

Behind the Scenes: The Role of the CCWS Legal Analyst

As we welcome our new Legal Analyst, Heather Wojcik, to CCWS and offer our profound thanks to her predecessor, Gisela Ruebsaat, it seems like a good time to share with readers a bit about the important role the Legal Analyst fulfills on the CCWS team.

In short, the Legal Analyst is the mainstay who provides the critical legal analysis that informs the work of CCWS related to domestic and sexualized violence, the law and social policy. She brings her understanding of the BC and Canadian legal and political landscape to this work, along with sound knowledge of relevant legislation like the *Family Law Act*, the *Child, Family and Community Service Act*, criminal law related to domestic violence and sexual assault, and privacy legislation.

The Legal Analyst participates in a wide range of CCWS projects that translate into tasks such as curriculum development, training delivery, briefing notes, information bulletins and backgrounders. She also regularly represents CCWS at a variety of provincial tables involving government, community, policing and child protection agency representatives.

Underscoring all the work of the CCWS Legal Analyst is a feminist analysis grounded in an understanding of intersectionality around the many factors that impact women's experience.

Welcome Heather Wojcik!

Our new CCWS Legal Analyst, Heather Wojcik, was called to the bar of British Columbia in 2011 and has a broad range of experience in the legal and non-profit sectors. Before joining EVA BC, Heather practiced civil litigation at the Vancouver law firm of Eyford Macaulay Shaw & Padmanabhan LLP and was a visiting lawyer at the Guyana Legal

Aid Clinic in Georgetown, Guyana. Most recently, Heather was a Program Director with the Law Foundation of British Columbia. She has sat on the board of the Vancouver Association for Survivors of Torture, and has served as a volunteer in many community and non-profit organizations, including the Canadian Red Cross, Access Pro Bono, and the Together Against Poverty Society. Welcome, Heather!



Thank you, Gisela! Trophy Recognizes Longtime Service



After more than 24 years with EVA BC, CCWS Legal Analyst Gisela Ruebsaat said farewell to colleagues and friends with her usual grace, wit and even some poetry at a ceremony held during EVA BC's

Annual Training Forum in November 2016. Executive Director Tracy Porteous described Gisela's work over the years as "a beacon in the anti-violence movement." Her insight, tireless effort and heartfelt commitment to ending violence against women was well known to all who had the privilege of working with her. May our affection and respect be her companions on the road to new adventures. Thank you for everything, Gisela!

Capacity Building Highlights

Working Collaboratively to Identify and Respond to Domestic Violence Risk (Duncan Community Training; September 26, 2016): This CCWS workshop was co-facilitated by Colleen McPherson, MCFD Policy and Practice. The training, which was attended by 16 participants, was designed for those who work in community and may need to make an ICAT referral (such as schools, clinics, hospital, non-profits, First Nations agencies, daycares, and the like).

Critical information was provided about the Cowichan Valley Interagency Case Assessment Team (ICAT), and how to make a referral to ICAT if you know someone who is at risk of serious harm or death due to domestic violence.

The workshop covered the purpose, principles and practices of the ICAT and included: ICAT basics – Who are the ICAT members, how does it work, and why it exists; privacy legislation and legal parameters of information sharing; evidence-based risk factors, and how to use the risk assessment tool; what is “relevant” information; principles and practices of collaborative safety planning, including offender risk management strategies; how to make a referral; and the role of a “non-team member” in presenting a case to the ICAT.

Working Collaboratively to Identify and Respond to Domestic Violence Risk (Cowichan Valley ICAT; Duncan; September 27, 2016): CCWS presented this workshop focused on assisting the existing ICAT team in aligning their current processes with the ICAT Best Practices. The 15 participants were presented with an overview of coordination, information sharing, informed consent, risk factors, ICAT step-by-step process, membership, risk management, records management and examples of some ICAT dilemmas that are experienced by ICATs around the province.

Working Collaboratively to Identify and Respond to Domestic Violence Risk (Vancouver; September 29, 2016): CCWS, along with staff from Vancouver Coastal Health and a MCFD Director of Practice, presented a workshop that reviewed the ICAT Best Practices Manual to 31 participants of the Vancouver Highest Risk Domestic Violence Team. The importance of

information sharing and collaboration from multiple sectors was emphasized, using a case study for demonstration. Brainstorming and problem solving took place for ideas to operate an ICAT in a region that has a large volume, such as Vancouver.

Building a VAWIR (Ashcroft; October 12, 2016): An in-person planning session was held on October 12, 2016.

Collaborating Across Systems: Preventing and Responding to Domestic Violence Against Women and Children (PODV Conference; Richmond; October 18-19, 2016): CCWS staff were active at the PODV conference, both attending the conference and delivering the following workshops:

- *ICAT Best Practices Guidelines: Focus on Strategies to Keep Communities Safer* (CCWS)
- *Information Sharing and Privacy Rights: Collaborating To Help Keep Survivors Supported And Safe* (CCWS delivered with MCFD)
- *Forced Marriage* (CCWS delivered with EVA BC and MOSAIC)

Domestic Violence Risk Identification, Risk Assessment Tools, and Risk Management Techniques (Enderby; October 21, 2016): A CCWS Regional Coordinator accompanied the EVA BC Indigenous Community Safety Program Coordinator to the Splitsin Band in Enderby to present on domestic violence signs, risk assessment tools and risk management techniques. This workshop was attended by Health Services programs, council members and elders.

