

ICAT Best Practices Roundtable

On September 24th & 25th, Interagency Case Assessment Team (ICAT) members from around the province met in Vancouver to share information that will be incorporated into an ICAT Best Practices guide being developed by EVA BC/CCWS.

This roundtable discussion, made possible with funding from the Victim Services and Crime Prevention Division of the Ministry of Justice and the RCMP's Family Violence Initiative, brought over 70 participants together to look at how existing ICATs are dealing with information-sharing, risk review, victim engagement, safety and support and offender accountability.

Collaboration was the recurring theme in introductory remarks made by Chief Mike Chadwick of the Saanich Police Department, Chief Superintendent Paul Richards from RCMP E Division and Deputy Chief Doug LePard of the Vancouver Police Department, all of whom spoke to the importance of building solid relationships in creating an effective ICAT.

Patrick Egan, Senior Investigator with the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of BC and Les Rose, Counsel with the RCMP E Division's Legal Advisory Section presented information about provincial and federal privacy legislation and the legal frameworks that exist for information sharing in highest risk domestic violence cases. "Life trumps privacy" was the main message from both these experts about cases where there is risk of grievous bodily harm or death.

Appropriate information sharing among agencies responding to domestic violence victims and offenders has long been recommended by academic research, coroner's inquests and domestic violence fatality review committees. Findings from the experiences of the North Okanagan ICAT demonstrate the benefits of

interagency teams include better identification of risk factors, proactive supports to victims and offenders, elimination of systemic barriers to safety, reduction in service duplication, fewer removals of children and an overall reduction in domestic violence offences.

Through their expert testimony in the Lee Inquest and as co-authors of the Keeping Women Safe Report, EVA BC/CCWS made submissions and provided briefing materials to government and the Coroner's Office on the urgent need for a high risk provincial domestic violence protocol. In 2010, the Violence Against Women in Relationships (VAWIR) Policy was amended and the new policy included a protocol for highest risk cases that directed collaboration and the sharing of information across sectors when responding to high-risk domestic violence. Since that time, many BC communities have been developing ICATs that are working to increase safety for those at highest risk for serious bodily harm or death.



CCWS Regional Coordinator Debby Hamilton and Sgt. Robb Daly of the Vernon RCMP deliver a presentation on the experiences of the North Okanagan ICAT at a recent training session.

One of these communities is the very successful North Okanagan VAWIR Committee's ICAT. In

addition to NOICAT's groundbreaking work at the local level, they are also working with CCWS to share their expertise in other communities. CCWS and NOICAT have been responding to requests to provide training, information, resources and support to ICAT initiatives throughout the province.

Part of the information sharing at the Roundtable included presentations from NOICAT and from two Domestic Violence Units (DVUs) - one operating within a municipal police force (New Westminster/Vancouver) and one based with the RCMP (Burnaby).

CCWS wants to thank everyone who contributed their time, energy and expertise to this highly successful event, including all the speakers, the individuals who served as facilitators for small group discussions and each and every participant. We look forward to continuing to support communities across the province in developing the foundation and tools to move forward on this work together.

Capacity Building Highlights

RCY Pilot Group ICAT Presentation (Richmond; April 15, 2013): 34 participants attended a presentation on the North Okanagan ICAT model and practices delivered by CCWS Regional Coordinator Debby Hamilton. Attendees were from the Richmond community groups Involved in the Representative for Children and Youth (RCY) Pilot.

ICAT and Community Capacity Training (Golden; April 22-24, 2013): CCWS Regional Coordinators Gail Edinger and Debby Hamilton, along with Sgt. Robb Daly, presented a training session on ICAT and Capacity Building sponsored by the Golden Community Coordination for Safety in Relationships Committee to further their work on developing a VAWIR initiative and ICAT. 31 participants that included RCMP, MCFD, MSD, Crown counsel, mental health, anti-violence workers and safe home staff were in attendance.

ICAT Consultation (Creston; May 17, 2013): CCWS Regional Coordinators Gail Edinger and Debby Hamilton provided intensive support to the Creston ICAT during this half-day session to clarify roles and procedures that was attended by 12 participants.

ICAT Consultation (Burnaby; May 20, 2013): CCWS Regional Coordinator Debby Hamilton provided follow-up consultation to the Burnaby ICAT Committee. The 12 participants were members of Burnaby RCMP, community agencies and anti-violence workers.

