

### Tri-County Batterer Intervention Provider Network Meeting Minutes--6/27/00

Present: Marc Hess (Multnomah County Community Justice), Guruseva Mason (Transition Projects), Paula Manley, Michael Davis (Changepoint), Chris Huffine (Men's Resource Center), Jerri Bracken (Washington County Community Corrections), David Houston (Changepoint), Bobbie Mekvold (Multnomah County Community Justice)

#### Discussion of boundaries between probation and BIPs

-In part, boundaries are determined by who has the money and the related policies they prescribe. For example, Federal P.O.s expects that there is no confidentiality, that even victim contacts need to be shared with them.

-If we talk with the victim, is that privileged information? Do they need to give permission for that information to be shared with the P.O.?

-What do we do when a victim shares information, but doesn't want it shared with the P.O.?

What is our obligation/duty?

-Given that it is the court who makes the referral (for court-mandated clients), who really is the client?

-It was suggested that the perpetrator be informed right at intake what information will be disclosed including: unauthorized contact with the victim, new offenses, positive UAs, attendance, level of participation, and threats to harm.

-A separate but close relationship with P.O.s seems to work best to share information, but also make requests of the other about what is done.

-What can complicate this is that you're dealing with a variety of P.O.s and their particular styles. How do you coordinate consistently given that there are a diversity of P.O.s and providers?

-Keep in mind that the purpose of probation is to modify the behavior that got the probationer into trouble. Victim safety is also important.

-There has been a press in the past to report every disclosure to the court, but now there's more room to not respond to a violation or to not report a violation to the court.

-Remember that P.O.s are supposed to be following the directives of the statutes as well as the judge's orders and directives. The judges can vary greatly in what they direct and mandate.

-Coordination between BIPs and P.O.s seems vital and can make a significant difference in our work with batterers.

-How do we maintain a positive flow of information in a variety of areas in both directions?

-Who should be doing victim contacts? Should providers do that or get that information from P.O.s? Victim contacts often have two purposes: to provide victims with information and support, but also to get information from them to help P.O.s do their jobs.

-Probation uses the victim as a barometer for how things are going. She is seen, loosely, as a client and part of the client pool. In that way, victim safety and perpetrator accountability are both important.

-It was suggested that if providers get information about the victim from the P.O. then the victim isn't being put in the middle.

-It was observed that there were no victim advocates present at this meeting today. That is a concern since coordination with victim advocates about all of this is important. Partnership with victim advocacy is a vital piece. It was noted that people with the money often make the decisions and then invite victim advocates to participate after the agenda has already been set, rather than having them help set the agenda. It is important to incorporate their vision rather than telling them what is needed.

-Who should decide when contact with the victim should be allowed? There is a range of judiciary responses to the whole victim contact issue. Providers see the perpetrator on a different level than the P.O. does. Input from both seem important. It's preferred to have the P.O. decide when the no contact order should be lifted, with information from the provider and victim as well. Ultimately it is the P.O.'s name on the line in terms of assigning blame and responsibility if anything happens.

anything happens.

-What information do P.O.s want from providers? They would like monthly reports which include attendance, UA results and substance use admissions, the provider's opinion/assessment of progress and an assessment of the perpetrator's level of understanding--is he getting it?

Weekly reports have some advantages as well--they are more current and often easier for the provider to complete, although it increases the amount of paperwork.

-Change among perpetrators can be gradual and hard to assess--like hair turning gray. It takes time to evaluate it.

-It can be helpful to have probation completion requirements separate and distinct from provider completion requirements. That way the decision of when a perpetrator has truly met the program requirements can be made independently from when they have met the probation requirements (and vis-versa).

-Should providers be contacting victims? Many victims aren't hooked up with victim advocates, so if the provider doesn't contact them, they may not hear from anyone. Probation departments are getting better about contacting victims in a timely way to provide information about services and resources. It is clear that victim outreach is important.

-It was suggested that P.O.s might be open to having providers offer mini-trainings in their departments about various aspects of DV. An alternative might be to see if the Tri-County meetings could be approved to provide probation training credits.

-Money is flowing to services for men, especially through probation departments, but how do we provide money for women's services? Charge a co-pay that would go towards victim services?

This is also an issue for non-dominant culture men, who may have few or no culturally appropriate services available.

-We need to keep doing the public education and coordination, as best we can.

Minutes taken by Chris Huffine.