

## Training Needs Assessment Conducted

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■ By Katie Parker

The Crime Victim Services Commission (CVSC) announced plans to conduct a training needs assessment of victim services agencies in Michigan at the 2010 Council of Advocates Meeting. In hopes of learning more about the training needs of and types of training currently offered to victim services providers in Michigan, three separate surveys were developed. These surveys were designed and implemented by the Michigan Public Health Institute (MPHI) and distributed electronically to training providers, agency directors, and agency staff and volunteers throughout the past year.

Data has been collected from agency executive directors, staff, and volunteers and preliminary results from these surveys were presented to attendees at the 2011 Council of Advocates Meeting. Agencies were asked about the types of training they currently receive, the training needs of staff and volunteers, and any barriers to attending trainings. They were also asked to identify which types of crime victims they primarily serve and in which counties services are provided.

Preliminary data analysis showed that the curriculum, cost, and location of a training are very important to the surveyed agency directors. The training priorities of agency directors included:

- Training on types of crimes: domestic violence, sexual assault, and dating violence
- Training related to building skills: advocacy, crisis intervention, and confidentiality
- Training on systems navigation: working with law enforcement, victims' rights, and the criminal justice system

Overall, agency staff and volunteers indicated that the most important factors in selecting a training to attend were the distance to the training, the cost of the training, and staffing coverage. For volunteers, the time of the training was the most important factor when determining whether or not to attend. Training priorities for staff and volunteers varied by region in Michigan, but included the following responses:

- Training on types of crimes: domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, stalking, and child physical/ emotional/ sexual abuse
- Training related to building skills: counseling techniques, crisis intervention, empathy, safety planning, and cultural competency
- Training on systems navigation: victim's rights, working with law enforcement, the court or criminal justice system, victim impact statements, PPOs, and victim compensation

Recently, training providers throughout Michigan received an e-mail requesting that they complete a survey about the types of trainings they offer to crime victim services providers. Training providers were also asked to indicate where these trainings are currently offered. Preliminary results from this survey will be forthcoming as soon as data collection is complete.

The CVSC plans to use these responses to learn more about what types of training service providers currently receive and what types of training they would like to see offered in the future. Training location will also be analyzed in relation to the location of victim services agencies to

ensure that appropriate trainings are held throughout Michigan and made accessible to all service providers.

During the summer of 2011, the CVSC will hold a focus group in Lansing to further discuss the training needs of victim services providers. Agencies and training providers will be invited to speak in-depth about their training needs as well as current training offerings. This focus group will be facilitated by MPHI.

For more information about the training needs assessment surveys or the upcoming focus group in Lansing, please contact Mary Zack Thompson from the Michigan Public Health Institute at 517-324-8392 or [mthomps@mph.org](mailto:mthomps@mph.org).

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