

**MEETING OF THE SUPPORT SUB GROUP OF THE INTER DEPARTMENTAL
STEERING GROUP ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND ABUSE**

10.00 am on Monday 7 December 2009

Training Room 1, Annexe 1, Castle Buildings, Stormont

Present:

Marian McIlhone	Domestic & Sexual Violence Unit, DHSSPS (Chair)
Julie Houston	Domestic & Sexual Violence Unit, DHSSPS
Jeanette Bratty	Domestic & Sexual Violence Unit, DHSSPS (Secretary)
Peter Philip	Criminal Justice Policy Division, NIO
Joyce McKee	RHSCB
Angela McLernon	Nursing Officer, DHSSPS
D/I Anne Marks	PSNI
Lisa Bunting	NSPCC
John O'Doherty	The Rainbow Project
Christine Hunter	PBNI

Apologies:

Dr Olive Buckley	GP/FMO
Deirdre Teague	Women's Aid Federation NI
Michael Lynch	Men's Action Network
Sarah Coulter	Nexus Institute
Dr Paddy Woods	DHSSPS
Maureen McCartney	Mental Health Unit, DHSSPS
Norma Downey	Childcare Policy Division, DHSSPS
Patricia Nicholl	Office of Social Services, DHSSPS

Minutes of Previous Meeting

1. The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and updates on the action points were reported on as follows:-

AP1, 2, 3, 5, 6 – Comments on the directory had been sent to Helena Bracken.

2. Marian provided a brief update on the Directory of Services to the group. She advised that there would be two versions; one for professional use in a ring binder format and a discreet CD size booklet for the public. She informed

attendees it was hoped to launch the Directory in January/February 2010 possibly via a lunchtime event attended by MLAs.

AP4 – Awaiting feedback on the statutory provision from Fionnuala McAndrew, RHSCB.

3. Joyce McKee advised that a meeting had taken place with Nexus to discuss the directory. She undertook to check Fionnuala McAndrew's response to the statutory provision section in the Directory and feed back to the unit.

ACTION POINT 1: Joyce McKee to chase up response from Fionnuala McAndrew regarding statutory provision in the Directory of Services

AP7 – No comments were received on NI Direct.

4. Marian suggested members take a look at the NIDirect website, specifically the WRONG landing page which provides users with short, concise, user friendly information.

Update on Support Strand of 2009/2010 Sexual Violence and Abuse Action Plan

5. Marian advised the Group that the Inter-Ministerial Group meeting on 30 September 2009 had gone well and largely focused on criminal justice aspects of domestic and sexual violence.

Key Action 1 – Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)

6. Marian advised the group that we are expecting final approval for the business case by the end of the month and the design team should begin work in January 2010. The current target date for completion of the facility is end December 2011.

Key Action 2 – Improve timescales for delivery of adult counseling services

7. Marian advised the group that the pilot with NEXUS was completed at the end of September 2010 and it was now planned to roll it out to the Belfast and Portadown offices. The pilot resulted in waiting times being greatly reduced and the service was now much more customer driven.
8. As part of the pilot, Marian advised the group that DFP consultancy services had undertaken an exercise with NEXUS Institute which looked at historic data, waiting times, how services were accessed, etc and by introducing new methodology they were able to change around an 80% DNA rate to a 79% attendance rate. This was a significant achievement.
9. It was now planned to involve statutory services and a PID has been drafted for consideration by RHSCB. Marian informed the group that DFP plan to begin hard charging for their consultancy services but that the Department (DHSSPS) had arranged funding for the roll out of this project to the statutory services up to the end of March 2010. A meeting will be arranged with statutory sector representatives to take this work forward.

Key Action 3 – Map existing range of services including how they integrate with each other, identify gaps in services and make recommendations

10. The draft Directory of Services is currently with the DHSSPS. NEXUS are currently preparing a report identifying gaps in service provision. The report will be considered by DHSSPS on receipt.

Key Action 4 – Produce guidance on therapeutic support for children and vulnerable adults pending criminal investigation in relation to their cases

11. Work is well progressed in this area. Guidance for victims and witnesses is due to go out for consultation early in the New Year.

Key Action 5 – Training for Staff

12. A training sub-group was set up a year ago to take this issue forward but due to a number of reasons, including resource issues, there has been no progress on this. Membership of this group will be revisited and it was agreed that this issue will be carried forward into next year's Action Plan.

13. Christine Hunter advised the group that Skills for Justice had carried out some work in the area of training and consideration could be given as to how the group could utilise this work.

ACTION POINT 2: Christine Hunter to send the Skills for Justice document to Jeanette who will circulate to group.

14. Joyce McKee informed the group of a number of initiatives eg the Skills Sector consultation on working with perpetrators etc, and a Healthy Prisons initiative (which includes healthy relationships) at Hydebank.

15. Marian advised the group that the University of Ulster were attempting to develop a training DVD for people working with victims. She agreed to follow this up with University of Ulster.

ACTION POINT 3: Marian to contact Tara Moore at University of Ulster with a view to utilising this training method.

