

MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS (MAG)
REGIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COUNCIL & CONTINUUM OF CARE
REGIONAL COMMITTEE ON HOMELESSNESS
MEETING MINUTES - DECEMBER 4, 2008

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COUNCIL MEMBERS ATTENDING

President Diane Enos, Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, Chair	*Councilmember Brenda Holland, City of Goodyear
Robert Bates, Phoenix Police Dept.	*Dan Hughes, City of Surprise
Kristen Scharlau for Kathy Berzins, City of Tempe	*Cmdr. Kim Humphrey, City of Phoenix Police Dept., Vice Chair
*John A. Blackburn, Jr., AZ Criminal Justice Commission	*Lynette Jelinek, Glendale Fire Dept.
Allie Bones, Arizona Coalition Against Domestic Violence	Alice Ghareib for Mary Lynn Kasunic, Area Agency on Aging
*Jennifer Casaletto, Maricopa Medical Center	*Patricia Klahr, Chrysalis Shelter Inc.
*Chris Christy, Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community	Kristen Krey for Councilmember Phil Lieberman, City of Glendale
Suzanne Cohen, Maricopa County Attorney's Office	*Jodi Beckley Liggett, Arizona Foundation for Women
*Councilmember William Conner, City of El Mirage	Betty Lynch, representative of Avondale
*JoAnn Del-Colle, Phoenix Family Advocacy Center	*JoEllen Lynn, American Express
Councilmember Trinity Donovan, City of Chandler	Maria-Elena Ochoa, Governor's Office
Laura Guild, Arizona Dept. of Economic Security	Stephanie Olohan, City of Goodyear
*Cindy Hallman, Marley House	Celeste Adams for Janice Parker, Save the Family Foundation
*Diana Hinz, City of Phoenix Prosecutor's Office	Connie Phillips, Sojourner Center
	Lynn Potts for John Pombier, City of Mesa
	Kerry Ramella, City of Phoenix Fire Dept.
	Sarah Youngblood, Community Legal Services

+ Those attending by video/audio conference
* Those not present or represented by proxy

CONTINUUM OF CARE MEMBERS ATTENDING:

*Councilmember Greg Stanton, Phoenix, Chair	Mike McQuaid, Human Services Campus
Robert Duvall for Roberto Armijo, Community Information & Referral Services	Linda Mushkatel, Maricopa County Chief Resource Office
*David Barnhouse, Governor's Office	Gary Zeck for Darlene Newsom, United Methodist Outreach Ministries
*Brad Bridwell, U.S. Vets	Councilmember Joanne Osborne, City of Goodyear
*Kathryn Brown, Arizona Dept. of Corrections	*Gina Ramos Montes, City of Avondale
*Kendra Cea, APS	Brenda Robbins, AZ Dept of Health Services
Trinity Donovan, Valley of the Sun United Way	

Councilmember Steve Frate, Glendale
*Councilmember Dina Higgins, City of Mesa
Theresa James, City of Tempe
Deanna Jonovich, City of Phoenix
Don Keuth, Phoenix Community Alliance,
Vice Chair
Stephanie Knox, Magellan health Services of
Arizona
*Mark Ludwig, AZ Dept. of Housing
Dan Lundberg, City of Surprise
Nick Margiotta, Phoenix Police Dept.
*Carrie Mascaro, Catholic Charities

Laura Skotnicki, Save the Family
*Jacki Taylor, Arizona Coalition to End
Homelessness
*Margaret Trujillo, MG Trujillo Associates
*Supervisor Mary Rose Wilcox, Maricopa
County
*Ted Williams, AZ Behavioral Health
Corporation
*Diana Yazzie Devine, Native American
Connections

+ Those attending by video/audio conference
* Those not present or represented by proxy

