

# **BATTERERS INTERVENTION PROGRAM STANDARDS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

**Meeting of April 2, 2012**

**Open session**

**Minutes Draft**

**Voting Members Present (7): Shelley Cortese, RI Department of Corrections/Chair; Rachel Orsinger(Alternate), RI Coalition Against Domestic Violence; Elaine Bucci, RI District Court; Anthony Ward-Smith, Justice Assistance; Mary Osborne, BIP Representative; Beatriz Perez, RI Department of Health; Sara Tindall-Woodman, Office of the Attorney General.**

**Seats Not Represented (6): Urban League; Supreme Court Domestic Violence Training & Monitoring Unit; Governor's Office; RI Justice Commission; RI Police Chiefs Association; RI Supreme Court.**

**Additional Participants (4): Emily Daniels, Probation & Parole/BIPSOC; Karen Lubo, Supervisor Probation & Parole; Bryan Riley, FVI; Ingrid Siliezar, Probation & Parole.**

**Materials Distributed:**

**Meeting Agenda: April 2, 2012**

**Meeting Minutes: February 6, 2012**

**Summary Comprehensive Re-Certification: Bridgemark**

## **Materials Made Available:**

### **Bridgemark Application for Renewed Comprehensive Certification\***

**\*for review only; in accordance with the Rules of Practice & Procedures**

**Shelley Cortese, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:05 pm.**

## **Review of Minutes**

**Minutes from the meeting of February 6, 2012 were reviewed.**

**Anthony Ward-Smith made a motion to adopt the February 6, 2012 minutes. Judge Bucci seconded the motion. All votes in favor; none opposed. Motion carried.**

## **Review Subcommittee Report**

**Shelley reported the Comprehensive Certification process for Bridgemark is complete. Shelley reported the Review Subcommittee is asking for a vote for Comprehensive Re-Certification. Shelley then**

asked the members of the Review Subcommittee who had participated in the process if they had any additional comments. Emily asked if members of the meeting had the opportunity to review the Comprehensive Re-Certification Summary of Bridgemark that was distributed at the start of the meeting. All participants stated they had. Emily stated that the application and curriculum submitted by Bridgemark was available for all voting members to review if they wish. Emily stated Anita Corley, Deb Ferrante, Rachel Orsinger and Ingrid Siliezar had participated in the review process. Rachel noted that Anita and Deb were unable to be present at today's meeting but she, Ingrid and Emily would be able to answer any questions regarding the process. Emily reported that a total of four groups were observed; two as initial observations and two as follow-up observations following a discussion of the initial observations among the Review Subcommittee and a meeting with Mary Osborne. Emily reported Anita and Deb observed the two initial groups and the follow-up group in November 2011 and that Rachel and Ingrid had observed a second follow-up group (fourth total) on March 21, 2012. Emily also reported a letter detailing the trainings to be attended by facilitators at Bridgemark was submitted by Bridgemark and distributed at the February 6, 2012 Oversight Committee meeting. This letter outlined the trainings to be attended by facilitators to bring the training hours into accordance with the Comprehensive Standards. This letter was submitted with Bridgemark's request for an extension of Comprehensive Certification and is available for review by voting members. Emily asked if there were any question

regarding the summary or review process of Bridgemark. Shelley stated that at the last Oversight Committee meeting the Review Subcommittee had not had the opportunity to fully discuss the trainings outlined in the letter. She stated the Review Subcommittee has since met and discussed the trainings and decided the trainings and hours submitted would qualify toward the Comprehensive Standards requirement. Shelley stated that going forward the Coalition had talked about quantifying the hours of each training that would meet the Comprehensive Standard's requirements. Rachel stated that the Coalition will be reviewing the Comprehensive Standards and the trainings offered by the Coalition and looking to crediting hours in the same manner other professional trainings are offered. Judge Bucci noted the summary had errors where Bridgemark was referred to as the former agency name, Kent House.

Anthony Ward-Smith made a motion to grant Renewed Comprehensive Certification to Bridgemark. Judge Bucci seconded the motion. All votes in favor; none opposed; Mary Osborne abstained. Motion carried.

### **Member Issues/Announcements**

Anthony Ward-Smith of Justice Assistance discussed the agency's latest data regarding the number of domestic violence cases arraigned in the District Courts and the outcome of those cases.

**Anthony stated that from December 1, 2011 to February 2, 2012 64% of the domestic violence cases arraigned in the Providence District Court were dismissed and in March 2012 92% of the domestic violence cases brought before the Washington County District Court were dismissed. Anthony asked Rachel how the Coalition compiles their data. Rachel stated the information is compiled from the Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Advocates working in the courts and the most recent numbers would be for the year 2011 and she believes the statewide dismissal rate was 38 or 39%, which is an increase from previous years.**

**Judge Bucci asked Anthony what Justice Assistance plans to do with the information. Anthony said at this point they plan to continue to collect data and watch for trends. Rachel stated the Coalition was looking into having city solicitors and police prosecutors included in the RI-VAWA DV/SA Law Enforcement Trainings.**

**Judge Bucci stated prosecution often dismisses a charge based on not having a victim present to testify. Karen asked if the case could go forward with police officer testimony if the victim did not appear or was not located. Judge Bucci stated that Crawford had made it very difficult to go forward without a witness. Rachel asked if documentation of physical evidence is enough to go forward. Judge Bucci stated there is often not enough physical evidence and there are very often no witnesses. That in the majority of cases there is**

only a victim and a perpetrator. It is up to the towns to subpoena victims and often times victims are reluctant to testify or not able to be located. Judge Bucci stated there are many factors that go into a dismissal; it is not as easy as not having a willing victim to testify.

Bryan stated he is very concerned with the lack of referrals. Bryan stated that there has been a drastic change in referrals over the past year. Emily reported that all BIP agencies have closed groups due to a lack of referrals. Bryan asked Rachel how often the Coalition gathers information. Rachel stated the Coalition gathers information on a quarterly basis and reports it annually. She said she will look into if the information can be distributed on a quarterly basis. Both Mary and Bryan stated there is no indigent funding for BIP and that both agencies are running groups at a loss.

Shelley announced Roberta Richman, Director of Rehabilitative Services at the Department of Corrections is retiring.

### **Upcoming Meetings**

**Review Subcommittee:**

**Wednesday May 9, 2012 at 9:00am in Dix Building, Cranston, RI.**

**DV Critical Cases Review Team:**

**TBD**

**Oversight Committee:**

**June 4, 2012 at 2:00pm in Dix Building 2nd Floor Conference Room,  
18 Wilma Schesler Lane, Cranston, RI 02920.**

**Meeting Adjourned**

**Judge Bucci made a motion to adjourn the meeting.**

**Rachel Orsinger seconded the motion. All votes in favor; none  
opposed;**

**no abstentions. Motion carried.**

**Meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m.**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Emily Daniels, Probation & Parole Officer**

**Batterers Intervention Program Standards Oversight Committee**