Portland Women’s Crisis Line
Survivor-Led Evaluation
Final Report

July 2014
by Molly Pringle
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If you or someone you know is experiencing violence in a relationship or has experienced sexual assault, call our 24-hour crisis line at 503-235-5333 or 888-235-5333

PWCL is committed to ending domestic and sexual violence by providing confidential support services and education to empower our community.

For questions about the Portland Women’s Crisis Line, please contact the business office:

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Executive Summary

The Survivor-Led Evaluation (S-LE) was developed and implemented by the Portland Women’s Crisis Line (PWCL) during February-July 2014. The goal of the S-LE was to create standards for PWCL service delivery that were informed by the voices of survivors, and to hold PWCL accountable to delivering service according to those standards. Seventeen survivors of domestic and/or sexual violence (D/SV) contributed to the S-LE by serving as members of the Survivor Advisory Board (SAB) and participating in individual or focus group interviews.

SAB members provided valuable feedback and insight into their experiences with accessing PWCL, as well as the overall Domestic & Sexual Violence Response System. The key findings will contribute to service delivery improvements within PWCL, and will be shared with the rest of the system to encourage dialogue among partners.

Key Findings: PWCL

The SAB reported that the following characteristics contribute to positive experiences when accessing PWCL’s services:

- Advocates encourage survivors to call back any time, 24/7;
- Advocates engage in creative problem solving to help survivors find direction even when resources are unavailable;
- Advocates are honest about the availability of potential resources;
- Advocates use the ‘warm handoff’ technique whenever possible to connect survivors to other resources.

The SAB reported that the following characteristics contribute to negative experiences when accessing PWCL’s services:

- Extended hold times lasting longer than ten minutes;
- Information and referral that is inaccurate.

Beyond adding capacity to reduce hold times and better ensuring the accuracy of information and referral sources, PWCL could improve services by engaging in more community-based outreach, especially to culturally-specific communities.

Key Findings: Domestic & Sexual Response System

The SAB discussed the D/SV response system and what contributed to positive service experiences and where there could be improvements. In general, SAB members perceived the D/SV system as a whole to be under-resourced and uncoordinated.
While there was general agreement that each individual agency within the system was trying its best, the SAB felt that more effort was needed to coordinate between agencies to better serve survivors. Specifically, the SAB prioritized the need for up-to-date information and referral services. SAB members also suggested that coordination efforts be focused on creating true emergency shelter for survivors facing extreme danger.

Finally, throughout the S-LE, the SAB members often mentioned that they would like more opportunities within the system to contribute feedback and improvement ideas, and to participate in decision-making in whatever capacity possible.

**Key Findings: Partner Systems**

Many discussions within the SAB involved survivors’ experiences with other systems outside of the D/SV response system, like the criminal justice, law enforcement, homeless service, and health care systems. Unfortunately, SAB members agreed that there was not an expectation to have a positive experience in any of these systems, individually or in coordination, and that to have a good experience was “to be lucky. “

In general, the SAB recommended stronger coordination between the D/SV system and these systems and suggested that D/SV response agencies offer specialized advocates to serve as inter-system liaisons. These specialized advocates would:

- Facilitate educational opportunities for service providers of these systems to better understand the unique needs of survivors;
- Contribute to positive cultural changes within these systems to reflect the goals of the D/SV system;
- Function as a bridge between survivors and these systems to ensure that there is understanding and follow-through of services.

SAB members specifically called out the desire for female advocates to be present within and help survivors navigate systems that are male-dominated (law enforcement and criminal justice). Additionally, the SAB identified a need for more coordination within the health care system and suggested improvements to the general understanding of D/SV and available resources among health care providers. The SAB recommended prioritizing improvements to survivors’ access to prescription medications and mental health care specialized in serving survivors.

**“It Depends…”**

Many of the questions included in the S-LE were very specific and SAB members often responded with, “It depends.” In moving forward with coordination and improvement efforts within the D/SV system, it will be important to further explore what “it depends” means. Survivors would like to be involved in
conversations that impact service delivery at every level possible so that they can define for themselves what it all depends on. The system should prioritize making more opportunities for survivors to provide feedback that will be listened and responded to.

Every SAB member reported that the experience of sharing their feedback for the purpose of improvement was an empowering and healing experience. Survivors would like more opportunities to participate in conversations that impact service delivery and the D/SV response system should make it a priority to invite survivors to the table.

**Conclusions**

The S-LE resulted in affirmation and direction for PWCL. The SAB described what the gold standard of crisis line service delivery looked like and PWCL will strive to be accountable to these standards.

Much of the feedback that the SAB provided during the S-LE echoed thoughts and feelings that PWCL advocates, and service providers from within the D/SV response system, have held for quite awhile. While PWCL believes that survivors are the experts on what it is like to access services related to D/SV and should play a central role in shaping service delivery standards, it is important to listen to advocates and trust the expertise of those who do this work every day. This is especially true for a system in which resource-intensive evaluation may be prohibitive.
Introduction

Organizational Overview

PWCL’s mission is to end domestic and sexual violence by providing confidential support services and education to empower our community.

For the past 40 years, PWCL (est. 1973) has been a vital resource whose core services have included a 24/7 crisis line, in-person medical advocacy response and ongoing support for survivors of sexual and domestic violence. PWCL’s Volunteer and Outreach Program engages and activates the public, bringing awareness to the complex issues of domestic and sexual violence.

In 2013 PWCL served over 21,000 callers who were seeking safety and healing from domestic and sexual violence. In an effort to ensure that every caller receives exceptional service, PWCL implemented the Access Improvement Project (AIP) in July 2013. The AIP is aimed at making it easier for survivors to access the highest quality of services from PWCL. The AIP is strengthening PWCL’s organizational capacity through evaluation and technology improvements, and by fortifying key relationships with our sister organizations to drive system-wide improvements.

Additionally, the AIP is a supporting project to PWCL’s 2013-2016 Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan has four primary directions:

1. Building Capacity
2. Meeting Community Needs with Quality Services
3. Prioritizing Equity and Diversity
4. Collaborating for System Changes

A critical element of the AIP is soliciting stakeholder feedback, which guides improvements to PWCL’s services. As a survivor-led organization, PWCL has made it a priority to listen to and be accountable to survivors. In an effort to learn more about how survivors perceive PWCL and experience our services, as well as to hear any suggestions survivors may have regarding how PWCL might improve, the Survivor-Led Evaluation (S-LE) was developed.

Survivor-Led Evaluation

The S-LE was developed and implemented from February through July 2014 through the support of grant funding from the Wessinger Foundation and the Women’s Care Foundation. The S-LE was conducted by PWCL’s Access Improvement Project Manager, and author of this report, Molly Pringle (henceforth referred to as AIP Manager). The goal of the S-LE was to create standards for PWCL service delivery that were informed by the voices of survivors, and to hold PWCL accountable to delivering service according to those standards. Additionally, the S-LE was a response to feedback from several important sources, including the Project
Advisory Council and the Community Partner Survey.

**Project Advisory Council**

The Project Advisory Council (PAC) was formed in September 2013 to create a space for relationship building between PWCL and our sister organizations, and to further inform the creation of PWCL’s service delivery standards. The S-LE was centered on hearing from survivors who had recently accessed services from domestic and/or sexual violence (D/SV) response organizations in the Tri County region (Multnomah, Clackamas and Washington counties), however, PWCL understood that feedback from our sister agencies would inform the S-LE’s content and process.