OTHERS PRESENT

Kathy Breen, City of Scottsdale
Cheryl Brunton, City of Phoenix
Tim Cole, City of Phoenix
Donna Crews, Advocates for the Disabled
Esther Emadi, Southwest Behavioral Health
Danielle Fragnito, Chrysalis
Susan Hallett, DES
Katie Hobbs, Sojourner Center
Juliet Klobe, CASS
Terri Leveton, Phoenix Rescue Mission
Mike Levy, NOVA Inc.
Mark Lewis, CIR
Mattie Lord, DES
Barbara Marshall, County Attorney
Mary Alice McKone, Elim House

Stacy Miller, RIAZ
Frank Nagy, Homeward Bound
Dottie O'Connell, Chicanos Por LaCausa
Carolyn, Olson, City of Mesa
Marlena Pina, The Salvation Army
Vicki Rainey, RIAZ
Heather Rennells, City of Scottsdale
Amy Schwabenlender, VSUW
Ellen Solowey, The Virginia G. Piper
Charitable Trust
Gary Spedl, St. Anthony on the Desert Church
Erik Strunk, City of Glendale
Frances Villarreal, City of Scottsdale
John Wall, CASS
Lisa Wilson, City of Mesa

1. Call to Order

MAG Regional Domestic Violence Council Chair President Enos called the meeting to order at 1:17 pm. She welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending the second joint meeting of the MAG Regional Domestic Violence Council and the MAG Continuum of Care Regional Committee on Homelessness.

President Enos said this collaborative meeting will further the partnership and collective efforts of the two Committees. She added that it is important to continue to leverage the knowledge and expertise of the two fields for the benefit of the people being served. President Enos introduced Don Keuth, Vice Chair of the Continuum of Care Regional Committee on Homelessness.

Vice Chair Keuth said Councilman Greg Stanton, Chair of the Continuum of Care Regional Committee on Homelessness, sends his regrets for being unable to attend this important meeting. He said addressing the inter-related issues of homelessness and domestic violence is critical to understanding and meeting the needs of the people we serve in the community.

Vice Chair Keuth asked attendees to introduce themselves, their agency affiliation and if they are a member of the MAG Regional Domestic Violence Council or the MAG Continuum of Care Regional Committee on Homelessness. Introductions ensued.

2. Call to the Audience

No comments were made at this time.

3. Collaboration Work Group Report And Recommendations

President Enos said the emergency homeless and domestic violence providers met in August to discuss options for developing a clear referral network between shelters. A collaboration workgroup was formed and they have since developed recommendations for an enhanced screening question and an emergency shelter eligibility matrix. Before discussing the recommendations, President Enos welcomed Mark Lewis from the CONTACTS Shelter Hotline and invited him to talk about the shelter hotline process.

Mr. Lewis, CONTACTS, said he was honored to be able to attend the meeting and speak about the CONTACTS Shelter Hotline. Mr. Lewis said he refers to the shelter hotline program as the gateway to safety. The program is open twenty four hours per day, seven days per week. They have bilingual staff available and also use the services of an interpreter line which offers over 200 languages. Mr. Lewis said these services are a necessary component as domestic violence affects all walks of life.

Mr. Lewis said they have a connection with the community that is special. Their job is to check with homeless and domestic violence shelters to find out how many beds the shelters have available. Individuals who call CONTACTS in need of safety and security can find out about the availability of beds in shelters throughout Maricopa County. He also said that CONTACTS is funded by Maricopa County agencies; and their primary response is to those agencies. However, they do deal with agencies outside of Maricopa County.

Mr. Lewis explained that when staff at CONTACTS receives a call, they try to find out more about the caller, their situation and if they are safe. He said if the caller is not safe, staff advises the caller that they need to be in a safe place before someone can assist them. Mr. Lewis said the caller will leave to a safe location and then call back or if necessary, staff will contact 9-1-1 for them. Once CONTACTS staff has determined the caller is safe, for victims of domestic violence, staff will ask if they are seeking assistance for themselves or if they have children. They also ask

questions to determine where the abuser is located. The purpose for asking about the abuser is so the victim is not sent to a shelter in close proximity to the abuser.

