

York University

Sexual Assault Awareness, Prevention, and Response Policy Working Group

Meeting Notes

Date: Thursday, September 17, 2015

Time: 10:00 a.m. –11:30 a.m.

Location: 956 Kaneff Tower

Attendance: Janet Morrison, Rob Castle, Elana Shugar, Catherine Salole, Aldo Altomare, Jessica Thyriar, Rodney John de Roché, Krista Hunt, Mina Rajabi Paak, Polly MacFarlane, Grace Permaul

Regrets: Maureen Armstrong, Chenthoori Malankov, Prakash Amarasooriya, CWTP Representative, Siraz Chatha, Liisa Stephenson, Deb Hansen, Arden Maaliq, Daulton Scott

Call to Order

- Welcomed Janet Morrison, Vice-Provost Students to the Working Group
- Janet Morrison is also a member of the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) Reference Group on Sexual Violence.

Review Meeting Notes

- August 25th Meeting Notes approved.

New Business / Establishing the Principles for Confidentiality

- Resources circulated:
 - *UN Survivor-centered approach*
 - *Ontario Network of Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centres, Services for victims/survivors of sexual assault*
- Discussion around response process to incidents of sexual assault.

- It was noted that female identified Security Officials are not always available.
 - Responding to survivors can be challenging for Security Officials because they do not have extensive training as first responders to sexual assault.
 - Security Officials are only supposed to do very basic intakes.
 - Balancing expressing empathy while trying to limit the amount of information shared by the survivor can be difficult.
- Current Practices and Clarifications
 - Currently there is an obligation for those that become aware of a sexual assault to report to Security Services. The survivor is not required to speak to Security Services. Security Services is obligated to inform TPS however the survivor is informed that they are not required to speak to TPS.
 - After some contact information is gathered by Security Services, if a survivor clearly expresses that they do not wish to report to TPS, can York prevent the survivor from being contacted?
 - Is preferred contact information requested from the survivor?
 - If there is follow-up from Security Services or TPS, the survivor should have a choice of how they will be contacted.
 - i.e. cell number versus home phone number
 - Security Services does not investigate incidents of sexual assault.
 - Is gathering contact information that is not directly shared with them considered investigating?
 - If a survivor provides a name of the suspect to Security Services and the information is provided to TPS and the accused is contacted. The suspect will know the survivor disclosed regardless of the survivors wishes.
 - Will the survivor be informed prior to the suspect being contacted?

- Balancing survivor's choice and community safety
 - The terms disclosure and reporting are often used interchangeably but they are not the same thing.
 - There is great consideration to weighing and balancing community safety versus survivor's choice.
 - Universities are all struggling with these issues.
 - The importance of a survivor being able to make the decision of how things move forward was underscored.
 - When the university provides information to TPS, when a survivor does not want to move forward with a formal report, we lose control over how the situation will be handled.
 - Discussion around different models at Universities.
 - **ACTION:** Aldo will provide examples of different models.
 - Regardless of if a survivor wants to report, Security Services will loop in with TPS to assess community risk.
 - Consideration is given to the moral/ethical/ balance and University responsibility.
 - Could we establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with TPS on how to respond to incidents on the York campus?
 - There are different security structures on campuses
 - Security Officials (York)
 - Special Constables
 - Private Security
 - Students must have opportunity to disclose for care/ support.
 - Without connecting with TPS, Security Services is looking at incident in a silo
 - Security Services response is not the level of TPS.
 - Security Services cannot assess the risk in the same way.
 - **Q:** What is the purpose of Security Services taking action?

- **A:** Potential to address immediate threat to community. Provide detail to law enforcement in order to apprehend suspect.

- Survivor Centric
 - Resource from UN Women about Survivor Centric Approach was shared.
 - Discussion around what it means to be survivor centric.
 - Concerns around reducing reporting if survivors do not want TPS to be informed.
 - Clarification if disclosures are for the basis of support or reporting.
 - Consider not reporting unless person requests
 - Current practise does not fully encompass a survivor centric approach.
 - Once a survivor discloses or reports to the University, the survivor is not in control of if the information is shared with Security Services and TPS.

- Security Bulletin
 - Concern around content of Security Bulletin implying a level of judgement expressed.
 - This was not the intention. Feedback around Security Bulletin content and language is appreciated.
 - **Q:** Are survivor's informed that there will be a Security Bulletin issued?
 - **A:** Yes, when possible, the survivor is informed that a Security Bulletin will be issued. They are also informed that no identifiable information about them will be included.

- Training for Security Services
 - CHR planning training for Security Services around sexual assault

- Additional questions for TPS
 - How can Universities uphold the guidelines of a survivor centric approach while abiding by obligations regarding community safety?

Next Steps & Meeting

- The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 7th at 12:30pm.
- TPS will be in attendance.

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