The feedback of the preliminary PAC meetings was integral to shaping the content of the S-LE. For example, the most consistent feedback from the PAC was that there are concerns regarding long hold times for survivors calling PWCL.

**Community Partner Survey**

Every three years, PWCL conducts a Community Partner Survey to better understand the experiences and perceptions of our fellow service providers, funders, donors, volunteers, and community members regarding PWCL as an organization and the quality of our services. Though a survey was issued in March 2014, the final report was not completed in time to inform the S-LE.

However, the S-LE included many questions that were formed in consideration of the 2011 Community Partner Survey. For example, the survey reported that only 58% of respondents described PWCL’s services as dependable. The S-LE included questions regarding survivors’ perceptions of PWCL’s services as dependable. The S-LE also included questions regarding survivors’ perceptions of barriers that PWCL faces in delivery quality service. The 2011 and 2014 Community Partner Surveys both include questions on this topic, which can now be compared to the S-LE for a more nuanced understanding of the issue.

**Opportunities for PWCL**

When the S-LE was developed and implemented (Spring 2014), the Tri County D/SV response system was undertaking a regional effort to coordinate access to services. Questions around the ideal number and nature of entry points to services were being discussed. PWCL was being considered as a potential agency to serve as a primary telephonic entry point to services. However, there were still many concerns within the system regarding quality of services, from PWCL and from the system in general because of lack of capacity and resources.

For example, there seemed to be widespread agreement that queue times on
PWCL’s crisis line were often longer than ten minutes, and that this was unacceptable. Additionally, there were concerns that all organizations were “bouncing around” survivors from one agency to the next, and giving lists of numbers for survivors to call rather than calling partner agencies and transferring survivors through “warm handoffs”.

While the system will likely always face challenges regarding coordination and resource scarcity, PWCL believes that we can offer the best crisis line service to survivors while filling a vital role in the regional D/SV response system.

Recruitment, Promotion & Partnership

Survivor Advisory Board

The S-LE was meant to draw the focus to the voices of survivors who had recently accessed or were currently accessing services within the Tri County region related to their experience with domestic or sexual violence. PWCL recruited as many survivors as possible to participate in the S-LE by serving on the Survivor Advisory Board (SAB). The SAB included 11 survivors who participated in the S-LE’s focus group conversations, as well as six individuals who chose to participate in one-on-one interviews.

In forming the SAB, PWCL chose to reach out to as many survivors as possible through the following sources:

- Internal referrals of current or recent PWCL participants accessing follow-up advocacy,
- PWCL and partner organization support groups
- Partner organization director and advocate referrals, and
- General promotion and outreach at community events.

The initial goal of the S-LE was to recruit 8-12 survivors to participate on the SAB. Within three weeks of the distribution of promotional materials, the AIP Manager had received 21 contacts from survivors interested in participating in the SAB. When the SAB focus group and individual interview schedules were finalized there were a total of 17 participants who all completed the project: 11 focus group members and six one-on-one interviewees.

Recruitment & Promotional Materials

There were three primary documents developed for recruitment of the SAB and promotion of the S-LE:

1. One-Page Letter to Survivors (Appendix B)
2. One-Page Letter to Partner Agencies (Appendix C)
3. Flyer for Community Posting (Appendix D)
The promotional and recruitment materials were tailored to appeal to the interests of either potential SAB participants or program directors. The project description for survivors (Appendix B) was written directly to the survivors, clearly stated the purpose of the project as being improvement-oriented, outlined expectations for commitment, explicitly described the compensation plan, and gave simple directions for those interested to make contact with PWCL.

The language for this document reflected PWCL’s goals of being survivor-led and empowerment-based. For example, the document states,

“You are a survivor who has had to go through the challenging process of accessing services, so you know best what works and what doesn’t, and what the best service would look like.”

Another important element of the letter to potential SAB participants was the statement that if a survivor decided to participate and then changed their mind, there would be no penalties or changes in relationships. The tone of the document was meant to infer the following intentions:

- Highlight the expertise of survivors who have accessed services,
- Demonstrate PWCL’s commitment to making the project as convenient and healing as possible, and
- Establish PWCL’s commitment to improving our services as a survivor-led organization.

The letter to partner agencies (Appendix C) was similar to the letter to survivors in that it centered on PWCL’s commitment to improve based on recommendations from survivors. The letter included more information regarding the process of the S-LE, what PWCL hoped to do with the findings, and how service providers might share the opportunity with survivors. The document invited any suggestions for the project and concluded with a note about PWCL’s intentions to share any and all tools and findings that result from the S-LE. Finally, the flyer for community posting (Appendix D) was an adaptation of the letter to survivors, which simplified the content and included graphics.

**Survivor-Led Evaluation Framework**

**Initial Thoughts & Direction**

In beginning the S-LE, we first reflected on our organizational values, mission, strengths and areas for improvement. We assessed our existing evaluation tools and decided that the broad goals of the S-LE would be:

- Assess the quality of PWCL’s current services as experienced by survivors,
- Establish promising practices for crisis line service delivery,
Gain a better understanding of potential directions for system-wide improvements, and
• Refine PWCL’s evaluation instruments to better reflect outcomes that are important to survivors.

The AIP Manager conducted a literature review to explore resources relevant to program evaluation involving or led by survivors of D/SV. A list of resources is included in Appendix E. There is a general dearth of literature on the topic, with even fewer examples of evaluation instruments in use by D/SV agencies. Despite the lack of literature specific to the topic, there was still guidance to be found from research on the feminist methodology of interviewing\(^1\), research with survivors in general\(^2\), and validation for the unique challenges PWCL faced in attempting the Survivor-Led Evaluation.

PWCL chose to employ a feminist methodology, which aims at “reducing hierarchy between the interviewer and the interviewee, providing information and resources, and creating an emotionally supportive and compassionate setting.”\(^1\) The S-LE was also shaped by the presumption that survivors participating in research are essentially making themselves vulnerable to re-traumatization and stigma, so any promotional recruitment materials should emphasize the researchers’ commitment to being understanding and compassionate.

**Dynamic & Responsive Framework**

The goals and objectives of the S-LE were informed by PWCL’s organizational core values:
• Empowerment
• Survivor-led Services
• Social Justice
• Community Education
• Mutual Support & Unity

The primary aims of the S-LE were as follows:

*This evaluation will help PWCL deliver the best service, as defined by survivors. Survivors who participate in the project will have a healing and empowering experience.*

The AIP Manager understood that the evaluation would be dynamic and responsive in that, though there would be specific aims and objectives, the interview protocols would shift to reflect any emerging themes. In a sense, this flexibility was necessary for the project to be truly survivor-led. However, a general framework (Appendix G) was developed to serve as a foundation and compass to direct the project through its evolution.

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Beyond having flexibility in terms of the content of the interview questions, the entire structure of the project shifted as the S-LE progressed. At the end of the second focus group interview, it became clear that some themes had emerged that would be better addressed through individual interviews with SAB members. The AIP manager decided to invite the SAB to participate in one-on-one interviews, for additional compensation, to further explore some topics and to allow for a more intimate conclusion to the project. The SAB members all agreed and, in fact, deeply appreciated the opportunity.

Findings

Experiences with PWCL

Perceptions of PWCL

When SAB members were asked to describe their perceptions of PWCL before accessing services, there was a shared understanding that the crisis line was answered only by volunteer advocates, not paid staff. Other common pre-service perceptions included the idea that PWCL was only for extreme crises (“utter poverty”, homelessness, homicidal threats), and that PWCL was for women with children only.