Mr. Lewis said staff will check the database to see how many shelters have beds that fit the necessary criteria. He explained, for example, that some people may need a lower bunk, or some may have children and need more than one bed. Once staff finds a suitable shelter, they will call the shelter to confirm availability and then let them speak directly with the caller. The shelter arranges transportation for the caller. If the shelter is not appropriate for the victim, CONTACTS staff will check other shelters until they find an appropriate spot.

Mr. Lewis said if all shelters are full, they will contact DV Stop, which is a program that places victims in a hotel until a domestic violence shelter has an opening. He said CONTACTS logs information to report back to their funders such as the number of callers, their race, and the shelters where they send victims. CONTACTS is a confidential line. They do not share personally identifying information. Mr. Lewis said their main goal is to get the caller to safety.

Mr. Lewis was asked if there is ever a time when CONTACTS would have to turn someone away. He replied yes; they absolutely do have occasions when they need to turn homeless individuals away. However, for victims of domestic violence, it is very rare that they get turned away because DV Stop provides a back-up solution. He said the only time they would need to turn away a caller is if both the shelter and DV Stop agree that the individual is not eligible or is not a good candidate for a domestic violence shelter. He added that they do have homeless individuals that try to get into a domestic violence shelter because of the smaller, more personal space.

Eric Strunk, City of Glendale, asked for more information about DV Stop. Mr. Lewis said DV Stop is operated by A New Leaf. They have counselors that will take an individual or a family into the program and provide services such as safety planning, domestic violence counseling, speaking with children and counseling family members. The program puts individuals or families into a hotel that has provided rooms to the DV Stop Program. The hotel stay is only temporary while a more permanent location is found. DV Stop is responsible for the individual or family during their entire stay at the hotel.

Mr. Lewis was asked if the hotline is independent of any other agencies represented at the meeting. He replied they are independent and they are not a state agency. He said they are a 501C-3 non-profit agency and they have a contract to operate the CONTACTS hotline.

Mr. Lewis concluded by stating CONTACTS staff members love their jobs and are very concerned for people who call the shelter hotline. He expressed his gratitude for anyone having anything to do with helping stop domestic violence.

President Enos thanked Mr. Lewis for his presentation. She informed attendees that MAG staff would provide the workgroup's recommendations for an enhanced CONTACTS screening question and for the emergency shelter eligibility matrix. However, she added that the topics would be for discussion only due to lack of quorum.

Brandee Mead, MAG, thanked the Council Chairs, Mr. Lewis, members of both Committees, and those involved with the working group. She said a lot of work had been done since the group first met in August. She said the work group focused on developing an enhanced screening question and looking at an eligibility matrix to assist with shelter referrals. Based on the process and discussion with the CONTACTS shelter hotline staff, a recommended change to the initial intake question was developed.

Ms. Mead explained that the recommended screening question had been discussed at the work group meetings. The question was then shared with providers and several of them agreed to take the developed question back to clients and ask them for their thoughts, comments and/or suggestions. Once that process was complete, they spoke with CONTACTS staff to share the information.

Ms. Mead said the enhanced question is: *Are you looking for shelter because you are homeless or because you have been abused?* She said they are using the word "abused" rather than "are you a victim of domestic violence" because the word abused is more readily understood. Ms. Mead said individuals do not necessarily see themselves as a victim of domestic violence.

Ms. Mead reported they have met with CONTACTS staff and they are in agreement regarding the enhanced question. CONTACTS is open to incorporating the enhanced question as a pilot process for a couple of weeks to see how it works, and if the enhanced question has any change or impact on the types of answers they receive from callers.

Allie Bones, Arizona Coalition against Domestic Violence, said the question was more basic than what had been discussed at the workgroup. She asked if women in shelters felt it was a good question to ask. Ms. Mead replied they had received feedback from two shelters and confirmed that the initial question had been more detailed. She said the initial question was: *Have you been in a relationship where you have been hurt, threatened, insulted or screamed at?* Ms. Mead said after discussing the initial question with CONTACTS staff, they felt it would open the door for too much discussion during the initial call.

