



Mission: *To promote a community-wide response to sexual violence by coordinating a multi-disciplinary team that will ensure victims receive comprehensive, compassionate care*

Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) General Meeting

MINUTES

Thursday May 30, 2019

Call to Order: Nicole Bishop, Director Palm Beach County Victim Services & Certified Rape Crisis Center (PBCVS)

Welcome / Introductions of Members and Guests:

Nicole welcomed all who were in attendance at the meeting and announced her return since her extensive supervision of the Justice Services division.

Review/Approval of minutes: Minutes for April 25th meeting was approved without any changes.

On-Going Business: Nicole Bishop, Director PBCVS

Nicole highlighted the celebration of the SANE nurses during the second week of May for National Nurses Week. Nicole thanked the Victim Services SANEs and medical professionals for the work they do to support victims of sexual assault.

Nicole and Dr. J.R. Thicklin also spoke to members about their success as presenters at the EVAWI Conference in San Diego they attended. They found they were better able to collaborate with the faith based community at this event and J.R. stated he is receiving inquiries about training for clergy to address sexual assault and domestic violence within the community.

Laboratory Testing Updates: Julie Sikorsky, Forensic Laboratory Manager

Julie Sikorsky updated SART members on rape kit backlog and the timeframe for processing sexual assault kits, the number of kits tested and the number remaining. She also wanted to let us know that crime lab will continue with testing the sexual assault kits, backlog and others.

Pre & Post SB636 Cases:

Reviewed SA cases (pre & post SB 636): 7923 (+1,443)

Pre SB636 Cases

~ 5,000+ cases reviewed

- Outsourced for analysis: 1612 (revision after data audit)
 - Reports Received: 1612 reports received (0 outstanding)

- 67 cases sent from final PO shipment – 22 additional cases to be sent which will exhaust current available funds.
- Profiles entered into CODIS: 728 profiles from 688 cases
 - From evidence: 634
 - Suspect samples: 94
 - CODIS hits (across all agencies): 263 (+1)
- 7 arrests made with 1 active warrant.
- Project still on-going to review cases without SAKs

New Business: Katherine Murphy, Director of Programs, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) PBC

Nicole introduced Katherine Murphy in support of Mental Health Awareness month. Katherine conveyed a brief outline of NAMI and the many free services they offer to community members who are eligible. Katherine also provided insight on how to use supportive language for victims with mental illnesses.

Member Highlight: Tanya Meade, Crime Victim Practitioner, Coalition for Independent Living Options, Inc. (CILO)

Tanya provided a detailed explanation of the role of CILO in Palm Beach County. Tanya also provided information and standards regarding the referral process, eligibility and services provided to victims of sexual assault who have a disability as well as the free training options Tanya can facilitate for community stakeholders.

SANE Report: Lisa Alward, Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Program Coordinator PBCVS

Nicole introduced Lisa to members as the new SANE Program Coordinator. Lisa reported that there were twenty-seven call outs and twenty-two forensic exams in April. SANEs responded to all cases. In the total call outs there were seven non-reporting victims. Eleven exams were completed at the Butterfly House.

Community Action Network: Sharon Daugherty, PBCVS Outreach Coordinator

Sharon discussed the Sexual Assault Services Community Needs Assessment for Palm Beach County. CAN met & discussed how to best reach the community & solicit responses from the community to determine: how we've done so far, additional needs, unmet services, best practices, and questions we don't know to ask.

Survivor Action Team is planning and putting on Media Appreciation Day in August. They are planning to highlight the media entities who RSVP in a presentation of their coverage. At this event, reporters will also be made aware of current projects and initiatives.

Training Committee: Molly McConnell, Victim Services Grant Coordinator

A Training Committee meeting is scheduled to meet on June 25th at 2pm at SART. Any members interested in attending should notify Molly to be put on the committee list. Molly distributed

flyers for an upcoming Florida Crisis Response Team training being held in Delray Beach from July 15th-19th. Molly also updated SART members on the limited registration slots available for the upcoming Trauma Informed Care Training on June 27.

Legislative Committee: Abby Ross, Legislative Aide to Sen Berman & Rebecca Delarosa, Legislative Affairs Director

Rebecca spoke to progress being made to legislation regarding cyber security as well as auditing measures to protect adult entertainers. List of bills from Abby were also reviewed and updates were provided on the current bills that are under review through legislation:

- Prohibited Acts in Connection with Obscene or Lewd Materials (SB 160/HB1107) (also currently in SB 642/HB7125)
- Lewd and Lascivious Exhibition (SB 828/HB 599) (also currently in SB 642/HB 7125)
- Crime Victim Assistance (SB 1068/HB 785)
- Cyber harassment (SB 1136/HB 1043) (also in HB 7125 not in SB 642)
- Human Trafficking (SB 540/HB 851) (is on 2nd reading in the House but is stuck in committee here in the Senate)
- Petition for Certain Protective Injunctions (SB 980/HB 845) (this passed the House and is on 2nd reading here in the Senate)

SART Case Staffing's: Valerie Messineo, PBCVS Team Supervisor

Valerie reported that five cases were staffed where three of the cases involved a Detective who came by the office the day before to provide case updates. The first case involved a domestic violence victim who was sexually assaulted by her partner. She was provided with services and the suspect was arrested. He continued to contact her while in jail and the victim ended up getting back together with him. She no longer wanted to proceed with the criminal case and it was closed by the SAO. We discussed how to provide support and let her know that we are still here for her, despite the outcome of the criminal case.

The next case involved two minor victims and a group of suspects. These adult men gave the girls alcohol and then sexually assaulted them. One of the victims became intoxicated, was Baker Acted and disclosed the assault. The detective, advocate, and SANE responded to the hospital where a kit was collected. Once discharged the victim returned to her mother's home. This was an unsafe environment and mom was recorded telling the victim that she should kill herself. This recording was given to the detective and the victim was removed from the home. DCF is now involved and the victim has relocated to Miami. The detective and the advocate went to Miami to meet with the victim and provide her additional support. We were trying to determine the best way to provide support to this victim now that she is temporarily out of Palm Beach County and out of the care of her mother.

The final case started off as one where the victim declined law enforcement and an exam. She proceeded with therapy services and later decided to report. Without any physical evidence, the detective wasn't sure if there was going to be enough information to proceed with charges. He arrived at the suspect's high school for an interview and overheard the school talking about the suspect. There is a group of female students that confronted school administration saying that

they have all been victimized by the same suspect. This case has since been filed with the SAO and is awaiting a filing decision.

Green DOT Program update: Clarice Redding, VS Green Dot Program Coordinator
Clarice shared that June will be Green Dot Action Month where she invited everyone to a Peace Walk will kick off the month. Clarice also highlighted Green Dot Action Month Proclamation would be June 4th. Green Dot Action Month flyers with event information were distributed.

Member field discussion: Nicole opened the floor to members to discuss successful collaborations or provide updates. Esther Rodriguez of AVDA informed SART members of various domestic violence support groups being held at AVDA. Many dates and times are available for victims of domestic violence to participate. For more information, contact Esther.

Lucas Hall announced that Compass has a new Trans Youth Group that is held the 2nd Saturday of the month and invited members to attend Compass' Stonewall Ball on June 22, 2019. Compass materials were made available to SART members.

J.R. Thicklin of Destiny By Choice discussed upcoming events in June and will send Molly McConnell information to distribute to SART members via email.

Next meeting date: June 27, 2019 @ 2pm – 3pm

Thank you!