All SAB participants described their pre-service perceptions of PWCL as a lifeline. While almost all SAB members thought of PWCL as the very first entry point to services related to D/SV, before accessing services most participants thought PWCL was only a “listening ear” where women could call for empathy and support, not information and referral. One SAB member considered DHS the entry point to services, and another thought of 211info as the entry point.

SAB members reported that their post-service perceptions shifted, as they felt like PWCL was a “reliable and amazing service for all survivors.” Many SAB members reported that after accessing PWCL services, they felt that the organization was exactly the resource they needed when they reached out for support.

“My goal was finding support and advocacy that was for me—finding a place where I was okay. And PWCL helped me find that. If I didn’t find it through PWCL, I don’t know where I would have turned.”

“Now, it’s the one number that no matter where I’m at in my life, I know I can call and feel support and find direction. I’ll never forget it or what PWCL has done for me.”

What PWCL Does Well

After accessing PWCL’s services, SAB members were able to report that the most important service characteristic that made their experience positive was time. Every single SAB member agreed that when they called PWCL and the advocate took time
to listen, was patient and didn’t rush the call, this was what most contributed to their positive experience.

“It feels awesome (to call PWCL). It’s like a helping hand, or a bright light in the dark. I remember... I was sitting outside on a break from work. I was in a place of confusion and mixed emotions. When I called, I felt as if there was an arm I wanted around my shoulders. It was like someone was finally there to hear me. And it was way more than hearing me. It was that I felt validated and that my advocate was there to be by my side for as long as it took. She was just there as if we had all the time in the world. She just held that space so wonderfully. She was so present.”

Many of the SAB members mentioned that they assumed the advocate who answered their crisis line call was also a survivor because they felt “so deeply understood.”

Most SAB members identified that their goal in calling PWCL was to secure shelter, with the second most common goal being to obtain general information and referral. Every single survivor calling PWCL for shelter was initially told that all local shelters were full. However, this did not lead to the survivor having a negative experience. SAB members reported that despite the lack of shelter, they had positive experiences when the PWCL advocate was honest about the availability of resources and engaged in creative problem solving that led to potential new directions for the survivor.

PWCL currently maintains a shelter callback list, which we initiated on the request of the system. The callback list is a largely under-utilized source of data on the regional need for domestic violence shelter. More information about and data from the callback list is included in Appendix H.
“I could hear the honesty right away. That’s what made the difference. I heard one honest voice when I heard all these lies around me. This honest voice, that’s what gave me hope.”

“My PWCL advocate was really cared, and she was so good at problem solving. It didn’t seem like it was her job because she was so deeply caring. I always got reminded of really basic things, like, ‘have you eaten yet today?’”

When survivors called for information and referral outside of shelter needs, they were often surprised by the advocate’s knowledge of potential resources. Almost every SAB member reported that, while resources were often at capacity, they were surprised by how many potential options there were in the system, and by PWCL advocates’ knowledge of resources.

“My PWCL advocate was like the trunk of a tree, and I was sort of holding onto the tree shaking, and she was just there—this grounding, strong force. And she pointed me up to the branches, which were the resources.”

SAB members were asked how they were connected to other resources during a crisis line call: three survivors said they specifically asked for phone numbers; four said that they didn’t remember; three had received warm-transfers to other organizations; and the remaining six said the question was not applicable. SAB members agreed that the warm-transfer approach was most desirable and should be offered as a choice to survivors whenever possible.

“[Warm transfers] are highly effective. Just to know that immediately, that person is on the line, instead of, ‘Call us back. Call us back.’ Sometimes calling back feels totally impossible.”

Finally, many SAB members reported that they felt validated by their PWCL advocate and felt that PWCL, in general, was committed to survivors and their interests. In reporting on ways in which their experiences with PWCL were survivor-led and empowering, SAB members mentioned that it helped when advocates asked them to identify their goals, rather than prescribing goals. Furthermore, all SAB members discussed how being asked to participate in an evaluation and give feedback was healing and empowering.

1 SAB members were asked to reflect on ways in which their PWCL experience was not trauma-informed, survivor-led, respectful, compassionate and empowering. Most SAB members reported that their experiences with PWCL were always positive and representative of the previously mentioned values, however, there were two instances in which SAB members had negative service experiences with PWCL.
“And now, just the fact that you’re asking how to improve. And you’re asking how it felt for me. Nobody asks. That, to me, means the most. It’s very helpful.”

What PWCL Can Improve

When SAB members were asked in what ways their experiences calling PWCL could have been improved, the primary themes were accuracy of information and referral and lack of outreach. It is understood that one of the limitations of the evaluation is that PWCL-affiliated staff were conducting the evaluation asking for potentially negative feedback about PWCL. It was frequently reiterated that the intention was that any feedback would lead to improvements and that negative feedback would in no way affect the nature of services or existing relationships between SAB members and PWCL.

One SAB member had a negative experience calling and having her call answered by a male advocate. While the advocate was caring and gave useful information and referrals, the experience of speaking with a male advocate was difficult for this survivor. The survivor suggested that, “When a male advocate answers, they need to immediately offer the option for the survivor to speak with a female advocate instead, so the caller doesn’t have to ask. I didn’t want to ask.”

Extended hold time (10+ minutes) was experienced by two SAB members; two others reported having to wait 5-7 minutes; four reported that they didn’t recall, but that it was shorter than five minutes; and the remaining 8 reported that they usually experienced no hold time. While the majority of SAB members did not face extended hold time, those survivors who did felt that it had a significant negative impact on the quality of their experience.

Finally, SAB members reported that PWCL could improve by increasing its presence through community outreach. There was a general call among SAB members for more outreach to culturally specific communities.

“I wish I had known more about PWCL and how much help they could have offered me. I waited because I just didn’t know.”

SAB members were asked how they heard about PWCL:

- “I can’t remember” (four responses)
- Advocate at another agency
  - Gateway Center (one response)
All three SAB members who had heard about the crisis line through a PWCL advocate doing outreach said that they would not have called had they not trusted the advocate from making repeated personal connections with them in their communities.

“I never thought of PWCL as an option…or any DV-specific service, really. It just didn’t seem like I fit until I met [the PWCL advocate]. She kept showing up for me in small ways and really got me to the point where I actually wanted to call. She was like a sister to me.”

Perceptions of the System

SAB members most commonly reported that they perceived the D/SV response system to be under-resourced and uncoordinated. The SAB agreed that lack of system coordination contributed directly to issues regarding the quality information and referral.

“You get bits and pieces from this agency, and bits and pieces from that one. There are basic things that everyone should know, and that’s just not the case. The accuracy and completeness of the information and referral is weak across the board. There’s a weakness with the dissemination of information…and it might be impossible to have it perfect, but it’s so important that it’s as tight as possible.”

The lack of coordination and collaboration was also seen as a source of competition, which, according to many SAB members, was a barrier to the system working together to secure resources.

“Every different agency is trying to do the best by survivors, and you all do such good work individually. But you all are so guarded with your own programs, it makes it so that I can’t talk to my advocate at [one organization] about what I’ve got going on at [another organization] without feeling like I’m betraying someone.”
When SAB members were asked what their primary need was when accessing services related to D/SV, the most common answer was shelter. Almost 80% of SAB members had the primary goal of securing shelter upon first accessing services. The biggest barrier to survivors having this need met was immediate unavailability of shelter. Every SAB member who had the goal of entering shelter was initially told that no space was available. Some members were asked to join wait lists, some were given lists of numbers to call, while most were told to call PWCL.