President Enos asked if the question presumes that the person is being abused rather than afraid of being abused. Amy St. Peter, MAG, said people often relate abuse to physical abuse, but it could also be mental abuse. She said part of what CONTACTS staff does, after asking the initial question, is to ask additional probing questions to help determine why the caller is afraid. CONTACTS staff is trained to ask the

questions necessary to help them arrive at the best course of action. Ms. Mead said CONTACTS staff will continue to address the safety issue by asking the caller if they are in a safe place. She also said CONTACTS staff will be provided with the definition of domestic violence so they can refer to it. Ms. Mead added CONTACTS staff is open to additional training on how to deal with domestic violence.

Laura Guild, Arizona Department of Economic Security, asked if the initial question is to be followed up with additional probing questions. Ms. Mead confirmed this and advised the direction of the call will then be based on the responses received from the caller. Ms. Guild asked if the querying of individuals in shelters had indicated the enhanced question was a good question to ask. Ms. Mead responded stating the enhanced question had not been tested and no feedback had been received. She said CONTACTS would begin the testing phase the following day.

Laura Skotnicki, Save the Family, asked what feedback had been received on the question the work group originally provided. Ms. Mead said the question being referred to talked about using the word "*relationship*" versus the phrase "*involved with someone*". Ms. Mead said they had received feedback from clients there was no preference for use of the word "*relationship*" versus the phrase "*involved with someone*".

Katie Hobbs, Sojourner Center, asked at what point CONTACTS staff will ask the person if they are safe. Ms. Mead said if the caller is being abused or in a domestic violence situation, the next question would be to ask if they are in a safe place. Mr. Lewis confirmed CONTACTS staff will not continue with the call unless the caller is in a safe place. A meeting attendee asked if CONTACTS staff will be able to identify abuse. Ms. St. Peter replied a script is provided to the CONTACTS staff that includes questions to help determine if abuse is an issue.

Ms. Skotnicki asked if the question regarding the caller's safety should be asked first given the response will be yes or no. Ms. Mead said they had discussed asking about safety first. However, they felt the need to determine if the call is for homelessness or domestic violence first.

Ms. Bones suggested asking the caller if they are safely able to answer questions at the time of the call. She said if the caller is with the abuser, they will be unable to say if they are calling about homelessness or domestic violence. Ms. St. Peter said if the caller is hesitating, it may prompt CONTACTS staff to ask yes or no type questions.

Mr. Lewis confirmed that CONTACTS will not speak with the caller if they are with the abuser and in an unsafe situation. He added the staff has to act on the caller's judgment of whether or not they are safe. Mr. Lewis was asked how many women typically call when the abuser is standing next to them. He said they receive about one-half dozen per year and for those types of calls, CONTACTS will either call 911 or has the caller call 911 directly. He said the typical caller will call when the abuser is

at the store or at work, or when she is at the neighbor's house and the abuser is not there.

President Enos suggested separating the first question into the following two questions: *Are you calling because you are homeless?* and *Are you calling because you are being abused?* She said both questions would require a yes or no response. Ms. Lewis said he saw no problem with President Enos' suggestion.

Mike Levy, NOVA Inc., suggested the order of the questions be reversed because abuse is the primary reason for the call followed by homelessness. Mr. Lewis said the current script asks if the caller is calling for a domestic violence shelter or a homeless shelter therefore reversing the order of the question is logical.

Ms. Mead asked if the group was comfortable making a recommendation for the question. Ms. St. Peter stated no action can be taken at this time due to lack of quorum. She said feedback can be received and the revised questions can be shared with Mr. Lewis and CONTACTS staff to be used as a pilot question for additional feedback.

Mr. Lewis said there are always two primary staff designated to the CONTACTS hotline. These two people receive about 50 calls a day. He said staff would begin using the new script the following day and can quickly provide feedback. Ms. Mead asked Mr. Lewis if the question can be changed into two separate questions. Mr. Lewis responded saying it was a good suggestion.

