

Alachua County Victim Services & Rape Crisis Center Advisory Council
Meeting held on Zoom
November 19, 2020
Minutes

Members Present via Zoom: Mary Ann Burg, Maddy Coy, Robert Edelman, Rita Lawrence, Commissioner Wheeler

Members Absent: none

Staff Present: Laura Kalt

Guests: None

There was not a quorum in-person

Meeting called to order at 5:38pm for non-voting topic discussion

- I. Laura Kalt spoke about the Community Needs Assessment the agency is undertaking.
 - a. As a certified rape crisis center, the agency is required by the Florida Council Against Sexual Violence (FCASV) to undertake a community needs assessment to survey the needs of sexual abuse survivors. The Center decided to narrow the scope to assessing the needs of sexual abuse survivors who are Hispanic individuals, individuals with limited English and persons who are undocumented.
 - b. Requirements by FCASV: focus groups must be used in some capacity to assess needs, report results back to the FCASV, and create action plan to address unmet needs.
 - c. The Center has a draft questionnaire for service providers and other community orgs to survey their observations on the needs of survivors in the target population, barriers they face with accessing services and the effectiveness of services. Questionnaires will be given by phone and focus groups will be created to discuss results and assist the Center with developing an action plan.
 - d. Suggestions made by members:
 - i. Look to local experts for assistance before launching: Have Robin Lewy or Veronica Robleto review the questionnaire and advise on how to best assess the needs of the target population since their organizations serve the population and been advocates for many years.
 - ii. Multiple stages and methods to assessment: questionnaire and focus groups combination seems best given that COVID is going on
 - iii. Points to Assess About the Needs of Sexual Abuse Victims: barriers to services, effectiveness of services offered, types of services needed, how do we provide services while protecting victims from unintended consequences (deportation, etc), which segment of target population has the greatest need, which group has the most difficulty accessing services, what medical services are people using (looking for potential place for collaboration), are mobile services needed with multiple points of access around the County, will other groups participating in assessment share stats, what issues relating to sexual violence do people see, how do we build relationships, other forms of abuse taking place, what culturally specific stigma is possibly creating barriers to services. Survey people in target population, not service providers.
 - iv. Focus groups: Best in-person but possibly Zoom would work if needed. Generating discussion is vital to successful focus group and that can be hard on Zoom. If Zoom is used, use recording option to capture discussion points. Need two facilitators with strong leadership and facilitating skills. Open with good explanation of why the assessment is being done, why this population was targeted, and what will be done with results. Go in with questions and issues to focus on prepared, but plan for the group to have a life of its own, and make sure facilitators know how to work in this environment.

Next Meeting: Thursday, January 21, 2021 @ 5:30pm on Zoom and in-person. Link provided by Laura Kalt before the meeting.