“There’s more than just a little need for it. The shelters are flooded with women fleeing domestic violence and abuse. We’re all trying to deal with our own crises, but going through shelter can be a crisis of its own.”

During the individual interviews, some SAB members brought up the idea of a primary entry point to services, instead of feeling like it was a “game to figure out who to call at what time of day to try to get in [to shelter].”

“I wish there was just one place to call. Like, why don’t you all work together to have some kind f database. Maybe something like 211’s website with all the resources right there. And [survivors] could call and get the same kind of information over the phone. It’s so much easier when you can see, right away, what’s available and what’s not.”

SAB members felt that resources in general, and shelter in particular, were not equitably distributed among survivors. It was unclear to SAB members how survivors qualify for various services, how screening processes are determined, and all SAB members reported seeing resource allocation policies and practices inconsistently applied.

Experiences of Survivors of Color

Every SAB member who identified as a woman of color experienced direct and explicit racism as they were accessing services, both from service providers and other survivors. For example, one survivor of color underwent extensive screening for potential transitional housing, and when she shared this experience with a fellow survivor who was white, she was told that the other survivor did not have the same experience and was simply told that she was eligible.

While explicit racism on an individual level was an issue for survivors of color, every survivor on the SAB, regardless of race, noticed and experienced structural racism within the D/SV response system. One survivor of color explained that she preferred to access service through the agency that was specific to her culture, however, she felt that she had to choose to seek services through the “mainstream”
agency because she noticed she consistently received more resources that way.

**Positive Service Experiences**

When SAB members had a positive experience with a D/SV response agency, they reported that they were validated and supported. This meant that an advocate went “above and beyond” to make a connection and treat the survivor with dignity and respect.

“One shelter advocate, she heard me mention that I liked writing and she made a point of telling me about a workshop about writing and healing. I was in a place where I barely knew who I was anymore and this advocate really listened and went out of her way to help me connect with myself again. That meant the world to me.”

When service providers had relationships with other agencies and could function as a bridge for survivors to other services, it contributed to survivors having a positive experience. There were five SAB members who had experiences of being connected to services that otherwise felt unreachable through the help of their advocate’s personal connections.

“I can’t say how important that is when one person knows somebody else at (another organization), or that kind of a thing. Instead of just this disjointed, fragmented system, it’s like, if your advocate knows who to call so you can get through the back door, that can be the thing that saves you.”

SAB members who felt they had engaged in emotional or difficult conversations with advocates appreciated when the advocate took the opportunity to check in with the survivor throughout the conversation and stay engaged.

**Negative Service Experiences**

As SAB members accessed services from the D/SV response system, the predominant factor that contributed to their negative experiences was lack of...
coordination between agencies. Lack of shelter resources was the second most significant factor contributing to a negative experience for survivors. Additionally, SAB members reported that there are inadequate opportunities to provide feedback of any nature to service providers. Survivors felt that their input, when they did share it, was not respected or responded to.

When survivors were asked to share information with service providers, they appreciated when an explanation was given for why the specific information was being sought. When service providers were impatient and/or lacked compassion, survivors noticed and felt uncomfortable, angry and hurt. Many SAB members reported that they felt that some questions were redundant or irrelevant.

“I remember being asked, after I just described how I was being stalked by my ex for years, ‘Does he have a history of violence?’ I mean, I just described his history of violence! Could [the advocate] tune in and validate me a little? Maybe say, ‘It sounds like he has a history of violence, do you know of any other violent patterns he has?’ It just seems so obvious to me. And it’s little things like that that really make a difference.”

Experiences with Partnering Systems

Throughout the evaluation process SAB members discussed their experiences interacting both with organizations specializing in D/SV response, as well as with organizations that operate in partnering systems, such as the homeless service system, law enforcement, criminal justice system, and health care system. It should be noted that conversations regarding SAB members’ experiences in partnering systems were most often focused on opportunities for improvement. The SAB was most interested in sharing what might be considered negative feedback, as there was a shared perception that the S-LE was an opportunity to inspire improvement, rather than to understand what was working well in these systems.

Homeless Service System

Many SAB members had interacted with the homeless service system in seeking shelter related to their experience with D/SV. The range of experiences with these services was broad and the primary concern from the SAB was that the homeless service system is inadequately resourced.

There were concerns that the system was more readily accessible to survivors with families, and that single survivors, women in particular, had very limited resources to draw from within the homeless service system. SAB members briefly discussed the benefits of the winter warming shelters and expressed the wish that the resource was available year-round.
There was some discussion regarding the difficulties of being on multiple waiting lists and trying to remember which shelter had which requirements. SAB members did not understand why shelters (homeless shelters relative to DV-specific shelters) were unable to share information about a participant’s status. While the details were only briefly shared, SAB members suggested that there be legislative changes to allow for the sharing of confidential information between partner systems and agencies.

**Law Enforcement System**

For the SAB members who had interacted with law enforcement, there was a spectrum of very positive to very negative feedback. Most survivors who experienced DV did not call law enforcement as an entry point to services, while those who had experienced SV all called law enforcement either as a first response or upon arriving at the hospital.

SAB members had positive experiences with law enforcement when survivors had a primary contact that was reliable and there was consistent follow-through.

SAB members had negative experiences with law enforcement when insensitive and harmful language was used, questions were asked that seemed irrelevant or redundant, there was no follow-through or reliable contact, and when survivors felt they were being doubted, patronized or insulted.

**Criminal Justice System**

SAB members accessed the criminal justice system for a variety of reasons, including securing protective orders, reporting acts of violence, pursuing criminal charges against abusers, addressing family court needs, and privacy needs. Similar to the experiences among SAB members with other systems there were extremely positive, as well as negative reports. Eight SAB members reported that they chose not to engage with the criminal justice system because of a general attitude that “nothing comes of pursuing criminal justice.”

The single SAB member who reported a positive experience with the criminal justice system recounted that her experience hinged on expectations and details being clearly communicated in as many forms as possible. She also had previous experiences in the system, so she said her “expectations for follow-through and compassion were realistic...they were low.”

“When a woman has a good experience in the criminal justice system or with law enforcement, it’s really just luck. I never expected to be respected or believed, so when I was it felt very lucky. I saw so many other women being torn down by the system.”

Four SAB members who had negative experiences with the criminal justice system reported that they felt unsafe and uncomfortable in the male-dominated system. Additionally, three SAB members
shared that they felt shamed when they were asked questions that seemed redundant or irrelevant. There was a general request for more transparency or explanation around court processes, perhaps through dedicated legal advocates (preferably female).

**Health Care System**

In regards to their interactions with the health care system, SAB members shared the concern that it was difficult to find support in addressing both their health care needs and their needs specific to their experiences with D/SV.

“*I was trying to get into shelter and my prescription had just run out, but I couldn’t find the time to take care of all the things I needed to do to get housing and get my meds. There was just no way and I could feel myself panicking just thinking about it. It was impossible.*”

Additionally, some SAB members mentioned that accessing health care was too complex and would take too long to achieve results. Similar to other systems, concerns about interacting with male providers were reported, as well as disappointment that there seemed to be a lack of coordination between health care providers and D/SV response providers. SAB members suggested that more resources be put into building wrap-around services that would allow them to meet all of their needs, especially emergency mental health needs.

