credit should be given for the educational experience of attending the program in the ACI, however the bulk of the program should be completed while living in the community. Toni Roderick stated that program fees would not be incurred while attending the prison program, which would alleviate the potential financial burden.

Judge Bucci stated that past discussions have focused around maximizing the potential for education while an individual is incarcerated; the current proposal seems to emphasize partial education in the ACI and continued attendance in the community batterers program. Kathy reported that the prison program is only twelve (12) hours, and many times the program is not offered every week. Maureen stated that from a practical perspective, the committees have no control over programming in the ACI. However, the Subcommittee has worked to draft a compromise which would satisfy all of the various stakeholders.

Kathy reported that even after completion of the prison program, many individuals return voluntarily to attend the program. She views the work she does as a treatment program and not as a punitive measure, and actively works with clients that cannot afford fees in her community program. Lastly, the majority of the individuals that attend her program complete successfully. Maureen added that the proposed draft legislation leaves open the possibility that should the current twelve (12) hour program be increased, accommodations could be made going forward. Judge Bucci verified if a program

certified by the BIPSOC would provide the batterers program in the ACI, to which Steve confirmed.

Member Issues/Announcements

Laura reported that a schedule of BIPSOC meetings for 2007 is available. A list of contact information for all members and designees is also available. Laura asked members to please review the information listed and inform her of any changes.

Kathy Carty informed members that Vantage Point has moved its office location to 1 James P. Murphy Highway, West Warwick. Her agency is hosting an Open House on Friday, December 8th from 3-7pm to showcase the new space. All are welcome to attend.

Upcoming Meetings

Review Subcommittee:

January 30th, 2007 at 2:30pm in Bernadette Building, 15 Fleming Rd., Cranston DOC.

Rules + Standards Subcommittee:

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

Ad Hoc Legislative Subcommittee:

December 18th, 2006 at 1:00 pm at Vantage Point, 1 James P. Murphy Highway, West Warwick, RI 02893.

DV Critical Cases Review Team:

**January 16, 2007 at 2:00 pm in Pinel Building, Top Floor/Left Wing,
Cranston DOC.**

Oversight Committee:

February 5th, 2007 at 2:00 at DOA, Conference Room C.

Meeting Adjourned

Maureen Keough made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Toni Roderick 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