MAG staff advised there was a quorum for the Continuum of Care Regional Committee on Homelessness. Members of this Committee can make a motion to recommend the proposed question. The Domestic Violence Council did not have quorum and could not vote on the motion.

Councilmember Steve Frate, City of Glendale, made a motion to recommend CONTACTS staff pilot the two questions proposed by staff. Michael McQuaid, Human Services Campus, seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Shelter Eligibility Matrix

Ms. Mead said the purpose for the workgroup was to develop a tool for use by the CONTACTS Shelter Hotline staff and providers to help make referrals to the most appropriate shelter. She said only emergency shelters are listed on the eligibility matrix. Ms. Mead said the work group is recommending the shelter eligibility matrix for approval. She asked for discussion and feedback from attendees.

Gary Zeck, UMOM New Day Centers, asked to have the name changed from United Methodist Outreach Ministries to their new name. Ms. Mead advised the change had been made but was not reflected on the handout provided at the meeting.

Brenda Robbins, Arizona Department of Health Services, motioned to approve the shelter eligibility matrix. Linda Mushkatel, Maricopa County Chief Resource Office, seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Crisis Management Strategies

Vice Chair Don Keuth welcomed Cynthia Zwick from the Arizona Community Action Association (ACAA). He invited her to provide an update on the progress of a statewide group of stakeholders formed to assess the impact of the economy's downturn on human services delivery.

Ms. Zwick thanked the Committees for the opportunity to attend and speak at the meeting. She also thanked everyone involved in ACAA and invited those who are not yet involved to join.

Ms. Zwick said they had a board meeting in September at which time they began talking about what is happening in the community and the shifts that are occurring. She said they are seeing many more families and individuals than they could possibly serve as well as many who have never asked for help before.

Ms. Zwick said there was deep concern for families and the lack of resources. They began looking at what could be done to address the situation. ACAA called a meeting of community members to which over 70 people from all facets of human services, social services, school systems, libraries, government agencies, state agencies and faith-based agencies responded.

Ms. Zwick said they worked from a premise of so many people are in need yet so few resources are available. She said many agencies were sending people to a number that was not being answered or they were put into a voicemail tree. She said for some families it was very frustrating because they received no support. Ms. Zwick said they have taken steps to come together with the community to address the situation.

Ms. Zwick proceeded to give an update of what has happened since their first two meetings. She said the new president elect operates from a platform of hope, change and "yes we can". She commented Arizona is about to have a new Governor and 2010 could see a \$2 to \$3 billion dollar deficit. Ms. Zwick said there is more uncertainty now than ever about how to fix the non-profit community. There is concern about the decline of donations and contributions. She referenced a Newsweek journalist's new phrase "affluent deprivation" which refers to incomes remaining stable yet people feeling poorer as they can not afford what they were used to.

Ms. Zwick added as demand for services go up, violence also increases. She said there is a rise in domestic violence cases going to court and the number of families who can no longer pay child support.

She said the group agreed to look at the short term and how to create a process in the system for changing the face of poverty. Four priority areas were identified: food, utility assistance, rent and mortgage assistance and transportation. She said another area for concern is the ability to make car payments. MAG Human Services Transportation has provided a lot of assistance. Ms. Zwick said four sub-committees were formed to address the priority areas identified. The sub-committees are:

- Data collection which is working with Community Information and Referral on how to track who has available resources.
- Direct care/navigator which relates to owning the call when you receive it.
- Donations in the form of food, cash or volunteer time. Ms. Zwick said they were concerned about competing holiday drives. They have decided to wait until the first of the year to proceed with this sub-committee.
- Messaging to help people understand the issue.

Ms. Zwick encouraged everyone to contribute if they are able to and to volunteer in their local community. She said families coming through the system now are angry about having to pay taxes and then finding they are unable to receive assistance.

