

Tri-County Batterer Intervention Provider Network Meeting Minutes March 10th, 2020

Attendance: Chris Huffine (Allies in Change), Tammie Jones (Oregon Justice Department), Regina Holmes (ARMS), Olga Parker (Modus Vivendi), Brennan Edwards (Lutheran Community Services Northwest), Kara Kresin (Cedar Counseling Center)

Minutes taken by: Ivy O'Rourke (PSU), Tess Van Doren (PSU), edited by Chris Huffine

Discussion Topic: Coronavirus (COVID-19) and Batterer intervention/abusive men

Important information on Covid-19:

Masks are only for infected individuals. Supplies hoarding is unhelpful and takes away necessary supplies for essential workers and at-risk individuals. There is a fine line between caution and fear, and much of our media has promoted fear-mongering. Self-concerned and ignorant responses are unhelpful – people who are in good health and not in vulnerable populations warrant being cautious and practicing hygiene but certainly not panic. Remember that the fear and panic of coronavirus has the potential to be more dangerous than the virus itself.

How is this relevant to DV?

It serves as a great international reason to further monitor and control partners. We understand that no contact orders decrease DV, and given that quarantine is essentially a “mandatory contact order”, it is safe to anticipate an increase in DV as a result. Along with that, what we know is that people who are abusive become more so under stress, this is just another reason why this should be discussed in groups; To inform men, prepare them to deal with stress, negate fear, be informed properly to avoid unnecessary fear/panic. In general, this situation can generate a lot of fear and fear is a great driver of abuse and control. More abuse and control could result from anxiety – ex: poor and working-class individuals cannot telecommute, having to go out into the world could create anxiety. Chris suggests that Covid-19 has the potential to affect BIPs on two different levels: on the **network level** and on the **individual level**. The question of, “what, if anything, does your organization have in place about quarantines/lockdown?” was asked. Along with the question, “How may it affect groups and Individuals in those groups?”.

Network level (addressing coronavirus impacts on your organization):

courts are in quarantine. The current Multnomah County procedure is if you're sick—stay home. Providing hand sanitizer to all people in essential shared spaces (ex: seen at Costco). Clients are asked to remain home if they are sick. Allies in Change had an all staff meeting last week to address increasing concerns of the virus and sharing the most up to date CDC report, and needing to address the possibility of how their organization may need to adapt in the event of a quarantine.

Individual level (addressing coronavirus impacts on your groups and clients):

It's likely that the men won't get coronavirus but they can be negatively affected by it. To address it at this level it was suggested to emphasize to clients and in groups the importance of staying home if you think you may be ill, not touching your face, and washing your hands. Use group time to provide informed updates with the amount of misinformation is being spread. Damping down the sensationalism. There is concern from providers about the level of isolation, especially for clients who struggle with social interaction and paranoia. It was mentioned that typically, at Allies in Change, clients are

allowed one unexcused absence and then they are charged for absences. However, now they are temporarily allowed excused absences that won't count against them – to encourage not spreading illness. It was also noted that this may be difficult w/ probation expectations. Chris wonders if probation may be enacting a similar policy to what they're doing at AIC. It was mentioned that men are bringing up the virus in groups and exposing their ignorance on the issue. An example was shared, of one man who planned to travel to Europe with his family and feared his daughter would die and he would never see her ever again. Despite the virus not actually effecting many people in Europe yet or children. Many men have expressed confusion about it being an airborne virus. someone mentioned likening this experience to the 2008 snowstorm that trapped many people in their homes and an uptick in DV was seen. Finding a point of comparison can reduce fear and give potentially provide reference for what is and is not helpful.

Activity : brainstorm as a group the things that could be difficult about COVID19 – then identify ways to address these

Coronavirus Concerns – what might your group members say	Ways to manage those Coronavirus Concerns :
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Fear of getting sick -Not getting the help you need – inability to seek medical help, inadequate supplies or unable to get them -Appointments getting cancelled -Economic slowdown -Lack of work -No vacations no travel -Fear of loved ones getting sick -Fear of deaths -Concern for elderly and fragile/vulnerable family and where they are -who around me is sick? -Being in quarantine – going stir crazy – cabin fever – being confined to home -Unable to pay bills -Concerns about being able to do what you need to, to see your family, complete programs -Child care if schools shut down and work continues -Loss of benefits from loss of work hours -Entertainment loss -Social isolation -Public transportation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Know how it spreads -Understand that it's evolving and stay updated -Look for helpful information not worst case scenarios -Keep perspective -Limit sensational content consumed -Acknowledge fears, don't minimize, but help them figure out what they can do to stay healthy. -Positive healthy things to do with the family, staycation -Time to do things you don't normally have to do!! Frame it as an opportunity to take advantage of -Remind them of things to do around the house and remind of self-care in these areas -Stress reduction techniques -Handling children and siblings – practical ways to coexist -Working from home -Techniques for those in recovery if they can't go to meetings or treatment. Utilizing what you can ~ like a phone or online NA/AA meetings- instead of panicking over not making it to a meeting.

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">-You aren't alone!-Good time to encourage better communication skills about how they feel, reach out to people if you are struggling-THIS TOO SHALL PASS-Stay engaged-Take time outs when you need to, don't be abusive-Spiritual practices |
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Editor's note: I have attached a revision/expansion of this activity to this email, based on additional input from group members.