

## NETWORK MEETING MINUTES

December 9, 2015

Present: 50 present, no conference call capability

### Welcome, Introductions, Announcements:

Alisha introduced herself and asked for others to introduce themselves, and indicated that if you have accessibility issues to please let us know.

Senator Heinrich's office was in attendance and noted they are willing to assist with searching out grant applications or if you need a letter of support, please reach out to them.

Rape Crisis Center is holding their open house this Friday, December 11, from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Everyone is invited. Will be honoring three community partners and two volunteers. Also, there is no waiting list for counseling services at RCCCNM, and they are offering Saturday services.

Southwest Women's Law Center is offering assistance for individuals enrolling for health care assistance such as Medicaid and the Health Exchange. There will be a community event on December 10 at the Raymond G. Sanchez Community Center from 6-8pm and another session on January 13 at the Mesa Verde Community Center from 6-8pm.

The Advocacy for Action Annual Conference will take place March 15-18, at the Hyatt Regency Tamaya Resort in Bernalillo. Scholarship applications will be available in January.

Buoy (pamphlets distributed) is a result of a Hackathon, which was sponsored by Tech for Justice and NM Legal Aid. The Hackathon was a brain storming session, and Buoy is a result of the event. It is a web-based, victim-centered application allowing users to create a group of contacts and allow the contacts to know where you are located. It is a one-button touch to let everyone in your network know you are in crisis, describe the crisis if you have time, with a map of where everyone in your network is located at so they can communicate with each other to assist you. It does not collect any unnecessary data and only stores data for 24 hours. Rebecca Crane's e-mail is [rebeccacrane@gmail.com](mailto:rebeccacrane@gmail.com) and the website to donate is [www.tinyurl.com/buoy-fundraiser](http://www.tinyurl.com/buoy-fundraiser). The hope is that by early 2016 there will be a version available for the community to use. It is being translated now so that versions in Spanish and Hindi will be available.

### Program Update – Frank Zubia, Director, CVRC

As of July 1, priority processing for homicide cases began. CVRC has a process for adult victims to be processed within 6 hours of their application. CVRC works closely with law enforcement agencies around the state. The family of the victim is applying generally for funeral expenses.

*Relocation and Rental Assistance* – CVRC also received \$125,000 to serve human trafficking victims with rent and relocation support. Reporting to law enforcement is not a requirement to

receiving assistance. The victim must be working with a service organization, and the service organization will complete the application on behalf of the victim. CVRC has partnered with three organizations in NM who actually manage the distribution of the funds: Life Link in Santa Fe, Safe House in Albuquerque, and La Pinon in Las Cruces. Maximum amount per victim is \$20,000/victim. The application is also on the CVRC website.

There are limits on the amount available for rental assistance - \$3000; education assistance - \$3000; loss of wages - \$3600; counseling - \$1500; medical/dental care; child care - \$3000; transportation expenses - \$5000; and other related reasonable expenses. It is a one-page application. Err on the side of asking for other assistance and let CVRC determine if they can assist. This same funding can also be used to assist sexual assault and domestic violence victims. The Relocation and Rental Assistance Program is a work in process and will be changing.

The final condition is that the victim must meet the definition of human trafficking victim as determined by CVRC, and noted on the application.

On a final note, CVRC will be moving to a new location on 6200 Uptown Blvd, near Coronado Center in the early part of the year.

#### 2016 Legislative Updates

*Lisa Weisenfeld, NMCADV Policy Coordinator*

The effort to pass a Strangulation Bill will be delayed until the 2017 Legislative Session. The NMCADV is keeping their requests this year to funding issues. The Coalition will work on a collaborative project called CARE with Animal Protection NM during the session. The Coalition will also be ready to respond to questions from the Legislature.

Last year a memorial was introduced to study Batterer Intervention Programs around the state. The complaint was that the 38 programs around the state did not work. This was information based on one study commissioned by the Pew Research Center. An international coalition of agencies/people was created to look at the issue in New Mexico. The research has been developed and has been sent around the world to show a well rounded look at the background, research and effects of BIPs. NM is now known as the state that gave an opportunity to BIP programs to state their case and preserve their funding. A CYFD Advisory Committee will be developed to continue creating a report about BIP in NM. Go to the [www.nmcadv.org](http://www.nmcadv.org) website and see the banner Batterer's Intervention Taskforce to see videos and other material.

Guns is a hot topic in NM. There are a number of groups nationally and locally, trying to address the issue of weapon seizures for those guns used in interpersonal violence and some sort of storage system, especially for domestic violence cases. New Mexicans Against Gun Violence is tackling this issue. At this point, not sure what the legislative action might be.

*Linda Siegle, Resources for Change and Lobbyist for NMCADV*

The coming session is a short session. The only constitutional requirement is to pass a budget. Other items are placed at the request of the Governor and that allows related bills to be introduced. The New Mexico Legislative Finance Committee revealed their estimate of \$232 million new dollars. That is money above our current budget. Cost/barrel of oil is down, but the result is more money in our pockets to spend. Gross receipts tax revenue is up as well. There are also lots of competing priorities for this excess money. This is an election year (2016) and there will be bills introduced to get representatives on the record for the next election. The environment then becomes very political.