In terms of what the future holds and the long term effort, Ms. Zwick said they are mobilizing as many people as they can. She is here to make everyone aware of what they are doing and how to get involved. Ms. Zwick added the philanthropic community has also come together to address the situation. She said the Pulliam is focusing on pulling efforts together as well. She noted St. Vincent de Paul is no longer going to be providing home delivered meals or utility assistance. Ms. Zwick also said the Legislature is looking at the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) money as a way to backfill Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

5. Collaborative Goals for 2009

President Enos welcomed Amy St. Peter, MAG, and invited her to lead the group in an exercise to develop collaborative areas of focus in moving forward with the collaboration between the Domestic Violence Council and the Continuum of Care Committee.

Ms. St. Peter thanked everyone for attending. She talked about the work done over the past year and how the previous presentation had focused on needs. She said she hoped to wrap up with a discussion on what the Committees can do to continue working together by drawing upon each others' experience and perspectives. Ms. St. Peter provided a handout allowing time for the group to write down their responses to the questions and statement on the handout. Afterward, Ms. St. Peter asked for the group's responses to the exercise.

The first item was: *Describe your peak experience(s) with the MAG Regional Domestic Violence Council or the Continuum of Care Regional Committee on Homelessness over the past year.*

Responses included:

- The Appreciative Inquiry workshop.
 - Ms. St. Peter said this approach is being used to develop the next regional plan.
- Youth Empowerment Project
 - A project focused on teen dating violence that is reaching teens across the county.
- Lottery money
 - Ms. St. Peter stated the Lottery money may be in jeopardy. She said people in social services are very good at serving people but do not always speak up for needs at the legislature. She added having a strong presence at the legislature is necessary and beneficial to programs.

The next item was: *What are your hopes for the Committees in working collaboratively over the next year?*

Responses included:

- Promoting a system of collaboration including courts, behavior health and substance abuse. There is a need to approach the issues holistically.
- Redoing the shelter turn away study from 2005.
 - Taking a new look by including homelessness and why people are being turned away when the issue isn't just the lack of space.
- Complete the civil legal assistance study.
- Develop a collaboration to bring domestic violence training and support groups into single women homeless shelters.
- Continue collaborations for permanent supportive housing and affordable housing
- Continue collaboration of the two Committees
- Memorandum of agreement on service delivery

The final item was: *What can you or your organizations bring to the table to make this happen?*

Responses included:

- Experience and best practices
- Sharing expertise and working together more collaboratively to help meet each others needs

Ms. Mead asked if anyone wished to make a motion to move forward with the hopes/goals for next year. Mr. McQuaid made a motion to move forward with the goals proposed for the Committees in working collaboratively over the next year. Mr. Frate seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Comments from the Regional Domestic Violence Council and Continuum of Care Regional Committee on Homelessness

Vice Chair Keuth invited members to present any brief announcements or to provide a summary of current events.

Councilmember Joanne Osborne, City of Goodyear, said they have a platform for the City on strengthening youth and families. They have discovered through discussions with school principals there are families in need and the schools are where these families feel comfortable seeking help. Ms. Osborne said they did not realize the big disconnect. The City of Goodyear is putting together packets of information to distribute to the schools to provide to those families who are seeking assistance.

Betty Lynch said they have a need in Litchfield Park for the same thing. She said the West Valley Human Services Alliance worked with DES on a program they can take out and adapt to any school. The program teaches teachers what to look for in terms of families in need. She shared an example of a student who commented his dad had stopped smoking, but was drinking a lot. A comment like that from a child can provide great insight. Ms. Lynch said the program can be made specific to any school or city and is offered to anyone who is interested.

7. Adjourn

Vice Chair Keuth thanked all the participants for attending the meeting. He expressed his appreciation for their time.

President Enos also thanked everyone for their participation. She said their leadership and dedication to the issues of domestic violence and homelessness in the region is critical.

The meeting adjourned at 2:47 p.m. President Enos offered a five minute break before the Regional Domestic Violence Council reconvened for their December Council meeting.