



## **Governor's Council to Address Sexual and Domestic Violence**

### **GCSDV Accomplishments**

In June 2007, Governor Patrick issued Executive Order #486 to create the Governor's Council to Address Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence (GCSDV). As Lieutenant Governor, Timothy Murray has chaired this interdisciplinary council consisting of up to 30 community-based experts appointed by the Governor, and representatives of various state agencies responsible for sexual and domestic violence service provision throughout the Commonwealth. Achievements under Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray's leadership as Chair of the Governor's Council to Address Sexual and Domestic Violence:

*Sexual and Domestic Violence Zero Tolerance Executive Order* - Executive Order # 491 directed the Commonwealth to implement a zero tolerance policy on domestic violence and sexual assault in the workplace. The EO grants up to 15 additional paid leave days for victims of Domestic and Sexual Violence, and mandates training to all managers to appropriately and confidentially implement the policy.

*Public Health Advisory on Domestic Violence Issued* - After a threatening rise in domestic violence, a Public Health Advisory was issued to raise awareness and educate people on the issue and the resources available to victims, marking the first PHA issued for a non-disease-related cause in MA and the first DV-related PHA in the nation.

*Pediatric Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners Program Report* – A series of action steps undertaken for improvement of Pediatric Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners Program involving systems change at and between DCF, Hospitals, and Public Safety agencies.

*Sexual and Domestic Violence Law Enforcement Guidelines* – Multi-disciplinary teams revised the guidelines for police response to domestic violence cases and created guidelines for sexual assault response and investigation. These best-practice guidelines were disseminated to police departments throughout the Commonwealth by the Secretary of EOPSS.

*Victims Bill of Rights* – The Victims Bill of Rights was updated through MOVA-sponsored legislation, which amends the definition of “family member” to include the grandparents of

victims and witnesses, require that all courthouses include a separate and secure waiting area for victims and witnesses, and ensures that families of victims in unsolved homicides and non-English speaking victims and witnesses receive notice of their rights.

*Promising Practices Report* – The report provides tools and resources for communities to implement their own Coordinated Community Response Coordinated Community Response, Community Mobilization, and Risk Assessment and Management initiatives.

*Blueprint for Systems Change Re: Domestic Violence* -These recommendations focus on state agency practices that complicate SDV survivors experience as they attempt to move toward safety and healing.

*Harassment Restraining Order (MGL 258e)* – The order ensures greater protection for victims of sexual abuse, stalking and intimidation, allowing victims to obtain criminally enforceable orders of protection against any offender.

*Military Sexual Trauma* - Members of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Services and Governor's Council to Address Sexual and Domestic Violence and representatives of the National Guard, the VA, DPH, and community based providers have convened to address the needs of Massachusetts residents who have experienced Military Sexual Trauma.

*Ending Homelessness for Survivors of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault* – Lt. Governor Murray charged the ICHH and the Governor's Council to Address Sexual and Domestic Violence with establishing a joint steering committee. This committee has initiated an action plan that will lead us toward our vision that survivors of domestic and sexual violence who are homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to the formal and informal supports they and their families need to live and thrive securely in their communities.

*Human Trafficking* – “An Act Relative to the Commercial Exploitation of People” establishes the state crime of human trafficking for sexual servitude. An ongoing Task Force was also established.

*Teen Sexual and Dating Violence Prevention Task Force* – Recommendations from the Task Force have created a Higher Education Working Group to address prevention and response to sexual and domestic violence on college campuses and have disseminated updated guidelines for school districts.

*DV Fatality Review Working Group* – This multi-disciplinary group has determined that there is a need for a formal DV fatality review protocol. With pro bono services of Mintz Levin and in partnership with the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security and the Department of Public Health, the group is developing a legislative request.

*Services Accessibility Working Group* – This working group has created a report and recommendations exploring accessibility issues at-risk populations face, and has noted disparities in sexual assault and domestic violence services.

*Health Care Working Group* – This group has launched to respond to new mandates of the Affordable Care Act and resulting needs of healthcare providers and increased capacity of community-based SDV programs.

### **Action Steps for 2013-2014**

- In partnership with the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security, the Department of Child and Families, and the Department of Public Health, we will award \$750,000 of Byrne funding to enhance High Risk Response work in communities and to engage a rigorous evaluation process. We want to ensure that this funding is non-duplicative, well-coordinated with ongoing work and contributes to the knowledge base to appropriately address needs in underserved populations such as the immigrant and refugee and LGBTQ communities. Abt Associates has been hired as the research and evaluation team and is currently conducting a landscape scan. We expect to have an initial grant application process begin in the fall.
- Stemming from the work of the joint steering committee of the ICHH and Governor's Council to Address Sexual and Domestic Violence, implement an Integrated Task Force comprised of staff from the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Department of Children and Families, the Department of Transitional Assistance, the Department of Public Health, and key statewide advocacy leaders to implement the full recommendations of the Steering Committee.
- Through the Higher Education Working Group and in partnership with the Department of Public Health, host best practice trainings for high-level college and university administrators to seek collective opportunities to improve prevention of sexual and domestic violence on campuses.
- Develop and implement plan for recommendations presented by the Services Accessibility Working Group Report on prevalence and service disparities for the elder, rural, the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, LGBTQ, immigrant and refugee communities.
- Create a formal Fatality Review system of DV-related homicides in partnership with Executive Office of Public Safety and Security and the Department of Public Health.
- Explore strategies for ensuring community-based sexual and domestic violence providers and medical providers are poised to meet the needs of survivors as new screening protocols are introduced through the Affordable Care Act.

- Continue the work of the Teen Sexual and Domestic Violence Prevention Working Group, focusing on restoring appropriations for sexual and domestic violence prevention and services for school districts.
- Examine legislative opportunities in the 2013-2014 session, including items related to strangulation, domestic assault and battery, accord and satisfaction, release of the body of a deceased person to family members, and employment leave.