Federally approved driver's licenses and a NM Driver's license bill passed overwhelming last year in the Senate and died in the house. It will be introduced again this year. Also a bill that would give unauthorized immigrants driving certificates will be introduced.

The governor will place several crime bills on her call. Hate crime bill for police officers; three strikes and you're out. CYFD is requesting some changes to the Family Code. NMCADV decided to support reform to the Bail Bond Legislation. It is Linda's opinion that there will be 50 to 60 bills introduced in addition to passing a budget.

Lisa does a weekly report that gives an update about what legislation is being addressed, action being taken, etc. Alisha will share the report through the Network Listserv.

*Susan Loubet, Women's Agenda (Sheila Lewis spoke on her behalf)*

Safe Harbor Laws – protects children who are being victimized from being prosecuted.

Expected that money will be re-appropriated this year.

An Expungement Bill allows people to clean up their record. This pertains to individuals coming out of prison who cannot find a place to live. In 2017, there is an intent to introduce this bill to make it possible for men and women to re-enter the work force.

Panel Presentation: Strangulation in IPV: Assessment, Research and Legislation

*Medical Assessment, Implications and Services, Gail Starr, ABQ SANE*

SANE has provided IPV exam since 2010 and the number of patients has increased yearly. Most referrals come from DVRC. SANE only does intimate partner exams and not other types of exams for battery. Gail reviewed the value of the exam, what a patient can expect from the exam, which includes the interview as well as a risk assessment, safety planning, and forensic photography. Strangulation is the best predictor for subsequent homicide. Only 32% of lethal strangulations show injury. At SANE, 42% of the DV patients reported strangulation as part of the assault. Death can occur between 10 sec and 21 days. Result of soft tissue swelling. The SANE exam also seeks to get subjective description of how the patients felt and thought at the time of the strangulation. SANE educates patients about warning signs and the need to call 911. SANE takes the patients very seriously, and supports and believes them.

Frieda with RCCCNM noted that in LGBTQ relationships, strangulation is common and police will look for damage, and if they don't see any injury they will look at the stature of the parties to assess responsibility.

Anyone can refer patients to SANE. Reporting to law enforcement is not necessary. Call 884-7263 to access services. SANE does not ask for ID, Social Security Numbers, or any other personal information except what is needed for the exam.

*Research on Strangulation in IPV, Dr. Donald Clark, NM Brain Injury Alliance*

Donald Clark is a family doctor who saw these injuries in his practice. Strangulation is not well researched in the medical field. In an emergency room study, 27% reported strangulation at some time. 54% of women seeking shelter support reported strangulation. 34% of women reported multiple strangulations of 3-5 times, and 23% reported over 5 strangulations. Dr. Clark also referenced an informal study of law enforcement officer murders in CA. All four of the perpetrators had a history of DV, and three of them strangled their partners. A history of strangulation incidents results in the highest level of lethality not just for the DV victim, but also responding law enforcement. Only 29% to 39% of women seek medical attention for their injuries. The Brain Injury Alliance is trying to get the better insurance coverage for those who have sustained these injuries and the long-term need for care.

Lisa Weisenfeld spoke to the very large need across the nation to better medically address strangulation related injuries. However, the equipment needed for assessment is incredibly expensive. But providers also need to take strangulation complaints much more seriously than what seems to currently be the practice.

Santa Fe providers has a safety net program that handles the interview question for DV in a different manner and actually has trained staff to come in and speak to the patient about DV services and referrals.

*Previous Legislative Outcomes and Future Strategy on Strangulation Law in NM, Lisa Weisenfeld, NMCADV and Linda Siegle, Resources for Change*

There have been five to six efforts to pass strangulation legislation. It has passed in the House a couple of times, and the Senate Judiciary will hold it up. If you search the criminal code in NM today you will find no references to strangulation or suffocation. It is a political problem, lots of pushback from defense attorneys, seems to be disproportionately a problem for people of color and the personalities of folks in the Legislature have prevented this from happening. We need a huge uprising of people in the state to make this happen.

Part of the problem is that people who experience strangulation minimize their experience. In addition, when law enforcement is involved, they look for signs of injury and when they don't see marks, they only document what they see. Even though there is a state of the art, strangulation tool available, no law enforcement agency in the state is using it. So at the DA

level, there is inadequate evidence to support prosecution. Minimize, minimize, minimize is the tendency from every level. This has been the most difficult subject to educate people about, all the way through the system.

The Request from the Coalition – every group who has a stake in this issue, needs to be educated and needs to show up in support of the bill, which will be presented in 2017. Lisa is asking folks to view a webinar on Strangulation which will be available soon. Beginning in March, the NMCADV will have monthly activities to increase awareness and education about this issue. The Coalition needs help speaking to the Senate Judiciary prior to the session so if you know someone on that Committee, get educated and start talking.

NM is one of the very few states in the nation that does not have legislation around strangulation.

Meeting adjourned at noon.