

Working with the Department of Corrections to Eliminate Prison Rape

Establishing Institutional Sexual Assault Response
Teams (SARTs)

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Presenters

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 - Has worked in victim services for 17 years

Objectives

From This Workshop, you will:

- Become informed about PREA and the key pieces of the legislation that will affect work between advocates and inmates
- Understand what Pennsylvania is doing to address prison sexual violence and lessons learned from this collaboration
- Understand what an institutional SART looks like
- Realize how to incorporate advocates into the corrections system
- Realize the differences between male and female inmates and how to work effectively with each population.

Incarcerated Inmate Facts

- BJS reported that 60,500 inmates were sexually assaulted in 2007 in a population of approximate 2.3 million inmates
- That equates to approximately 1 in 5 inmates across the country
- Female inmate population is the fastest growing in the US
- Juveniles in adult facilities are 5 times more likely to be sexually assaulted

Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)

- Prison Rape Elimination Act
- *Farmer v. Brennan* – Supreme Court ruled that prison sexual assault violated the Eighth Amendment
- Signed into law on September 4, 2003, by George W. Bush
- To address the problem of sexual abuse of persons in custody in US correctional agencies
- Established a commission of experts to review this violation and make recommendations to improve conditions and safety of incarcerated persons

Key Objectives of Legislation

- Develop standards for detection, prevention, reduction and punishment
- Collect and disseminate info on the incidence of sexual assault
- Award grant funds to help state and local governments implement the Act
 - Pennsylvania was one of those states to receive initial funding

What has Pennsylvania done?

- The Pennsylvania Department of Corrections (DOC) pulled together a team to look at the issues of sexual assault in their facilities. This team included:
 - Administration of the DOC
 - The Office of the Victim Advocate (OVA)
 - PCAR
 - Medical Services
 - Treatment Services
 - Security
 - Psychology
 - Research and Statistics

What has Pennsylvania done? (Cont.)

- Established new policy addressing sexual assault and sexual harassment
 - DC-ADM-008: Sexual Harassment of or Sexual Contact with Inmates
 - Can be found on the [PA DOC Website](#)
- Created new print materials with sexual assault information for inmates
 - Brochures for every inmate and family member entering the system
 - Posters with information

What has Pennsylvania done? (Cont.)

- Established a Sexual Assault Reporting Line
 - Answered at the Central Office by Duty Officers
 - Only the facility can be tracked through the call
 - Available to general public in the state of PA
- Established a mailbox specifically for inmates to write to regarding sexual assault issues
- Creation of Clinical Review Team
- Creation of Institutional Sexual Assault Response Teams
- Creation of the Sexual Assault Response Team Toolkit

Clinical Review Team

- Established by the DOC to review sexual assault cases from all 27 institutions in the state
- Analyzes the process and methods used in the investigation and follow up in sexual assault cases
- Provides feedback to the institutional sexual assault review teams to improve future incident management
- Members of this team include: DOC Admin, Medical, Psychology, Treatment Services, Security, PA State Police, PA District Attorneys Assoc., PCAR and OVA.

PA Institutional SART Teams

- 4 Pilot Sites
 - 2 Female Facilities – SCI Muncy & SCI Cambridge Springs
 - 2 Male Facilities – SCI Mercer & SCI Dallas
- Each team consists of:
 - Security
 - Medical
 - Psychology
 - Victim Information Specialist (VIS)

Role of the Victim Information Specialist

- To act as an information person for the incarcerated victim
- To act as a liaison between the corrections staff, victim and community advocate
- Assist in setting up follow up sessions with the community advocate
- Arrange gate passes for the advocate to come to the prison
- Attends SART meetings
- Receives additional sexual assault training each year

Establishing The SART Teams

- *Step 1:* Initial Meeting with the Superintendent and administration at the local facility & local rape crisis center representative
- *Step 2:* Basic Training to all contact staff members about general sexual violence issues and working with incarcerated victims
- *Step 3:* Intensive Training to all staff members that will be participating on the Institutional SART team

Establishing The SART Teams (Cont.)

- *Step 4:* Meeting between the institutional SART and the community based SART to get acquainted and learn the roles of each team and position
- *Step 5:* Community Resource Training for the SAFE nurses, Victim Information Specialists, Community Based Advocates and anyone with the potential to work with an incarcerated victim

Tips for Successful Collaboration

- Understanding that there is a problem to be addressed
- Have a shared vision for the group
- Accept incremental success on the path to the ultimate goal
- Ensure that the right people are at the table to make things happen
- Diversity among the people at the decision making table
- Understanding and implementing change
- Share resources
- Establish a method to evaluate success

Incorporating Advocates into the Corrections System

- Establish a clear working relationship at the beginning
 - Discuss philosophies of the corrections staff and rape crisis staff
- Determine the confidentiality terms that will be utilized
- Determine the information flow between corrections and advocates
- Establish specifics regarding rape crisis services (Where, when, how)
- Sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU)

Working at the Facility

- Take a tour of the facility before going to visit a victim
- Know where counseling will take place – determine if it is appropriate
- Meet the key personnel that you will be working with
- Ask questions regarding all procedures that will be followed
 - What to bring/What not to bring
 - What to wear/What not to wear
- Determine ahead of time safety procedures

Incarcerated Victims in PA

- Research was conducted by the PA DOC Research and Statistics Department to gather information regarding incarcerated victims
- Study was conducted so victims had to self report
- Results showed:
 - Statistically small number compared to national figures
 - Victimology matched what national study found: younger inmates, smaller in stature, low level crimes, first time offenders, mental health issues
- Problems with the study from an advocate's perspective

Types of Sexual Assault in Prison

- Consensual
- Coerced
- Protective Pairing
- Bartering or Trading for sex

Dynamics of the Male Population

- Types of Homosexuality in the prison system
 - Homosexuals
 - Gays
 - Queens
 - Straights
- Concept of the “Inner Homosexual”
- More aggressive and physical
- More gang related assaults

Dynamics of the Female Population

- Profile of the Female Inmate
 - Offenses
 - Racial divide
- Incarcerated Mothers and related issues
 - Children of inmates are 5 times more likely to be incarcerated themselves
- Issues with the most impact on female inmates
 - Social and cultural backgrounds
 - Prison Families
 - Prison Sexuality

Issues with the Most Impact on Female Inmates

- Social and cultural backgrounds
 - Racial and ethnic minority
 - Poor
 - Low levels of education and vocational skills
- Prison Families
 - Mirrors that of general society
 - Adaptations for the female roles (i.e. Mother, Daughter)
- Prison Sexuality
 - Most identify themselves as heterosexual
 - “Gay For the Stay”

Questions

- Regarding our work in PA?
- Regarding incarcerated victims?
 - Questions in general?

Resources

- Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape ([PCAR](#))
- National Sexual Violence Resource Center ([NSVRC](#))
- Just Detention International ([JDI](#))
- PA Department of Corrections ([PA DOC](#))
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