



CEDV Accountability Workgroup

July 20th, 2023

3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Government Center, Room 2/3 and Zoom Teleconference

Members Present: Jamie Milloy -Acting Chair (OAR), Melody Vielbig (DSVS), Donna Audritsh (ADAPT), Brenda McBorrough (FCIA), Christopher Davies (DSVS), Adam Allston (Health Department), Courtney Schwartz (VSDVAA) Derwin Overton (OAR) Katrina Smith (JDRDC), Dawn Butorac (Public Defenders Office), Stacy Ziebell (DSVS), Iman Omer-Bahar (Health Department).

Observers: Shaneen Dewendre (Ashiyanaa)

Presenter: Chris Davies (DSVS Clinical Services)

Meeting was called to order at 3:10 PM, because of technical problems with the Zoom meeting.

Minutes:

I. Approve Remote Attenders:

A. Shaneen Dewendre with Ashyianaa attended remotely due to wrapping up a late board meeting. Since this is her fourth remote attendance during this calendar year, she is noted as attending this meeting as an observer.

B. Courtney Schwartz with the VA Action Alliance is attending remotely as she lives more than 60 miles away.

C. Donna Audritsh, DSVS Volunteer is attending today's meeting between back-to-back meetings.

D. Jamie Milloy asked for a motion to approve remote attendees,

Derwin Overton moved the motion to be approved. Brenda McBorrogh seconded. Motion passed.

II. Review/Approval of June 15, 2023 minutes.

A. No changes. Minutes approved as written.

III. DSVS update on status of focus group and surveys

A. PowerPoint presentation to share how Focus Group/Surveys were created and addressed questions around Victim Services, Intervention Services for Survivor's partners who caused harm, Police and Legal System and Community Services.

B. Two focus groups were held remotely with only English-speaking participants. 7 total participants for Focus group, all women. Themes included:

- Participants did not feel heard by the system.

- Participants felt that there was an overreliance on criminal justice system and a need for a variety of interventions for those who cause harm.

- Addressed how people who cause harm can manipulate systems and communities to harm victims.

- Lack of protection for survivors and systems that at times inflicted harm.

- Some survivors wanted more community involvement and others did not.

- Some survivors wanted a greater variety of interventions, but others thought it too risky to hope for more.

- No single approach was seen as safe or effective for all cases.

C. Survey Respondents:

- Survey Monkey used and advertised to partners through Accountability Workgroup, DV Network, DSVS staff and contacts,

other focus group participants. Available in 8 languages but only English responses. Started 6/24-7/14/2023. Same four topics as Focus Group.

- Wide series of responses within a small sample. No non-English speaking participants.
- 21 women between ages of 35-64. 12 White, 3 Asian, 2 Black, 3 Other Race, and 1 Native America/Alaskan Indian.
- Findings included that while few responded, those who did provided rich information on the topic of victim safety and accountability.
- General agreement that: a. They want to be believed. b. The current legal system is not sufficient to promote accountability. c. No interventions should keep survivors in relationships when they want to leave or require survivors to cut off contact with a partner before receiving support. d. All parties would benefit from becoming better informed about domestic and sexual violence to prevent those who cause harm from manipulating the system.
- Limitations were no non-English speakers and small sample size.

D. Suggestions from Survivors:

- Campaign to educate criminal justice system, social services, and general community and wanted outside experts to do the educating rather than those involved in existing system.
- Survivors with lived experience to provide peer support and mentoring.
- Peer led forum for survivors as a community of support.
- Frequent contact and support to survivors throughout the accountability process.
- A variety of community-based accountability interventions beyond court or police.
- Prevention/early intervention with families as first signs of distress.
- Address unresolved trauma for those who cause harm.

E. Key takeaways:

- Survivors wanted their voices to be heard more to influence systems' outcomes.
- Confidence in community-based intervention is mixed.
- No non-English speaking participants. What barriers led to non-English speakers not to participate?
- Limited overall strategies for addressing interpersonal violence.

-Both leaving or staying seemed to bring about negative outcomes from systems.

-Wanted to hear more about the process for treatment to those who cause harm.

F. Next steps/Recommendations:

-Identify and propose enhancements to community accountability

-Obtain complementary data from those who cause harm.

G. Discussion from members:

-One participant wanted their partner to be involved in Domestic Violence Intervention Program, but the court would not order it in PO.

Note: 3:41 PM video went out on Zoom connection. Got verbal response from Donna Audritsh, Shaneen Dewendre and Courtney Schwartz that they could see and hear us, even if we could not see them.

Question from Stacy Ziebell: How did participants learn about focus groups and surveys? Chris Davies reported we did not ask this in Focus Group and Survey. Did learn that most participants did participate in victim services.

Stacy Ziebell discussed how groups may need to find out where community members are receiving their information and use those platforms to advertise victim and accountability services/resources.

Jamie Milloy shared how one survivor felt that the name Victim Advocate was not a good name as they could not advocate for them in court.

Katrina Smith: Can we have a person under a PO that allows them to work on services together with the person they harmed?

Jamie Milloy and Chris Davies shared how some participants were not aware of Domestic Violence Intervention programs for those who cause harm or could not access them.

Katrina Smith talked about when people who come for Protective Orders and staff will offer them connections to services/resources.

Chris Davies: Wondered if some of the experiences that the participants had were impacted by the court system during the pandemic. Jamie Milloy

and Stacy Ziebell both wondered if some of these experiences were one off or more of a system issue.

Katrina Smith talks about how they try to assist with Protective Orders but as they require a written affidavit at times then the person may not want to have the partner receive the written affidavit. Katrina reports that magistrate offices won't take PO requests between when JDRDC cuts off intakes for Protective Orders and when courts close. The magistrates only receive Protective Order filings when the court is closed.

Dawn Butorac said in a follow up to an earlier question that she was able to confirm that services such as Domestic Violence Intervention Programs can be ordered within a Protective Order. She wonders if this does not happen at times as the judge does not want to order Domestic Violence Intervention program or other services when there is no supervised probation. It is unclear how compliance with required treatment as part of Protective Order would be enforced, since there is not supervised probation.

Chris Davies shared this was a very rewarding process. Jamie Milloy also shared that the work to create survey/focus groups was so worth it once they were in front of survivors.

- IV. Subgroup Brainstorm from 4:00 to 4:30 PM (Separate Minutes attached for each subgroup meeting)**
 - a. Promising new programs
 - b. Improving existing pre-trial systems
 - c. Improving existing post-incarceration systems
- V. Schedule subgroup meetings for August:** Next meeting August 17, 2023, 3:00-4:30 PM in Room 2/3 of the Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, VA 22035.
- VI. Explore a timeline to report subgroup progress:** Individual subgroups will meet August 17, 2023 and September 21, 2023 and report out at next Workgroup meeting October 20, 2023.
- VII. Explore a timeline to present proposal to CEDV:** To be discussed at next subgroup meeting.

- VIII. Open comment from the public:** No comments from public was made as there were no participants from the public.
- IX. Adjourn:** Meeting Adjourned at 4:00 PM.