

Bellingham-Whatcom County Commission Against Domestic Violence

DV Commission Meeting

Thursday September 28, 2017 from 8:30am-10:00am

@ Mount Baker Theatre Encore Room

The mission of the Bellingham-Whatcom County Commission Against Domestic Violence is to provide leadership in the community's effort to reduce and prevent domestic violence.

Members Attending: Alan Artman; Riannon Bardsley; Beth Boyd; Chief Cliff Cook; Regina Delahunt; Sheriff Bill Elfo; Silvia Johnson; Christina Kobdich; Jon Komorowski; Jon Mutchler; Katie Olvera; Linda Quinn; Sharon Rutherford; Garrett Shelsta; Kevin Turner; Michelle Zlotek; Moonwater

Members Absent: Karen Burke; Lorayne Dennis; Ken Levinson; Dave McEachran; Kathy McNaughton; Darlene Peterson; Dave Reynolds; Mike Riber; Peter Ruffatto; Bruce Van Glubt; Mary Welch

Staff Present: Susan Marks; Liz Stuart; Melissa Lacki; Elizabeth Montoya

Guests: Sgt. Claudia Murphy, Bellingham Police Department; Chris Roselli, Western Washington University

Agenda Item	Discussion
<p>Welcome and Introductions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reminder to complete meeting evaluations Introduce DV Commission members and guests 	<p>Welcome and Introductions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DV Commission members introduced themselves and their agencies. Introductions included new DV Commission Member, Ferndale Police Chief Kevin Turner, Chris Roselli (Western Washington University), and Claudia Murphy (Bellingham Police Department). DV Commission members were reminded to complete their meeting evaluations at the end.
<p>MOTION: Consent Agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minutes from July 27, 2017 	<p>MOTION: Consent Agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members were provided with copies of the minutes from the 7/27/2017 meeting for review. Jon Mutchler made a motion to approve the minutes from the meeting. Garret Shelsta seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
<p>DV Commission Mission Expansion: Flow Chart and Timeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review, questions, comments 	<p>DV Commission Mission Expansion: Flow Chart and Timeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members were provided with copies of the DV Commission Expansion flowchart and timeline. Chris introduced the flowchart and asked members to review.
<p>DV Action Month</p>	<p>DV Action Month</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Susan introduced the Domestic Violence Action Month (DVAM) calendar and asked members to choose one action per week to take.

	<p>Members were also asked to “like” the DV Commission page on Facebook and write posts asking their followers to do the same. Members were also asked to post the DVAM calendar at their workplace where others can see it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In October, DV Commission members were asked to complete their weekly action and share with their networks; comment on DVAM Facebook posts; share the DVAM Facebook posts; and tag other leaders in the community in the posts and ask them to comment, share, and take action.
<p>Review of Domestic Violence-Related Data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Petitions for DV protection orders in Whatcom county • Lethality Assessment Program and victims who identify as LGBTQ+ • DV High Risk Team (DVHRT) and offender accountability outcomes • Report out to large groups 	<p>Review of Domestic Violence-Related Data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regina introduced the data review activity. Members were divided into three groups, reviewing data regarding Petitions for DV Protection Orders in Whatcom County; Lethality Assessment Program and victims who identify as LGBTQ+; and DV High Risk Team and Offender Accountability Outcomes. Members were asked to review the data packets in their small groups, discuss the following questions and document their responses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>What?</i> What data did you review? What observations stood out? ○ <i>So what?</i> What impact could this have on people who are victims, children in the home, or offenders of domestic violence? ○ <i>Now what?</i> What actions make sense? Who takes those actions? When? • After giving groups times to review and respond to the data, groups shared their observations. • Petitions for DV protection orders in Whatcom county <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Michele Zlotek reported out on the Domestic Violence Protection Order (DVPO) data. The group observed how the law enforcement calls for DV have maintained steady but victim services have gone up. The number of petitions for DVPOs in Whatcom County has gone down significantly. ○ The overall rate that DVPOs are granted in the state of Washington is high, but very low in Whatcom County District Court. ○ The group observed several comments from survivor focus groups regarding challenges and barriers in obtaining DVPOs. The group commented that survivors could become discouraged by the confusion of navigating systems. ○ Survivors may not report in tribal areas or in certain cultures because of family members and cultural barriers. There may also be a distrust of law enforcement or fear of getting relatives in trouble. ○ The group commented on challenges with commissioners in district court, ongoing cultural barriers, and opposite trends of service requests and POs petitioned for granted. ○ The group shared that they would like to develop a better understanding of why POs are not being granted. Whatcom

could lead state-wide efforts to figure out why this is happening, look at the history of the issue, and focus on the specific populations that are least likely to apply.

- Lethality Assessment Program (LAP) and victims who identify as LGBTQ
 - Linda Quinn reported out on the LAP and victims who identify as LGBTQ+ data.
 - The group observed the following themes from interviews LGBTQ+ survivors of DV: Fear of being believed; Fear of identity being misunderstood; Need for LE and service providers to be able to identify the aggressor; Isolation and further victimization; Need for education on healthy relationships and definition of DV; Lack of an LGBTQ+ community center; Need for first responders to be openly affirming about support for LGBTQ victims.
 - The group noted that Whatcom County's LAP data on DV in same-gender relationships does not match national data—this gap raises questions. Is DV being underreported in LGBTQ communities in Whatcom county?
 - The group considered this data to be a cause of concern because victims and their children may be less likely to report abuse, which can lead to a continuation of the cycle of abuse. There may also be insufficient opportunities for support and prevention education for LGBTQ victims of DV, and resources and education for service providers.
 - The group discussed the following strategies: 1) Sharing resources among agencies, including training; 2) Capitalize on social media to market resources; 3) Edit forms to make them more LGBTQ-friendly; 4) Create a culture of safety by asking genuine, open questions, listening, and believing; and 5) Review the LAP screening to determine if all questions are relevant to the LGBTQ community.
- DV High Risk Team (DVHRT) and offender accountability outcomes
 - Claudia Murphy reported out on DVHRT.
 - The group noted that there is a lack of apparent data on recidivism, and questions remain as to whether the DVHRT is impacting it.
 - The group noted that DVHRT has been meeting for the last three years and the data that was reviewed ended a year ago in October. Since then, DVHRT numbers of referrals have increased significantly and we don't yet have data reflecting the most recent progress.
 - Claudia reported that DVHRT has seen huge differences in accountability, convictions and time between reporting and arrest, and that the biggest asset of the DVHRT, according to its members, is communication between systems.
 - The question remains: How much is batterers treatment and counseling happening and what effect does it have?
 - One of the statistics reviewed in the data was concerning bail. The group was pleased that bail in increasing in some circumstances, but the group also noted that there are other

	<p>movements regarding jail alternatives and bail reduction or elimination. Claudia noted that the concern from the group was victim safety in the time between the arrest and the bail release for offenders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The group would like to collect additional data on cases occurring throughout the past year to see if there has been additional change.
<p>1. Adjourn</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turn in your meeting evaluations 	<p>@ 10:00am</p>