

## Queries for Regional Advisory Committee June 23, 2014

### Prevention of Abuse

#### Central New York Field Office Attendee Responses

1. What does the word “abuse” mean? What are other words for “abuse,” such as “bullying?”

*The purpose of this question is to get a sense of understanding of abuse and language-use to inform the development of materials.*

**Abuse is:** disrespect, coercion, being misused, physical; power and control exerted to manipulate others; ones behavior response to stress that leads to manipulation and control of another human being, animal or object; anything done to you that forces you to do what you do not want to do

**Other names for abuse:** coercion, emotional blackmail, misuse, authoritative leadership, financial power, government/agency manipulation of services to control people, bullying, passive aggressive provocation, manipulation, victimization, human trafficking, rape, brains washing, racism, etc.

2. Have you ever read anything about abuse prevention? Has anyone ever taught you how to protect yourself? If so, was it helpful and why?

*The purpose of this question is to identify existing resources that may be helpful and/or identify components of resources that can inform the development of new materials.*

**Previous knowledge of abuse prevention and self protection:** Of the persons utilizing services in the room, only one had actual prior training on abuse, prevention or self protection through a primary school program. Of the peer staff in attendance, they had limited training from abuse prevention agencies dependent on where they are located and very limited if any training from their own agencies. The older persons served in the room had little knowledge in this area.

**Known Resources:** Dr. Phil, abuse prevention agencies (i.e Vera House – Onondaga Co.), library resources, The Alliance (advocacy on human rights training offered statewide), OMH staff training, various forms of media (movies, newspaper articles, etc.), schools, Intentional Peer Support training, Self Advocates, NYS Court Systems (sometimes educational other times they are abusers), religious and faith based organizations

3. What do you think is important to know about abuse?

*some examples:*

- *What is the definition of abuse?*
- *What are the signs of abuse?*
- *What behavior is appropriate and what is inappropriate?*
- *Who can you call if you or someone you know is being abused?*
- *What can you do to prevent abuse?*

**The room thought that all of the above are very important to know about.**

**Additional important information on abuse:** knowing the statistics of abuse, medication reactions (incorrect medications can make a person abusive), overmedication can cause us to be dulled to a point where we don't realize we are being abused), how to handle our own vicarious/personal trauma issues, recognizing and identifying that you are being abused, support group resources needed, organizing against abuse, knowing our rights (human rights, legal rights, civil rights, patient rights, etc.)

4. What format would be most useful as educational materials?  
*Consider video, brochure, poster, website, other formats...*

**Formats for resource and education:** All listed above, workshops, support groups, conferences, interactive role play (helps a person sense what it is like), public forums, and ways to educate police and all human services workers (not just mh)

5. What type of training would be helpful?
- *Would you attend a training on abuse prevention?*
  - *How frequently would you attend (e.g. once a week for six weeks)?*
  - *Would you watch a webinar or do you prefer in-person trainings?*

**Attendance:** Yes from all but one to attending training , the other response was no; if offered in location close by and length of training.

**Frequency:** As frequently as possible or needed, shorter duration training, series classes, multiple day training, etc.

**Training modality:** Would attend webinars, in person training and other formats of training.

6. How can we best provide education on abuse prevention to service recipients who may not speak English as a first language, or who have other communication difficulties/disabilities?

- Utilize person centered planning to determine the needs of the person
- Use best practices in cultural competency
- Intentional Peer Support training techniques
- Conflict resolution methods
- Provide materials in all languages
- Mandatory that we inform all persons served of the availability of the Justice Center and it's purpose as a resource
- Ensure that interpreter services are informed of the Justice Center and how to connect persons to that resource
- Make people aware of all disability barriers and accommodations

- Make sure we are responsive at once as some people's cultures make it extremely difficult to report abuse and they may not come back for help if they have to wait any length of time.
7. If there were an international symbol of abuse prevention what would it look like? (For example, a No Smoking Sign is an image of a cigarette with a line through it)

**The following ideas came forth:**

**Person lying down being kicked but with circle w/line across: Means "Don't kick me when I am down"**

**Person lying in fetal position with tears with circle with line across: Means "Don't make me feel helpless."**

**Fist with face with tears flowing out with circle with with line across: Means "No more violence."**

**Person with megaphone at another ear with a quote bubble with characters normally used to show foul language with circle with line across: Means "Stop Verbal Abuse and Agression."**

**Face with tongue protruding like a dagger with circle with line across: Means "Words hurt!"**

**Peace Symbol**

**Co-Exist symbol**

**Word abuse in circle with line across: Means "No abuse zone."**

**Rainbow with word acceptance under it**

**Stop sign with word abuse on it**

8. Is there anything else you think is important to educating service recipients that we haven't touched on already?

Abuses that are inherent and possible within the public mental health system as well as the private system.

Identifying self abuse

Medication abuses (coercive prescribing), recognizing when are you being chemically restrained when not warranted by emotional needs or reported symptoms

Poly-pharmacy abuses

9. If you had a magic wand, what would you do to keep everybody safe and free from abuse and neglect?

- Start listening to complaints at all levels when persons served state they are being abused. Make unannounced visits after complaints instead of calling providers to ask "Did you do that?" Catch them red handed.
- Take complaints about all human services organization not just disability related. (DSS is notorious for abusing people with special needs.)
- Mandate police entities to take training on abuse and disability related issues, especially gender biased abuse by police members
- More education for everyone to raise awareness and preventative maintenance
- More options for complaint resolutions when persons are being victimized by providers which happens frequently.

- Empower people to lobby politicians to change current laws that are abusive and coercive
- Provide funding for continuation of the Parents with Psychiatric Disabilities initiative to stop the discrimination and destruction of families
- Mandate education to all human service providers about how to treat people as people with dignity and not as some parasite on the tax payer
- Ensure that all government agencies also are held accountable for how they treat people
- Mandate that each county have a solid complaints protocol contracted to an independent organization to get fair reviews of consumer complaints.
- Start analyzing the complaints and incident reports for patterns of abuse and neglect and report the data directly to counties and field offices for actual follow up, not just a phone call
- When a certain threshold is met on an agency or county where complaints or incidents are concerned, require all county agencies be mandated to take training on abuse prevention and conflict resolution
- Mandate trauma informed compassion training for all government, non profit human services agency, make the trainings open to the public at large.
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