**Experiences with Evaluation & Quality Assurance Practices**

**Demographic Information**

PWCL asks callers for basic demographic information (age, race, gender, zip code) whenever appropriate to ensure that a survivor is offered as many relevant and useful resources as possible. SAB members were asked what their experiences were in being asked and what it was like to share.

Most SAB members reported that they understood that such information might be useful, but there was no consensus on what the information was used for. When SAB members were asked for their demographic information during a crisis line call with no explanation, it often felt uncomfortable and unpleasant. When SAB members were asked for their demographic information and were given a reason, they often felt more comfortable about sharing, or even wanted to share to be sure they were getting the best possible referrals.

SAB members identified the most positive framing of the request for demographic information is to state that the information will be used to best match the caller with services and to identify any gaps in available services within our system.
Crisis Line Quality Assurance

PWCL believes that it is not best practice to seek quality assurance feedback on the crisis line from callers immediately following a call. However, the Department of Justice strongly encourages that the Common Outcome Measure questions be asked to 20% of all callers. Currently, PWCL meets this mandate by asking callers selected by the discretion of the advocates.

SAB members were asked how it would feel to be asked for feedback on crisis line services directly following a call. All SAB members said, “it depends,” and gave a list of qualifiers. For example, it depends on: whether the caller was in immediate danger; had somewhere to go; wanted to make another call; or had minutes on their phone.

SAB members were presented with a copy of PWCL’s current follow-up advocacy evaluation postcard that is handed out to participants who receive in-person follow-up advocacy and asked to review the content (Appendix K). SAB members reported that the questions generally reflected the goals and outcomes that they held as individuals. They also mentioned that they most appreciated the open-ended questions.

Opportunities for Sharing Feedback

There was widespread acknowledgement that evaluating crisis line services is incredibly challenging, and the SAB had difficulty developing new ideas for evaluation tools and practices. However, there was a general sentiment that there should be more opportunities for survivors to share feedback, specifically through in-person interviews that include open-ended questions.

Additionally, the SAB members highlighted that they would be more willing to share feedback if they felt like it was going to be heard, respected, and responded to. All SAB members stated that they would be happy to share feedback if it would result in improvements to services.

What Can We Do?

Recommendations for PWCL

Feedback from the SAB supported PWCL’s perception that our service delivery model is strong and results in positive experiences for most callers. The following standards for crisis line services were developed directly from feedback from the SAB, and PWCL should be accountable to delivering service according to these standards:

- Take as much time as the caller requires to listen and hold space
- Use a caring and compassionate tone of voice and be sure not to sound scripted

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- Take as much time as the caller requires to listen and hold space
- Use a caring and compassionate tone of voice and be sure not to sound scripted
Whenever possible, let the survivor make decisions for themself and offer open-ended, rather than directive, guidance.

When resources are unavailable be honest and engage in strengths-based problem solving, rather than just “bouncing off” the survivor to another organization.

When connecting survivors to other resources, offer to transfer using a warm handoff whenever possible, rather than giving a list of phone numbers.

Encourage every caller to call back any time, 24/7.

When asking for demographic information, explain the purpose as being a means to best match the survivor to resources and to improve our system’s understanding of need for services.

In order to uphold these standards, PWCL needs to increase its capacity. Staffing the crisis line with additional paid and volunteer advocates during peak call hours will reduce hold times while allowing advocates to continue to spend adequate time with every caller. Increasing staff capacity will also protect advocates against burnout, as it is stressful to be fully present with a caller when there is a long queue of callers who all deserve the same energy and attention.

To ensure the quality of advocates’ service, PWCL’s Director of Services should implement regular quality assurance surveying. PWCL currently has a tool in place for quality assurance, which should be edited to reflect the service delivery standards. The tool is used while the Director of Services is observing a crisis line call, and the advocate knows the observation is happening. Both the supervisor and the advocate fill out the same form to document strengths and areas for growth. In particular, the tool should include prompts to take note of whether advocates provided open-ended and strengths-based support to callers. The quality assurance process should include documenting how the standards of practice are enacted so that PWCL can share these practices with the community.

In an effort to connect with more survivors and promote PWCL as a resource that serves all survivors (regardless of gender, income, race, etc.), PWCL should enhance its community outreach efforts. The SAB requested that PWCL focus resources on connecting with culturally specific communities and strengthening relationships with culturally specific providers to ensure that survivors are being connected to available resources. The SAB made the additional recommendation that PWCL strive to become more visible for marginalized demographics, such as LGBTQ communities and among sex workers.
PWCL should continue to ask for feedback from survivors in as many ways as possible. The SAB reported that, most often, it is not appropriate to conduct quality assurance surveys at the end of a crisis line call. The SAB agreed that the most effective and respectful way of obtaining survivor feedback is through open-ended surveys conducted over the phone or in-person. PWCL should explore new ways of regularly connecting with survivors in these ways.

Finally, PWCL should assert itself as a primary entry point to services within the D/SV system, which is currently exploring options to better coordinate access to services. When SAB members were asked whom they called or where they went when they initially tried to access services related to D/SV, 12 of the 17 survivors, or 71%, called PWCL first.

**System-wide Recommendations**

The primary system-wide recommendation from the SAB is for improved coordination and collaboration between D/SV response agencies. These agencies should focus resources on becoming more familiar with one another’s services, cultures and priorities. Again, the D/SV response system is currently exploring options to better coordinate access to services, and themes of relationship building, equity, anti-racism, transparency and accountability should be central to these conversations. Additionally, any efforts to strengthen relationships and improve inter-agency awareness and understanding might also improve the accuracy and completeness of information and referral, which SAB members identified as a system-wide priority.

SAB members repeatedly came back to the idea of specialized inter-system advocates who would serve as navigators for survivors accessing services from the D/SV response system, and partner systems such as the health care, criminal justice, and homeless service systems. Consistency in communication and follow-through contribute to positive experiences for survivors, and inter-system advocates would likely improve the chances of these things happening as survivors access services from complex and often disparate systems. Furthermore, SAB members conjectured that these specialized advocates would strengthen relationships between and within systems, which would lead to greater efficiency in terms of resources, and greater efficacy in terms of positive outcomes.

The health care system in particular was called out by most SAB members as being the most important target for relationship strengthening with the D/SV response system. The SAB would like to see more mental health resources, especially crisis and pharmaceutical resources, made available to survivors. There was a call for “wraparound” services that would support a survivor from their entry to services through their journey to safety and healing. The SAB felt that having a dedicated inter-system advocate would be
a strong response to the need for comprehensive services.

Finally, many SAB members who had extensive experience accessing services from the D/SV response system, as well as from partner systems, found that, eventually, they gained the empirical skills to self-advocate and more effectively secure resources and information that they needed. These survivors feel that effectively self-advocating can be empowering and transformative, and that if more educational opportunities were available to survivors, perhaps they would feel more confident to take action on behalf of themselves. For example, SAB members requested workshops to learn more about:

- The dynamics of power and control,
- How to navigate the criminal justice system,
- What their rights are regarding housing and employment, and
- How to give back to the community through volunteering and advocacy.

Finally, SAB members shared the resounding feedback that they would appreciate, as often as possible, being invited to participate in conversations and decisions regarding the D/SV response system. The SAB had the impression that the agencies within the D/SV response system rarely came together to discuss the state of things, and suggested that this happen regularly (which it does, in fact) and that survivors be invited to every meeting to both attend and participate.