Family Violence Screening Training for Dispute Professionals, Community Legal Education (Vancouver; June 18 & 21, 2013): On June 18th, CCWS Regional Coordinator Debby Hamilton provided a short presentation to legal professionals based in Kelowna, Prince George and Victoria that assisted with their understanding of domestic violence and identifying risk. On June 21st, EVA BC Executive Director Tracy Porteous presented the same information to legal professionals based in the Vancouver area. According to CLE, feedback about the presentations was extremely positive and they were very thankful for EVA BC/CCWS involvement and the critical aspect of the training we provided.

ICAT - RCY Pilot Subcommittee (Richmond; June 19, 2013): CCWS Regional Coordinator Debby Hamilton and Cst. Krysta Turpin of Langley Domestic Violence Unit presented a half-day workshop for Richmond ICAT. The presentation included practices and procedures of the North Okanagan ICAT, including recordkeeping, privacy, risk identification and safety planning. The 20 participants were from RCMP, Vancouver Coastal Health, Richmond General Hospital ER, anti-violence workers, victim services, parole and community agencies.

Regional Workshop Highlights

Hazelton Region - Anspa'yaxw (Kispiox), Gitanmaax, Sik'e'dakh (Glen Vowell), Hagwilget (May 1-3, 2013): An in-person session was held as part of efforts to build coordination across the region. This is the east end of the region that includes other Gitksan communities of Gitwangak, Gitsegukla and Gitanyow. Facilitators were: CCWS Contracted Regional Coordinator Morgen Baldwin; Marilyn George, STV Outreach Worker, Northern Society for Domestic Peace; Belinda Lacombe, STV Counsellor, Northern Society for Domestic Peace; Molly Wickham, Critical Choices Project Researcher/Project Coordinator, Northern Society for Domestic Peace; and EVA BC Indigenous Communities Safety Project Consultant Bev

Jacobs. 34 participants included Aboriginal leaders, Elders, community members and service providers involved in life skills, community health, legal advocacy, counselling, youth programming and social development. Participant feedback was very positive overall, with all evaluation respondents indicating they will be sharing information they learned at the training with others. The majority of respondents also indicated they felt relationships with law enforcement were created and/or improved as a result of the training.

Regional ICAT and Capacity Building Training (Trail; May 14-16, 2013): Trail Community Coordination for Women's Safety sponsored training to further their work on developing an ICAT. CCWS Regional Coordinators Gail Edinger and Debby Hamilton, along with Sgt. Robb Daly, presented training to 40 participants from RCMP, anti-violence workers, Community Corrections, Transition House staff and MCFD on capacity building, coordination and ICAT practices. Participants from Nelson, Kaslo, Trail, Castlegar, Salmo and Grand Forks worked on existing and developing protocols to address highest risk.

Also, it is worthwhile to note that this was the first time CCWS worked with Brian Sumner, a Process/Practice Consultant from MCFD Kootenay Region, to incorporate Appreciative Inquiry (AI) into the workshop plan. The AI was well received by this group.

Regional Capacity Building and ICAT Training (Williams Lake; June 3 & 4, 2013): CCWS Regional Coordinators Debby Hamilton and Gail Edinger, along with RCMP Inspector Barb Vincent, presented training to 70 members of the justice, child welfare and anti-violence field from Quesnel, Williams Lake, 100 Mile House, Clinton, Alexis Creek and Fraser Lake.

Haisla Village (September 20, 2013): Regional Coordinator Morgen Baldwin facilitated a follow-up session to Indigenous Communities Safety Project presentation held in August. Participants from the Haisla Village Health Centre, Haisla Elder's Centre, Northwest Counselling, and Northwest International Family and Community Services are working to enhance connections within the village and with anti-violence services in the nearby town of Kitimat. The goal is to increase the capacity of community members and services to respond effectively to domestic violence and sexual assault.

VAWIR Committee Conference Call

20 representatives from coordination initiatives across the province participated in a conference call held on April 25th that was facilitated by CCWS. Main agenda items were checking in about how Third Party Reporting and the Ministry of Social Development's 'Persons Fleeing Abuse Policy' are being utilized in communities.