16. Lisa Bunting told the group that people working with victims had real problems accessing specific training.

2010/11 Action Plan

17. Consideration was given to the 2010/11 Action Plan in respect of identifying priorities and how they are funded.

18. It was agreed that SARC would be a priority to be carried forward along with training and potentially also a review of children's therapeutic services.

19. Lisa Bunting informed the group that the changeover from childhood to adult services could be problematic and agreed to draw up a draft proposal for consideration by the Support Sub-Group. It was agreed that Lisa Bunting's paper would be put on the agenda for the next meeting and the draft support section for the 2010/11 Action Plan should also be ready for the next meeting.

ACTION POINT 4: Lisa Bunting to provide proposal for consideration on current service provision for children and young people by the end of January.

ACTION POINT 5: Draft support section of the 2010/11 Action Plan to be compiled by Julie Houston for discussion at the next meeting.

20. Support mechanisms for young victims and witnesses was discussed and it was decided this was more appropriate to the work being taken forward by the Protection and Justice Sub-Group.

21. Peter Philip advised the group that there are a lot of issues around attrition and drop out of services. He agreed to provide a short update on these issues for the group.

ACTION POINT 6: Peter Philip to provide a one page update on special measures and attrition to be circulated to the Support Sub-Group.

22. Other issues suggested for inclusion in the 2010/2011 Sexual Violence Action Plan are support for ethnic minorities and addressing human trafficking. Consideration could also be given to routine screening in ante-natal clinics at first appointment and how this could be effectively measured. It was also agreed that on-going counseling support needs to be improved and the time lapse for accessing services needs to be reduced. It was felt it was important to skill up teachers to get domestic violence and sexual violence issues included in the school curriculum.
23. The group noted that PSNI has drawn up a draft protocol for how to manage victims of sexual violence who present at A&E Departments. The possibility of drawing up protocols for other workers concerned with sexual violence and abuse was considered. For example, it is important that health care and support workers are aware of the need for Post Exposure Propolaxis (PEP) to commence within 72 hours if a victim has potentially been exposed to the risk of HIV.
24. It was agreed that the development of the SARC will be a catalyst for training to enhance sexual violence services.
25. Marian then advised the group that discussions are still ongoing in relation to merging the domestic violence and sexual violence strategies. The domestic violence strategy "Tackling Violence at Home" ends in 2010 whilst the sexual violence strategy "Tackling Sexual Violence and Abuse" runs until June 2013 so there are still issues in relation to how these areas are taken forward in the future.

Any other business

26. Marian advised members that the minutes of the sexual violence sub group meeting will be published on the DHSSPS website.
27. Marian also provided a brief update to members on the sexual violence media campaign. The aim of the campaign is primarily to increase public awareness of

sexual violence and abuse. She advised the group that the Lifeline contract (providers of the helpline) will run until June 2010. There are currently less than 30 calls a week to the helpline but the number of referrals into wraparound services from these calls is higher, which suggests that the right types of calls are being received by Lifeline.

28. Marian also informed the group that the sexual violence module results of the 2008/09 NI Crime Survey would be published next week.

29. Peter Philip agreed to share the Criminal Justice Inspectorate report with the group when published in the New Year.

Date of Next Meeting

30. The next meeting was arranged for **22 February 2010 at 2.00 pm in Conference Room C3.18, Castle Buildings.**

ACTION POINT 7: Jeanette to confirm date and venue of next meeting with members

SUMMARY OF ACTION POINTS

ACTION POINT 1: Joyce McKee to chase up response from Fionnuala McAndrew regarding statutory provision in the Directory of Services

ACTION POINT 2: Christine Hunter to send the Skills for Justice document to Jeanette who will circulate to group.

ACTION POINT 3: Marian to contact Tara Moore at University of Ulster with a view to utilising this training method

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SUPPORT SUB-GROUP ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND ABUSE STRATEGY

Action Point Register

Action Point	Meeting Date	Action Point Description	Responsibility	Update/Progress	Status
AP1	7/12/09	Joyce McKee to chase up response from Fionnuala McAndrew regarding statutory provision in the Directory of Services.	Joyce McKee		
AP2	7/12/09	Christine Hunter to send the Skills for Justice document to Jeanette who will circulate to group.	Christine Hunter		
AP3	7/12/09	Marian to contact Tara Moore at University of Ulster with a view to utilising this training method.	Marian McIlhone		
AP4	7/12/09	Lisa Bunting to provide proposal for consideration on current service provision for children and young people by the end of January.	Lisa Bunting	Paper submitted	Closed
AP5	7/12/09	Draft support section of the 2010/11 Action Plan to be compiled by Julie Houston for discussion at the next meeting.	Julie Houston		
AP6	7/12/09	Peter Philip to provide a one page update on special measures and attrition to be circulated to the group.	Peter Philip		
AP7	7/12/09	Jeanette to confirm date and venue of next meeting with members.	Jeanette Bratty	Next meeting confirmed for 22/2/10	Closed