“\textit{It Depends…}”

Again, many of the responses from SAB members regarding specific practices or ideas hinged on, “It depends.” When survivors were asked what it might feel like to answer a post-crisis line call survey over the phone, the response was, “it depends.” When survivors were prompted to share how they would like to be told when a resource is unavailable, they replied, “it depends.” And when they were asked whether and how a standardized screening tool for accessing services might be applied, survivors said, “it depends.”

Because so many replies were contingent on the specifics of the given situation, more research is needed to dissect what it all depends on. However, this does not mean that decision-making and action should be held up until there is definitive clarity. Rather, there should be a greater trust in service providers to recognize what any situation might depend on. PWCL believes that survivors are experts on the experience of accessing services, and that advocates are experts on understanding and identifying what it might depend on for an individual survivor to find safety and healing. The expertise of survivors and advocates is an incredible resource in the regional D/SV response system, and it should recognized as such. Survivors and advocates should be active participants in conversations regarding the direction of
the D/SV response system, especially in regards to decisions that may impact direct service delivery.

**Conclusion**

Survivors who participated in the S-LE found the process to be healing, empowering and useful. SAB members appreciated the connections they made with other survivors. Many of them felt that the process was cathartic and gave them a new perspective on their experience. Some SAB members shared that they learned more about the D/SV response system throughout their participation, and that this new knowledge helped them better understand why certain things happened the way they did. Again, every single SAB member suggested that the system create more opportunities for survivors to be involved and share feedback.

PWCL believes that to offer the best services to survivors and to most efficiently use our limited resources, we must involve survivors and operate as a truly survivor-led organization. The S-LE resulted in explicit standards for service delivery to which PWCL now holds itself accountable and will strive to enact.

As the Tri-County D/SV response system continues to seek direction, PWCL recommends that survivors be considered experts and are involved in as many ways as possible.

**PWCL would again like to thank the survivors who participated in the Survivor-Led Evaluation. It is because of your courage, commitment and generosity that PWCL will be better able to serve survivors and embody our belief that everyone deserves a life free of violence.**
Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

**Access Improvement Project (AIP):** The AIP began in July 2013 with the support of United Way funding. With a focus on improving survivors’ access to PWCL’s services through improvements in technological, evaluation and staffing capacities, the AIP is a reflection of PWCL’s aspirations to end domestic and sexual violence in our communities. The requested OCF funding would support PWCL in continuing the AIP and building on the strong progress that has already been accomplished.

**Tri-County Domestic and Sexual Violence Response System:** All organizations in the region of Multnomah, Washington and Clackamas counties that specialize in supporting survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

**Project Advisory Council (PAC):** This collaborative work group, established in September 2013, is made up of representatives from eight of our sister organizations. The central goal of the PAC is to inform PWCL’s efforts to establish Promising Practices for our crisis line services. Additionally, PWCL sees the PAC as a space to strengthen relationships within our service community, encouraging transparency and accountability.

**Survivor Advisory Board (SAB):** The SAB is a made up of a group of 17 individuals from our community who identify as survivors of domestic and/or sexual violence. The SAB is tasked with guiding PWCL’s improvement efforts, specifically in collaborating on the Survivor-Led Evaluation.

**Survivor-Led Evaluation (S-LE):** This comprehensive organizational evaluation took place from February through July 2014 and involved survivors at every level of development and implementation. The result was an action-oriented report that has informed PWCL’s future improvement efforts related to direct services. Additionally, the S-LE has informed our Promising Practices, ensuring that we are accountable to survivors, and that our operations are truly survivor-led.
Appendix B: One-Page Letter to Survivors

SURVIVOR-LED EVALUATION FRAMEWORK
SPRING 2014

Hello! The Portland Women's Crisis Line (PWCL) wants to know what you think! We want to improve our crisis line services and your feedback will help us do that. You are a survivor who has had to go through the challenging process of accessing services, so you know best what works and what doesn’t, and what the best service would be like. Your feedback is very important to us, and we hope you will participate. You can help us improve so we can give other survivors the best service possible. The project is called the Survivor-Led Evaluation because we want you to lead us as we improve our services.

What is the Survivor-Led Evaluation? This is a project that will help PWCL deliver the best service, as defined by you and other survivors. We want to know what you think the best crisis line services would be like. The goal of the project is for PWCL to listen to survivors like you, and then respond to your feedback by improving our services.

What do I have to do? If you agree to participate, you will be involved in a series of group discussions with 8-10 other survivors. This group is called the Survivor Advisory Board. There will be three group meetings with the same people, and each meeting will last for 90 minutes. What you say during the meeting will be kept confidential, so no one will know what you said or that you were a participant. During the meetings we will talk about your experiences accessing services, and if you have called PWCL we will ask what that was like for you. The meetings are not yet scheduled, but if you agree to participate we will try to make it convenient for you. Most likely, the meetings will take place once a week for three weeks in a row.

Time Commitment: Three meetings that each last 90 minutes and take place on three different days within a one month period.

What do I receive? If you agree to participate you will receive a catered lunch and a $30 Fred Meyer gift card for each group meeting you attend. If you attend all three meetings you will receive an additional $30 Fred Meyer gift card. Free childcare will be provided on-site where the meeting is held. If you need help with transportation, PWCL will help arrange a cab ride for you. If you drive to the meetings, PWCL will reimburse you for the cost of your travel.

Who do I call if I have questions? You may call or email Molly Pringle, the project manager from PWCL. Her number is 503-232-9751 extension 2008. Her email is molly@pwcl.org

If you decide to participate and change your mind later there are no penalties to you. That is okay. If you come to a group meeting and want to leave in the middle, you can do that. If participating in the group discussion brings up strong feelings for you, talk with your advocate or someone like them. They will listen to you.

Thank you very much!

Molly Pringle
Access Improvement Project Manager
Portland Women’s Crisis Line
503-232-9751 x 2008
molly@pwcl.org
Appendix C: One-Page Letter to Partner Agencies

SURVIVOR-LED EVALUATION FRAMEWORK
SPRING 2014

→ Project Overview: Every year, PWCL supports over 21,000 callers who reach out to us for support as they seek safety and healing from domestic and sexual violence. In an effort to ensure that we are delivering the best service to every caller, PWCL is developing and implementing a Survivor-Led Evaluation Framework (S-LEF). The goal of the S-LEF is to create standards for service delivery that are informed by the voices of survivors, and to hold PWCL accountable to delivering service according to these standards. The S-LEF is a comprehensive program evaluation that will involve survivors of domestic and sexual violence at every level, from its development to implementation.

The Survivor Advisory Board (SAB), made up of 8-12 survivors who have accessed DV/SA response services within our system, will be the platform for survivor participation in the S-LEF. The SAB will guide the development of evaluation instruments that will later be used to assess PWCL’s services and ensure that we are accountable to the highest standards as set by survivors.

We need your help to establish the Survivor Advisory Board! PWCL would like to recruit survivors who have accessed or are currently accessing services at your organization. It is not a requirement for SAB members to have utilized PWCL-specific services. We are interested in hearing from a variety of survivors, some of whom will likely not have contacted PWCL. We also understand that survivors may access multiple organizations on their journey towards safety.