Healing Through Learning: Trauma Informed Practice in the North (Prince George; October 21, 2016): Attendance and presentation of workshop on VAWIR Committees and ICATs. This 75-minute session covered the importance of community collaboration and coordination between service providers in responding to domestic violence cases. 65 participants from various services and communities in the region discussed the benefits of VAWIR Committees and ICATs.

Staff Sgt. Robb Daly – Founding Member of North Okanagan ICAT Recognized with Order of Merit



Canada's Governor General, His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston with Staff Sgt. Robb Daly.

In October 2016, Staff Sgt. Robb Daly travelled to Quebec City where he was fully invested into the Order of Merit for Police Officers. In a letter describing this proud moment in his career, Staff Sgt. Daly said he alone could not take credit for this honour that was based on his founding work with the North Okanagan Interagency Case Assessment Team. Rather, he acknowledged the group effort of his many ICAT friends and colleagues in bringing this important community model to life. Congratulations Robb, on this well-deserved honour!

Enhancing Safety: Empowering the Campbell River VIR (Campbell River; October 27, 2016): CCWS co-facilitated this session for 30 participants at the Rose Harbour First Nations Health Centre. Attended by police, health and hospital, probation, Indigenous services, MCFD, Immigrant services, women's services and counsellors.

ICAT: Updated Best Practices and Information Sharing Parameters (EVA BC Annual Training Forum; November 24, 2016): Topics discussed included linking of ICAT to local coordination committees, membership of ICAT and roles of members, updates to process and procedures including transferring files between communities,

documentation and record keeping, information sharing and privacy legislation updates.

Coordinating Sexual Assault Responses (EVA BC Annual Training Forum; November 24, 2016): 31 participants from different communities throughout the province took part in this workshop that showcased a panel of workers from the field who shared their experience and models of response.

Forum for Domestic Violence Unit Partnerships (EVA BC Annual Training Forum; November 25, 2016): 42 participants attended this forum/workshop that provided DVU partners with a chance to share their expertise regarding all relevant practices that guide their work.

Regional Capacity Building

Developing a Collaborative Response to Domestic Violence (Lillooet, September 28 & 29, 2016): As featured in the previous News Bulletin, this 2-day training building VAWIR and ICAT was the culmination of a year of support from CCWS.

Best Practices in Coordinated Responses to Sexual Violence (Cranbrook; November 3, 2016 and in Terrace; February 7, 2017): Participants attended this full-day training covering material that included sexual assault prevalence, coordinated responses to sexual violence and reporting options.

Support Projects Addressing Violence Against Indigenous Women

CCWS has integrated a comprehensive approach emphasizing the involvement of Indigenous communities and service providers into all its community development work to increase the safety of Indigenous women. CCWS provides support, mentoring and knowledge sharing for projects addressing violence against Indigenous women, such as the Risk Identification and Safety Planning for Indigenous Communities Capacity Building 2-day workshop and the Indigenous Communities Safety Project (ICSP) Knowledge Sharing Workshop run by EVA BC.

CCWS continues to support the development of a unique VAWIR and ICAT initiative in the Nisga'a Nation. The initiative includes the four Nisga'a Villages (Gitlaxt'aamiks, Gingolx, Gitwinksihlkw and

Laxgalts'ap) in the Nass Valley as well as three urban locals (Terrace, Prince Rupert/Port Edward and Vancouver), which provide a voice for Nisga'a citizens who live outside the Nass Valley.

TPR Protocol Enhancement

To ensure consistency of response and collection of data, BC's police services have reached an agreement with CCWS to enhance the current Third Party Reporting (TPR) provincial protocol. This enhancement to the protocol is one of several initiatives the provincial TPR Work Team is engaged in to increase the availability of this important reporting option across the province.

RCMP Sergeant Stephanie Ashton with BC RCMP Crime Prevention Services (CPS) will act as a liaison with RCMP detachments and municipal police departments to support their efforts to investigate these incidents, and to ensure consistent attention to Third Party Reports and related policing issues. This liaison position will also improve the ability of police services to review TPRs from across the province to identify linkages between investigations of sexual assaults within and across police jurisdictions.

TPR Information: *Third Party Reporting Guidebook, November 2015* is available at <http://endingviolence.org/publications/third-party-reporting-guidebook-increasing-reporting-options-for-sexual-assault-victims-november-2015>

TPR Support: ccws@endingviolence.org
Ph: [604 633-2506 ext. 15](tel:6046332506)

Resources

View CCWS resources and publications online at <http://endingviolence.org/research-publications/>

Coming soon! ICAT Best Practices Manual, 2nd edition: A revision of the ICAT Best Practices Manual to incorporate changes and development of practices has been underway in the past year.

The 2nd edition includes significant changes to sections on privacy legislation, informed consent, file storage, file disclosure, member roles and responsibilities, transfer of files between communities and record keeping.

VAWIR Committee Conference Call

The most recent VAWIR Committee call was held on February 21, 2017. One of the main topics discussed by the 20 participants was about women being mistakenly arrested, after suffering a history of abuse by their male partners, in cases of relationship violence. The group also shared experiences of coordination successes in their communities.

Provincial Working Group

The most recent Working Group meeting took place in Vancouver on March 8, 2017. The next meeting is slated to take place on October 25, 2017. To see a current list of Working Group members, please visit

<http://endingviolence.org/prevention-programs/ccws-program/ccws-working-group-members/>

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Laura Woods recently joined CCWS in a part-time role as Acting Regional Coordinator.

Welcome Laura!