

**BATTERERS INTERVENTION PROGRAM STANDARDS
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

Meeting of August 6, 2012

Open session

Minutes Draft

Voting Members Present (6): Shelley Cortese, RI Department of Corrections/Chair; Deb DeBare, RI Coalition Against Domestic Violence; Elaine Bucci, RI District Court; Anthony Ward-Smith, Justice Assistance; Mary Osborne, BIP Representative; Diane Daigle, Office of the Attorney General.

Seats Not Represented (7): RI Department of Health; 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): Kathy Carty, Vantage Point; Anita Corley, EBCC; Emily Daniels, Probation & Parole/BIPSOC; Deb Ferrante, EBCC; Bryan Riley, FVI; George Sheehan, RI-BIP; Ingrid Siliezar, Probation & Parole.

Materials Distributed:

Meeting Agenda: August 6, 2012

Meeting Minutes: April 2, 2012

Summary Comprehensive Re-Certification: Vantage Point

Materials Made Available:

Vantage Point 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 April 2, 2012 were reviewed.

Deb DeBare made a motion to adopt the April 2, 2012 minutes. Diane Daigle seconded the motion. All votes in favor; none opposed. Motion carried.

Review Subcommittee Report

Shelley reported that the review process for Vantage Point's Renewed Comprehensive Certification is complete; a copy of the summary was

distributed. Emily reported on the Vantage Point summary; acknowledging volunteers Anita Corley, Deb Ferrante and Rachel Orsinger who assisted in the re-certification process. Emily went over the main points of the summary and asked if there were any questions regarding the summary or review process of Vantage Point. Emily stated that she and Rachel had the opportunity to observe a group facilitated by Dr. Kathleen Carty and acknowledged how Dr. Carty had handled the complexity of a client's victimization and perpetration of abuse astutely. The Review Subcommittee is asking for a vote granting Vantage Point Renewed Comprehensive Certification.

Deb DeBare made a motion to grant Renewed Comprehensive Certification to Vantage Point. Anthony Ward-Smith seconded the motion. All votes in favor; none opposed; Mary Osborne abstained. Motion carried.

Emily reported the Comprehensive Certification process for FVI is nearly complete. Emily has met with Bryan Riley and discussed the need for additional training hour submissions and training descriptions for facilitators. The Review Subcommittee is requesting an extension of Comprehensive Certification, on behalf of FVI, until the October 1st Oversight Committee meeting.

Deb DeBare made a motion to grant an extension of Comprehensive Certification to FVI until the BIPSOC meeting on 10-1-2012. Anthony

Ward-Smith seconded the motion. All votes in favor; none opposed; Mary Osborne abstained. Motion carried.

Member Issues/Announcements

RICADV

As discussed at the April 2nd Oversight Committee meeting, Rachel Orsinger asked the Review Subcommittee to look at the RICADV trainings and the correlating hours to be credited toward the ongoing training hours required for facilitators to remain able to facilitate mandated Batterer's Intervention groups. Emily reported the Review Subcommittee has received the information from the RICADV and will assess it at the next scheduled Subcommittee meeting.

Justice Assistance

Anthony Ward-Smith of Justice Assistance (JA) discussed the agency's data regarding the number of domestic violence cases arraigned in the District Courts and the percentage of dismissals, which JA estimates to be between 58-65%. Judge Bucci asked why there is a discrepancy between the RICADV percentage of dismissals and JA's percentage. Anthony stated that at the April meeting Rachel had stated the newer numbers from the RICADV had shown the percentage in dismissals was higher than previous years and that the RICADV number was closer to the numbers JA had found. Dr. Carty

asked if the data showed whether there were certain types of domestic violence charges being dismissed more than others. Diane Daigle asked if the data include charges that were not dismissed but amended to non-domestic. Anthony stated the agency had not looked at these factors when compiling the rates of dismissals. Deb Ferrante asked if there are certain cities and towns that stand out in their rate of dismissals. Anthony stated that there are jurisdictions that stood apart from the rest and that Jonathon Houston, director of Justice Assistance, has the specific breakdowns of dismissals for cities and towns.

Batterer Intervention Programs

Bryan reported referrals are still down and FVI is having a difficult time maintaining the groups. Mary reports referrals are still down at Bridgemark as well and Dr. Carty states that her private practice supports the Batterer's Intervention Program run by Vantage Point because her numbers are down 75% and she has closed half of the groups running 2 years ago. Anthony stated the Comprehensive Standards allow for variance in special circumstances; would it be possible to increase the group size from 10-12 without the need for a co-facilitator so that programs may have more clients in a group to support the cost of running that group. Deb DeBare and Shelley voiced their reluctance to change the group size cap as a knee jerk reaction to the current economy. Both referred to the time it had

taken to establish the Standards and that the Standards are based on years of research on best practice. There must be a balance in looking to change any of the guidelines set by the Standards as to victim and community safety, offender accountability and program quality of service. Judge Bucci noted that the drop of referrals and lack of client finances has been an ongoing concern for the Programs and that the Programs are struggling to stay financially viable and therefore the Committee should grant them the time to be heard on how the increase in group size cap for an individual facilitator would create a more financially sustainable business model for Programs. Emily stated the Standards provide a process for programs to request a variance in standards. The Programs/a Program can request the Oversight Committee hear the proposed variance and it can be put on the agenda for discussion. (Post meeting, Emily forwarded Section 9 of the Comprehensive Standards to all certified Batterer's Intervention Programs via email)

Open Government Summit

Emily reported out on attending the Attorney General's Open Government Summit held on July 27, 2012. Emily reported as a public body the Oversight Committee must establish a written procedure regarding the process of requesting the Committee's public records. The Committee must also appoint a Public Records Officer; this person must obtain training regarding the Access to Public Records Act and the Open Meetings Act.

It was also noted that there are to be no “boiler plate” topics on the agenda; each topic discussed needs to be included in the posted agenda. If a topic not on the agenda is brought up for discussion and the cannot be set aside for the next scheduled meeting a majority vote of members can amend the agenda to include the discussion in the meeting.

Upcoming Meetings

Review Subcommittee:

Tuesday August 28, 2012 at 9:00am in Dix Building, Cranston, RI.

***Post meeting the date was rescheduled for Thursday September 13, 2012 at 9:00am**

DV Critical Cases Review Team:

TBD

Oversight Committee:

Monday October 1, 2012 at 2:00pm in Dix Building 2nd Floor Conference Room, 18 Wilma Schesler Lane, Cranston, RI 02920.

Meeting Adjourned

Anthony Ward-Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Mary Osborne seconded the motion. All votes in favor; none opposed;

no abstentions. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Emily Daniels, Probation & Parole Officer

Batterers Intervention Program Standards Oversight Committee