→ How: The SAB will be formed by recruiting 8-12 survivors who are current and recent PWCL participants, as well as current/recent participants from our sister organizations (Project UNICA, Raphael House, Bradley Angle, NAYA, VOA, ROSS and Gateway). The SAB will meet for three 90-minute meetings over the course of a month. Molly Pringle will be managing the S-LEF for PWCL, and she will be the primary contact. Molly will work with your organization’s designated contact (Director of Services or a similar position) to discuss a recruitment plan that works best for your organization and participants.

→ When: The S-LEF timeline is attached. If your organization is willing to participate, an MOU should be signed by April 7th.

→ What’s Next: Molly will be in touch to schedule a meeting to discuss things further and answer any questions.

It is our hope that the S-LEF results in the creation of evaluation tools that future PWCL participants will respond to, and that this information will guide our continual improvement efforts. It is our goal to ensure that we are accountable by providing the service that survivors deem as the best. We hope to share the tools that are developed with your organization and to support you in any way if you are interested in developing a similar framework. Thank you for your time and energy.

In solidarity,

Molly Pringle
Access Improvement Project Manager
Portland Women’s Crisis Line
503-232-9751 x 2008
Wants Your Opinion!

Help Us Improve Our Services
By Participating in Our Survivor-Led Evaluation

What Is the Survivor-Led Evaluation?

PWCL wants to improve our crisis line services and your feedback will help us do that. You are a survivor who has had to go through the challenging process of accessing services, so you know best what works and what doesn’t, and what the best service would be like. PWCL will listen and respond by improving the way we serve you and other survivors based directly on your feedback.

What Does Participation Involve?

You and 8-10 other survivors will participate in group meetings that will focus on PWCL’s services. Or, if you want to share your input but can’t make it to the meetings, we can arrange phone interview or for someone from PWCL to come to meet you. If you participate, you will receive Fred Meyer gift cards, a catered meal, a cab ride or bus ticket to the meeting, and free childcare during the meeting. There will be three meetings that will take place in April and May. Even if you haven’t accessed services from PWCL you can still participate!

Sounds Great! How Do I Get Involved?

If you’re interested in participating, please contact Molly Pringle from PWCL. You can call her or email her.

molly@pwcl.org 503-232-9751 extension 2008

Thank you so much for your time! Your input is very important to PWCL!
Appendix E: Additional Evaluation Resources

Evaluation Resources
Oregon Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence
Summer 2014

→ Literature


→ Guides, Tools & Webinars

Evaluating the Outcomes of Domestic Violence Service Programs: Some Practical Considerations and Strategies by Cris M. Sullivan and Carole Alexy
If you want a concise but detailed resource for definitions, issues, and practical suggestions, THIS IS IT!
http://www.wscadv.org/docs/Evaluating_the_Outcomes_of_DV_Services_Programs.pdf

Outcome Evaluation Strategies for Sexual Assault Service Programs: A Practical Guide by Cris M. Sullivan and Suzanne Coats
Features: basic definitions of evaluation terms; addresses challenges specific to our service community

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Appendix E: Additional Evaluation Resources

Outcome Evaluation Strategies for Domestic Violence Programs
by Cris M. Sullivan

Domestic Violence Evidence Project
A website with many reports on how to design and implement evaluations, and analyze and use data
(Includes links to the previous two reports by Sullivan)
http://www.dvevidenceproject.org/evaluation-tools/

National Resource Center on Domestic Violence: Outcome Evaluation Issue Briefs
A series of short (3 pg) guides that speak to practical evaluation issues: confidentiality and safety; using evaluation findings; gathering, maintaining and analyzing data
http://www.dvevidenceproject.org/publications/

Better Evaluation
An interactive website that may clarify more general questions about how to approach evaluation, like: framing the evaluation purpose and criteria; synthesizing data; understanding causes. Not specific to evaluating DV services, but still useful.
http://betterevaluation.org/

National Latin@ Network

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Evaluation for Improvement: A Seven-Step Empowerment Evaluation Approach

W.K. Kellogg Foundation Evaluation Handbook
Extensive guidebook with an interesting section about balance evidence and improvement.
Hello, and thank you again for your participation. The Survivor Advisory Board (SAB) is meant to explore your experience accessing domestic and sexual violence services. The SAB will meet for three 90-120 minute long focus group meetings, during which you will be asked to share your opinions in a casual group conversation. The group discussions are meant to learn more about your experience accessing services, your ideas about how to improve PWCL's services, and what you think the best possible service delivery would be like.

Whatever you say during these meetings will remain confidential. The conversations will be digitally recorded so that detailed notes can be taken later. The recordings will be secure and confidential, and once the notes are taken the recordings will be deleted. Molly Pringle, the project manager, will be in charge of keeping the recordings secure, transcribing the notes, and deleting the recordings. If you have concerns about your participation, please contact Molly Pringle, the project manager at molly@pwcl.org, or by phone at 503-232-9751 extension 2008. You may also contact Rebecca Nickels, PWCL's Executive Director, at rebecca@pwcl.org, or 503-232-9751 extension 2006.

You may choose to leave the focus group meeting at any time, take a break, or refuse to answer any question. This will not affect your relationship with PWCL or any other service provider. This document does not require you to attend all three SAB meetings, rather it is only to ensure that you understand your role on the SAB. Thank you very much for your participation!

I consent to participating in up to three focus group discussions. I understand that the content of these meetings will be recorded, and that any information I provide will remain confidential. I understand that I will receive a copy of this consent document for my records. I agree to keep the location of these meetings confidential.

________________________________________  __________
Printed Name of SAB Participant

___________________________________________________
Signature of SAB Participant

___________________________________________________
Date
Appendix G: Evaluation Framework

**Aims:** This evaluation will help PWCL deliver the best service, as defined by survivors. Survivors who participate in the project will have a healing and empowering experience.

**Goals / Objectives:** Standards for service delivery and actionable improvement plan informed by the voices of survivors

**Core Concepts:** Accessible Services; Reliable Services; Quality Services; Effective Services; Effective Evaluation Tools & Processes; Culturally Responsive & Respectful Services; PWCL’s Role in the System; System Coordination

**Key Indicators:** Visibility; Reputation; Barriers to Access; Hold Time; Accuracy of Information & Referral; Characteristics of Negative/Positive Experiences

**Methods & Sources:** Focus groups; Individual Interviews; Process Journals; Anonymous Feedback
Appendix H: Shelter Callback List Information

PWCL has maintained a Shelter Callback List since 2011. The goal of this list is to provide survivors with an additional way to hear about domestic violence shelter availability in the Portland Metro area including Multnomah, Washington, Clackamas, Clark, and Columbia counties. If a caller identifies as needing domestic violence shelter, they have the option of being placed on the Shelter Callback List. In order to be placed on the list a survivors undergoes a brief pre-screen to ensure that domestic violence shelter is a good fit for their needs and to identify which shelters are appropriate matches based on their gender, relationship to the abusive person, and lethality risk level. When a survivor consents to being on our Shelter Callback List, PWCL advocates will attempt to notify them when an appropriate shelter space becomes available. A secondary goal of the Shelter Callback List is to provide community members, funders, and domestic violence service providers with information about the need for domestic violence shelter. Survivors have also expressed appreciation for the on-going support they receive by being on the Shelter Call Back List. Many survivors have reported a benefit to being on the list includes that they feel a sense of being heard and supported when PWCL advocates follow up to notify them of shelter availability. When a PWCL advocate calls a survivor to notify them of available space, the advocate also makes time to check in with the survivor and provide safety planning, emotional support, resources, and referrals.