Provincial Working Group

The next Provincial Working Group meeting will take place in Vancouver on December 3rd, 2013.

Resources

Consultation on Victims' Bill of Rights - In July 2013, EVA BC/CCWS participated in the Federal Department of Justice Consultation on the proposed Victims' Bill of Rights. CCWS Legal Analyst Gisela Ruebsaat also prepared a written submission outlining our recommendations.

Response to White Paper on Justice Reform Part Two – This 8-page document prepared by CCWS Legal Analyst Gisela Ruebsaat outlines the EVA BC/CCWS responses to commitments and recommendations put forward in the BC White Paper on Justice Reform Part Two.

Changes to the BC Family Law Act: Q & A – A compilation of answers to questions discussed during conference calls involving anti-violence programs from around BC in January 2013 was prepared by CCWS Legal Analyst Gisela Ruebsaat and EVA BC Program Manager Harjit Kaur.

To view these and other CCWS resources and publications online, please visit www.endingviolence.org/publications.

Trends and Emerging Issues

CCWS is a forum for discussing the challenges of policy and program implementation and resolving those challenges. When communities identify issues such as those below, CCWS Regional Coordinators work with community stakeholders to address the issue at the local level. When an issue cannot be addressed at the local level and CCWS recognizes a province wide "trend" emerging, we endeavour to address the issue at a provincial level through the CCWS Working Group.

- ❑ Community Relationships and VAWIR Coordination Key to Building Interagency Case Assessment Teams (ICATs): CCWS continues to include the importance of solid coordination and tools for engaging in coordination activities in our ICAT capacity building. We continue to disseminate legal analysis from a cross-sector perspective. CCWS continues to promote the need to build cross-sector relationships into both sexual violence and VAWIR responses.
- ❑ Capacity Pressures on Programs - Balance Needed to Provide Services to Women at All Risk Levels: Requests for support for women identified as highest risk is creating capacity issues for programs and agencies. There is concern from the programs that the focus on highest risk will leave women who are not assessed at that level without service.
- ❑ Agencies Being Subpoenaed or Served with Court Documents: CCWS has received calls from communities regarding their records being subpoenaed or being advised that their client's records held at another agency are being subpoenaed. Also, about attempts to serve individuals with court documents.
- ❑ CCWS is hearing from communities and regions seeking support to implement or improve protocols and procedures for Third Party Reporting of sexual assault in their communities.

Upcoming

EVA BC's Annual Training and Prevention Symposium, ***Breaking the Silence: A Violence Against Women Prevention and Response Symposium***, will be held at the Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel on November 28 & 29, 2013. In addition, a Pre-symposium Training Day, ***Family Law and Related Issues***, will be held on November 27th in partnership with Legal Services Society of BC and the Law Foundation of BC.

This year's symposium highlights approaches to prevention work in a variety of areas ranging from engaging men and boys as allies to creating physical safety in a virtual world to understanding the root causes of violence against Indigenous women. The symposium will include information and practical skill building on legal, policy and

service related issues and showcase some inspiring successful prevention initiatives. As always, CCWS staff will be developing and delivering training relevant to workers in the field. This year, CCWS workshops are:

Emerging Practices in BC: Addressing Highest Risk Domestic Violence in BC: This two-part workshop will generate a "birds-eye" view of the picture in BC related to implementation of the government's cross-sector VAWIR Highest Risk Protocol.

Third Party Reporting from the Ground Up: This workshop is intended to help local agencies who wish to develop a third party reporting protocol in collaboration with law enforcement agencies in their community.

To download a complete Symposium Registration Package with complete details on all speakers and workshops, go to <http://www.endingviolence.org/publications>.

Contact Us

Gail Edinger, Regional Coordinator
250-397-2389, gail.edinger@gmail.com

Debby Hamilton, Contracted Regional Coordinator
778-475-6164, dhamiltonccws@shaw.ca

Gisela Ruebsaat, Legal Analyst
250-592-6073, gisela2@islandnet.com

Morgen Baldwin, Contracted Regional Coordinator
250-635-5300, morgenbaldwin@gmail.com

Terran Bell, Administrative Assistant
604-633-2506 ext 15, ccws@endingviolence.org

Visit us online at:

www.endingviolence.org/ccws