Since August 2011, a total of 1792 domestic violence survivors have been removed from PWCL’s Shelter Callback List. This includes 848 singles and 944 families and may include duplicates as survivors may chose to be placed back on the list once they have been removed. The average number of days survivors remain on the list is 50 days. There are multiple reasons a survivor may be removed from the list. Reasons that participants were taken off of the Shelter Callback List include:

- 62% of survivors’ phone number became disconnected
- 35% were removed because PWCL left multiple messages or they were no longer eligible to be on the list
- 25% of survivors were removed because they got into domestic violence shelter or found safe housing
- 4% were removed because they asked to be removed
- 4% were removed because they left the Portland area, returned to their abuser, or for “other” non-specified reasons

As of March 2013 there have been approximately 1200 participants removed from the call back list. Of these participants: 89% identified with experiencing violence from an intimate partner, 43% were identified by an advocate as being in a high lethality situation, and 10% identified having a service or companion animal.
MEETING #1 GOALS

- Welcome SAB members and orient them to the Survivor-Led Evaluation
- Build shared language and rapport
- Open a space for story-telling → SAB members are the experts
- Learn general details about SAB members’ experiences accessing services
- Encourage future participation and clarify expectations for the structure of future meetings

- 6:30-6:45p  **WELCOME SAB PARTICIPANTS**  
  - Meet and greet: Molly & Jen
  - Sign informed consent document
  - Review project goals, structure, expectations, compensation
    - **GOALS:**
      - To discuss YOUR experience
      - To gather information about accessing services to improve this process for survivors
      - To improve PWCL’s services, as well as our entire system
  - Build shared language/rapport

- 6:45-7:10p  **ICE BREAKER & DINNER**  
  - Silly check-in question to set the tone
  - Begin family style meal

- 7:10-7:30p  **GROUND RULES**  
  - Build shared language/rapport
  - Invite participants to define the ground rules
    - Trauma-informed language: be mindful of triggering/intense language
    - Share the space
    - Take care of yourself!
  - Trauma-informed: details about participants’ experiences are important, but be aware of the shared space and the goals of the project
  - If participants have concerns that need to be addressed through detailed story-telling, we can arrange a one-on-one meeting
Appendix I: Focus Group Protocol #1

- Awareness of the limited time
- Reiterating the multiple opportunities for feedback/continued dialog

• 7:30-8:10p  **FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS**
  - Write three words that describe your experience accessing dv/sa services for the first time
    - These will be posted on the sticky wall and a group discussion will follow
  - Introduction of PWCL’s values & word association activity
    - In what way was your experience NOT...
      - Trauma-Informed
      - Survivor-Led
      - Respectful
      - Compassionate
      - Kind

• 8:10-8:30p  **CONCLUSION**
  - Wrap up/ Grounding
  - Discussion about future meeting dates
  - Reminder of support & feedback opportunities
  - Journal distribution and expectations
    - “Your journal is a space for you to share with us any thoughts you have about:
      - Your experience accessing services
      - Ideas you may have to improve service delivery
      - Challenges you have faced/ are still facing in your process
    - Your journal will be returned to us so that we can refer to it as we make our improvement efforts in the future. Thank you so much for sharing your thoughts with us!”

**FUTURE MEETING GOALS**

**Meeting #2: Service Delivery Improvements**
- Specific service-related questions
  - Knowledge of available resources
  - Minimizing risk of harm
  - Information & referral
  - Reliability
- How does it feel to be asked demographic questions?
- Review specific evaluation tools and practices
  - How would it feel to take a short survey at the end of a CL call?
  - What if a survey/postcard/interview was like this or that?
  - Review/edit/develop PWCL’s promising practices

**Meeting #3: System-wide Improvements**
Appendix I: Focus Group Protocol #1

• Discussion of system-wide issues: coordination, resource-matching
  • perceptions of entry points/ specializations/ bouncing around
  • perceptions about what services are available/effective

Discuss the role of survivors in future planning/evaluation efforts
How to more effectively communicate with survivors?
How to more effectively involve survivors in our work?
Appendix I: Focus Group Protocol #2

SAB Protocol #2

• When you accessed services related to DV/SA,
  o what was the primary need you were seeking to address?
  o what was your ideal outcome?
• How would you know that you achieved that outcome?
• What one thing would you change about:
  o Service delivery?
  o Available Services?
  o Your experience?

• Look at current PWCL tools:
• Common Outcome Measure Questions:
  o I have a better understanding about my options after talking to PWCL.
  o After talking with PWCL, I have new ideas for increasing safety in my current situation.
  o During this call, I learned how to access some available resources.

• How would it feel to take a short survey at the end of a CL call?

• Demographic information questions:
  o How does it feel to be asked demographic information during a crisis line call?
  o What does this language feel like: “Can I ask you some personal information that will help me to best match you to available resources and to ensure that we offer you and future callers the best possible service?”

• Language around difficult conversations (i.e. no resources available)
  o Compassion
  o Honesty
  o Transparency
  o Creativity

• Ease of access
  o What was the biggest barrier you encountered in accessing services?
• How did your first experience seeking services change what you believed about:
  o Your situation?
  o Availability of services?
  o Effectiveness of services?
Appendix I: Focus Group Protocol #3

Final SAB Group Meeting

- What has it been like to participate in this project?
- What was your experience in finding out about the project?
  - Language that drew you in?
  - Visual?
  - Word of mouth?
- How can we improve this experience in the future?
Appendix J: Individual Interview Protocol

SAB Individual Interviews

Perceptions of/Experiences with PWCL
- Had you ever heard of PWCL before experiencing DV/SA?
- What do you think PWCL’s mission is?
- What were your (your community’s) perceptions of PWCL?
  - Available services?
  - Reliability?
  - Quality?
  - Outcomes?
- How did you hear about PWCL?
- What was your experience calling PWCL?
  - Services accessed?
  - Reliability?
  - Quality?
  - Outcomes?
  - Queue time?
- What wasn’t helpful about the services you accessed?
- Why didn’t you access PWCL?
- What is PWCL’s greatest strength?
- What is PWCL’s greatest weakness?

Perceptions of/Experiences with 211
- How did you hear about 211?
- What services did you think they offered?
- Did you feel hopeful that you would get what you needed in calling 211?
- What was your experience calling?
  - Available services?
  - Reliability?
  - Quality?
  - Outcomes?
  - Queue time?
- What types of resources did 211 link you with? How did they link you?
- Did 211 connect you to shelter/housing? What time of year was it?

Cultural Responsivity
- Did PWCL’s services respect your culture?
- Did PWCL’s services understand your culture?
- Did PWCL offer referrals that were specific to your culture?
- As you have accessed services related to DV/SA, have you experienced racism?
  - What did this look like?
  - Has it continued?
**Appendix K: PWCL Follow-Up Survey**

PWCL would like to know if our advocates were helpful to you. Your honest response will help us improve our services. Your answers are confidential. Thank you for your feedback!

**Please circle the best answer using the following scale:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PWCL helped me make more informed choices about my situation.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>After working with PWCL, I know more about how to minimize my risk of harm.</td>
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<tr>
<td>After working with PWCL, I know more about access to resources.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The person helping me was kind and respectful.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

What services do you need that you weren’t able to get?

What can PWCL do to improve their services?

What was the most useful service PWCL provided to you?

Additional Comments/Critiques/Appreciations:

Please email anything else you would like to share to feedback@pwcl.org

Internal Use
Program: 
Date: 
Advocate Initials: