

Strategic Plan

Intersections

Coming Together at the Crossroads to Better Serve Sexual Assault Survivors with Disabilities



INTERSECTIONS: Coming Together at the Crossroads to Better Serve Sexual Assault Survivors with Disabilities

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I. INTRODUCTION

Overview of the Collaboration

Intersections is a collaboration between Moving to End Sexual Assault (MESA), our community's local rape crisis center, and Imagine!, a primary provider of developmental disability services. Both organizations serve Boulder and Broomfield counties in Colorado. The collaboration began in October 2009 and is funded by a three-year federal grant from the Office on Violence Against Women through the Education, Training, and Enhanced Services to End Violence Against and Abuse of Women with Disabilities Grant Program (Disability Grant Program).

Intersections seeks to create sustainable, systemic changes within each organization that will result in fully accessible and seamless services for people with disabilities in our community who have experienced sexual assault.

Collaboration Members

Moving to End Sexual Assault (MESA) is the rape crisis center in Boulder and Broomfield counties and serves as an expert in trauma and sexual violence. MESA offers services to teen and adult survivors of sexual violence as well as prevention education programs to the community. MESA was awarded the funds for this grant and is the lead fiscal agent in the collaboration.

Imagine! is the Community Centered Board (CCB) for Boulder and Broomfield counties, serving as the single point of entry for any eligible person with a developmental disability to receive services and support. In addition to serving as a state CCB, Imagine! also provides educational and therapeutic services, job training and placement, extra-curricular activities, opportunities for community living, behavioral health services, technology solutions, and support for families. Imagine! is the sole partner agency in this collaboration.

Vision and Mission

Vision Statement

Intersections envisions that people with disabilities who have experienced sexual assault will be met with trauma-informed and disability-aware services. Services will be responsive, seamless, and fully accessible, provided by a network of highly-skilled professionals who are comfortable working with and honoring the choices of people with disabilities who survive sexual assault. People with disabilities who have experienced sexual assault will feel safe, in control, valued, heard, and respected. Our community will understand the impact and complexities of sexual assault and will share ownership for supporting survivors with disabilities.

Mission Statement

The mission of Intersections is to address and enhance systems for serving people with disabilities who have experienced sexual assault. Through this collaboration, Imagine! and MESA will transform our organizational cultures to be trauma-informed and disability-aware by:

- Formalizing the connections between MESA and Imagine! to open both organizations' systems to each other's resources and knowledge in order to build a seamless and

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dynamic system of support for people with disabilities who have experienced sexual assault;

- Identifying, developing, and enhancing policies and procedures within both organizations to improve our “response-ability” and accessibility to people with disabilities who have experienced sexual assault to receive timely information, advocacy, and support;
- Increasing the awareness, skills, and comfort level of staff and volunteers at MESA and Imagine! to work directly with people with disabilities who have experienced sexual assault.

Overview of the Planning Phase of the Grant

This grant is a three-year endeavor with two phases. The first phase is the Planning and Development Phase, which consists of multiple deliverables. We are currently in this first phase. The first deliverable in this phase entailed identifying and solidifying collaboration members, strengthening and building the collaboration relationship, and solidifying working agreements through the creation of a collaboration Charter.

The second deliverable involved creating a Needs Assessment Plan, which specified our goals for the needs assessment and the methodology for conducting it. The next step was to conduct the needs assessment and create a report of the findings, including potential solutions to any identified barriers.

The last deliverable of this phase is to create a Strategic Plan. This document outlines the Strategic Plan, including detail proposed initiatives based on the needs assessment findings.

The second phase of the grant is the Implementation Phase, where Intersections will implement the strategic plan.

II. SUMMARY OF THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT PLAN AND FINDINGS

Needs Assessment Goals

Intersections conducted a needs assessment in the summer of 2011. The goals were to:

- Identify current organizational structures and gaps with regard to policies, procedures, protocols, and trainings that address how to respond to and support people with disabilities who have experienced sexual assault at both organizations.
- Evaluate skills, awareness, and comfort levels of staff and volunteers at every level of both organizations to respond to and support people with disabilities who have experienced sexual assault.
- Identify what current relationships exist between MESA and Imagine! (both formal and informal), barriers to working together effectively, and opportunities to grow, nurture, and sustain the relationship.

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- Identify what works and does not work in an organization to ensure accessibility, safety, “response-ability,” and a welcoming environment through the lens of sexual assault survivors and people with disabilities.
- Identify what supports and limits exist in each organization’s culture to respond to and address issues of accessibility, safety, “response-ability,” and a welcoming environment for people with disabilities who have experienced sexual assault.

Methodology

Intersections conducted interviews and focus groups with 87 people from both organizations. Seventeen (17) focus groups were conducted with 58 participants, and 23 interviews were conducted with a total of 29 people. Those engaged from Imagine! included consumers (people with intellectual disabilities currently receiving services), family caregivers, staff members, executive staff, leadership, and board members. Those engaged from MESA included clients (survivors of sexual assault), volunteers, staff members and interns, executive staff, leadership, and board members.

Findings

The majority of participants at both organizations were supportive of the goals of the collaboration. In fact, many were enthusiastic and believe this project will meet a critical need. All levels spoke highly of their respective organizations, despite the gaps specific to serving survivors of sexual assault with disabilities. There are many dedicated, motivated, and talented people on both teams who are invaluable assets as the collaboration enters into strategic planning and the implementation phase.

Consistent themes emerged from the data and were categorized into six specific findings. Both organizations had the same overall findings, with some variations on how those findings were specifically occurring and impacting the organizations.

Finding 1: Barriers within the culture

Both organizations are impacted by their current physical environment, communication, and attitudinal cultures, which limit our ability to provide safe, accessible, and welcoming services to people with disabilities who have experienced sexual assault.

Finding 2: Lack of organizational capacity

Both organizations lack the capacity for working at the intersection of sexual violence and people with disabilities. Capacity includes the time and financial ability, as well as the comfort, nuanced skills, confidence, knowledge, and prioritization within the staff and organizations to provide trauma-informed and disability-aware services for people with disabilities who have experienced sexual assault.

Finding 3: Impact of decision making authority and processes on future work

The current processes and levels of authority for decision making within each organization pose potential challenges to the collaboration’s ability to make sustainable and systemic changes.

Finding 4: Gaps in policies and procedures

Both organizations have gaps in their current policies and procedures that hinder the delivery of trauma-informed and disability-aware service to people with disabilities who have experienced sexual violence. This includes current policies and procedures that need to be reviewed and enhanced as well as missing policies and procedures in need of being created.

Finding 5: Lack of a formalized partnership

MESA and Imagine! lack solidified partnerships, both formally and informally, for working together at the intersection.

Finding 6: Strengths to build on

Both organizations have numerous strengths that we hope to capitalize and build upon to ensure sustainable and successful change within our collaboration. At MESA, staff, volunteers, and interns seem highly motivated to support the needs of their clients and are committed to providing the best services possible. Volunteers and staff alike were thoughtful and inspired when discussing their work with clients. At Imagine! staff is very committed to supporting the needs of their consumers and is dedicated to providing the best services possible. Many staff members were energized and caring when talking about their consumers, and it was this work with consumers that consistently inspired them to continue working at Imagine!.

In addition to these key findings, our needs assessment report included implications and potential solutions for each finding at both agencies. The proposed initiatives in our Strategic Plan directly stem from these key findings, implications, and possible solutions.

III. THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Following formal approval of our needs assessment report, the collaboration team members of Intersections held “Open Meetings” throughout all levels of both organizations. This was a key stage in preparing for the strategic planning meeting as the collaboration felt it was of utmost importance to have support and additional feedback from both organizations to inform how priorities were set in the strategic plan. Below provides a detailed outline regarding the purpose and intentions of the Open Meetings.

Open Meetings

The purpose of the open meetings was to share the key findings from the needs assessment as a way to (1) respectfully thank those who participated in the needs assessment process by closing the feedback loop for them (i.e., “Whatever happened to all that information we shared during those focus groups?”), (2) gain input and ideas for potential solutions for the strategic plan from all levels, and (3) continue to generate interest and support for this project throughout both organizations.

Open meetings were held with the same groupings of executives, leadership, staff, and volunteers as participated in the needs assessment. All individuals in any particular grouping were invited to attend, even if they did not participate in the needs assessment. For example,

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all Case Managers at Imagine! were invited to attend the open meeting, hear the findings, and give their input, even if any one of them as an individual did not participate in a focus group or interview as part of the needs assessment. This ensured that the confidentiality of who participated in the needs assessment was maintained, while at the same time created a process that continued to invite everyone into the project's mission.

Two groups from the needs assessment process were not invited to the open meetings. These groups were the client/consumer groups from both MESA and Imagine!, meaning sexual assault survivors and people with disabilities. The rationale for this was that the findings identified gaps in our services with, at that point, no attached solutions. The strategic plan will address the gaps in services to strengthen both Imagine! and MESA's services for survivors with disabilities. Both survivors and people with disabilities will be invited to participate in the implementation phase of the strategic plan as part of work groups tied to each initiative as the collaboration places a high value on the participation and input of these two groups.

Strategic Planning meeting

Following the completion of the open meetings, a two-day strategic planning session was scheduled with our Vera consultant and included the collaboration team members, the interim Project Manager, and the Intersections Executive Committee. All parties agreed to the initiatives and activities based on the key gaps identified during the needs assessment.

The goals of the strategic plan are to help us transform our organizational cultures so that sexual assault survivors with disabilities will be met with fully accessible services that are both trauma-informed and disability-aware. Our strategic plan will also help both organizations create a network of skilled professionals who are comfortable working with and honoring the choices of people with disabilities who have survived sexual assault, while helping them feel safe, in control, valued, heard, and respected.

Prioritization of our strategic plan goals is based on the potential impact of any particular initiative, objective and/or activity to create sustainable, systemic change, specifically, on the ability of the initiative to:

- Effect the greatest systemic change on MESA and Imagine!'s ability to best serve survivors of sexual assault with disabilities (imbedded systems change)
- Create long-term vs. short-term gains (sustainability)
- Last beyond current organizational staff and the grant period (sustainability)
- Be organizationally feasible to implement and maintain (sustainability)

IV. STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

Summary of Initiatives

Intersections chose four major initiatives to focus upon for this strategic plan which were identified as themes throughout the needs assessment. These initiatives stem directly from the needs assessment report and are key to creating excellent service provision to survivors with disabilities. While the initiatives set forth are separated into four areas, each initiative is interrelated and will work in conjunction with the other initiatives. We believe this is core to bringing about the desired impact of systemic, sustainable change.

The four major initiatives Intersections has chosen to focus upon in this strategic plan are listed below:

- **Initiative 1:** Create and/or enhance organizational policies and procedures to best serve survivors of sexual assault with disabilities.
- **Initiative 2:** Enhance organizational culture (physical, attitudinal, communication, and programmatic) to provide safe, welcoming, and accessible services to sexual assault survivors with disabilities.
- **Initiative 3:** Enhance organizational capacity for working at the intersection of sexual violence and people with disabilities (knowledge, skills, comfort, and confidence).
- **Initiative 4:** Enhance and formalize the relationship between MESA and Imagine!.

Intersections has determined that these initiatives cannot stand alone in order to create sustainable and meaningful change for a seamless and dynamic system of comprehensive services for survivors with disabilities. Each initiative is interlinked and supports the other initiatives listed. For change in both organizations to be sustainable, changes need to be embedded into the culture and foundation of both organizations. Given this and Intersections' commitment to ensuring that all changes made through this strategic plan are sustainable, these four initiatives are needed in conjunction.

Short-Term and Long-Term Initiatives

All four initiatives will be worked on simultaneously and will entail numerous activities which have been outlined in detail in Section V, Initiatives, Objectives and Activities. The strategic plan will consist of short-term and long-term initiatives. Intersections realizes that the time left in the current funding will only allow for implementation of a few objectives from when we receive approval of the strategic plan to the official close of the grant (September 30, 2012). Subsequently, Intersections plans to request for a no-cost-extension to extend our grant period for up to one year.

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Should Intersections be granted a no-cost extension, we plan to continue implementing short-term initiatives during the no-cost extension period. This has been reflected on the Intersections Work Plan (Appendix I).

If a no-cost extension is not permitted, Intersections will continue to implement the strategic plan as proposed; however, we anticipate that we would have to adjust the timelines for completion as we would have fewer resources dedicated to this project during implementation.

Long-term initiatives are those that will take place with additional funding and are beyond the scope of the short-term and no-cost extension period. Time frames are reflected in the Intersections Work Plan (Appendix I).

A list of implementation periods has been provided below:

- Short-Term Initiatives: upon approval of Strategic Plan from Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) through September 30, 2012.
- No-Cost Extension Plan: October 1, 2012 – September 30, 2013.
- Long-Term Initiatives: October 1, 2013 and ongoing.

Overview of the Work Process

Intersections has formulated a comprehensive outline of the specific objectives and activities needed to accomplish each initiative. Many in-depth conversations took place among our collaboration team members, our Vera technical consultant, and the Intersections Executive Committee to ensure that all key elements were included in the plan as well as determining who should be involved in the work groups for each initiative.

Many of the initiatives will utilize similar processes for implementation. These processes have been outlined in this section to help frame our approach to this project.

Creation of Work Groups

In order to successfully reach the initiatives set forth, we have decided that work groups should be created to conduct the implementation of each initiative of the strategic plan. Through these work groups we intend to create buy-in across both organizations, provide additional opportunities for staff and volunteers to be involved in the implementation phase, and to ensure that a diverse array of voices are included during creation and decision making processes. One criteria already set forth by Intersections is that people with disabilities and survivors of sexual assault will be included in all the work groups. Intersections believes these voices are essential to creating meaningful and relevant changes in both organizations.

The composition of each work group will be determined by the focus of the initiative they are to complete. For every work group, the current collaboration team members (the MESA representative, the Imagine! representative, and the Project Manager) will develop the specific criteria for membership in the work group. The collaborative team members are responsible for ensuring that criteria are met when selecting work group members.

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Once the membership criteria for the work groups have been established, the collaboration team will outline roles and responsibilities of work group members and recruit individuals for participation. On seeking commitment from the individuals in the work group the collaboration team members will schedule orientation.

Orientation to the Intersections project will be essential for the ultimate success of the work group. Given this, the orientation session will cover information about the development of Intersections, how the group approached and conducted the Needs Assessment, findings from the Needs Assessment, the Strategic plan, and expectations from work group members vis-à-vis a timeline, expected output/s and outcome/s. To accomplish this, the collaboration team members will create and deliver orientation sessions for the work groups.

Piloting Implementation

Due to the size of Imagine!, it has been determined it will be most efficient and effective to pilot all initiatives within a smaller group of Imagine! staff before implementing across the whole organization. The Innovations Adult Residential Services program has been identified as the area to pilot changes. This group was identified as the pilot site due to their involvement in the needs assessment.

By piloting through Innovations Adult Residential Services, Intersections will also be able to make significant progress in the implementation phase which will maximize the impact we will have with remaining funds for this project as we will be able to implement more change in a smaller section of Imagine!. This will benefit the collaboration long-term as it will provide the work group the opportunity to evaluate the implementation of the new initiatives prior to rolling out organization wide at Imagine!.

This process will be unique to Imagine!, as MESA is a significantly smaller organization comparatively. At MESA, these short-term initiatives will be implemented across the entire organization.

V. INITIATIVES, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

A detailed explanation and rationale for each of the initiatives, objectives and subsequent activities are outlined below.

Initiative 1:

Create and/or enhance organizational policies and procedures to best serve survivors of sexual assault with disabilities.

Rationale: The needs assessment conducted by Intersections found that both MESA and Imagine! have significant gaps in their current policies and procedures that hinder the delivery of trauma-informed and disability-aware services to sexual assault survivors with disabilities. This initiative has been identified and selected because the creation of clear and comprehensive policies and procedures will be a way to ingrain disability-aware and trauma-informed philosophies into each organization. Hence, the intent of addressing policies and procedures is that they are foundational to systemic change and demonstrate a commitment towards fully accessible and seamless service provision on the part of both organizations.

This initiative includes reviewing and enhancing current policies and procedures relevant to serving sexual assault survivors with disabilities to be trauma-informed and disability-aware. As well as creating policies and procedures which are needed to fill the gaps identified during the needs assessment. Additionally, it will include developing policies which are identified to be missing as a result of the review process that is part of this initiative. The intent of this initiative for MESA is to develop clear guidelines to support staff in knowing what steps to take to provide welcoming and fully accessible services for clients. For Imagine! this initiative will particularly support having formalized policies and procedures in place to address the existing gaps. It would lead to consumers at Imagine! to know, that Imagine! is a safe place to disclose; that they could seek support for their needs as a survivor of sexual assault with disabilities and that they could remain safe and heal from their experience(s). So, as a result of the focus in this area, staff at both organizations, as a part of this process would understand the commitment towards providing consistent, quality and comprehensive services to people at the intersection.

We anticipate that once the changes have been made at the policy level and systems for implementation have been established, they will be operational on an ongoing basis. The staff training(s) in new policies and procedures would lead to staff practicing/implementing the same which would in turn lend to changing the work culture. This will also lead to making the changes embedded in respective organizations in order to maintain and sustain this systemic enhancement. Thus, enhancing policies and procedures will be a sustainable change for each organization.

The following are the key objectives and rationale of activities towards addressing the implications identified in the needs assessment with regard to policies and procedures to best serve people at the intersection at both MESA and Imagine!.

Objective 1.1: Clarify policy and procedure development authority between Mental Health Partners (MHP) and MESA.

One of the needs assessment findings for MESA was that there is confusion about the level of authority and the method for creating and/or enhancing MESA policies. MESA is a team of Mental Health Partners (MHP), which has a formal process for changing and/or creating policies. During the needs assessment, information as to how MESA is expected to engage with MHP when making policy and procedure changes were conflicting and highlighted the need for clarity in this area.

As a result, prior to beginning the task of reviewing current policies and procedures at MESA, it will be necessary to clarify the policy and procedure development and/or enhancement approval authority between MESA and MHP. It will be critical to clarify the process by which MESA internally develops, enhances, approves, records, and implements its own policies and procedures that affect MESA staff, volunteers, and interns. Gaining this clarity will result in clear procedures for MESA staff to follow while developing and/or enhancing policies and procedures for staff that will increase their effectiveness for working at the intersection. These steps will be completed by the Project Manager and the MESA collaboration team members in conjunction with appropriate MESA and MHP executive staff.

Objective 1.2: Create a work group.

Intersections determined it is important to create a work group that will be charged with carrying out the activities associated with each initiative. The “Creation of Work Groups” section in this document (pg.10) outlines specific criteria and elements that must be present in each work group. In addition to the criteria for all work groups, the work group for Initiative 1 will include that members have access to the policies and procedures at their respective organizations; come with a depth and breadth of understanding of their own organization’s current policies; and understand the formal process for reviewing, enhancing, and/or developing new policies.

Similar to the ways in which other work groups will be created, the current collaboration team members (the MESA representative, the Imagine! representative, and the Project Manager) will outline roles and responsibilities of work group members and recruit individuals for participation. After work group members have been selected, the current collaboration team members will provide an orientation session which will cover information about the development of Intersections, how the group approached and conducted the Needs Assessment, findings from the Needs Assessment, the Strategic Plan, and expectations from the work group members vis-à-vis a timeline, expected output/s and outcome/s. This will be conducted concurrently with Objective 1.1.

Objective 1.3: Collect and review existing policies and procedures at both organizations relevant to being disability-aware and trauma-informed.

During the needs assessment, we learned from sexual assault survivors that issues regarding confidentiality were of utmost importance for them to feel safe and comfortable when receiving services in the community. From people with disabilities, we learned that services need to be personal and delivered at a pace and level of understanding that meet their own unique needs in order to feel most accessible and welcoming. As a result, these will be key focus areas during the policy and procedure review.

The work group will undertake the following activities:

1. The work group will collect and review policies that currently exist at both organizations which are relevant to serving sexual assault survivors with disabilities for being disability-aware and trauma-informed.
2. It will develop a trauma- informed and disability- aware tool to evaluate the effectiveness of our current policies and procedures.
3. Upon completion of the development of this tool, it will be presented to the Intersections Executive Committee for review, feedback and approval.
4. After obtaining the approval from the Executive Committee, the tool will be submitted to OVW for approval.
5. Upon receiving OVW approval, Intersections will apply the tool to evaluate the policies and procedures from the lens of being disability-aware and trauma-informed at both organizations.

In addition to staying focused upon disability-aware and trauma-informed philosophies, the work group will also need to obtain relevant information on current legal and/or mandated requirements for each organization. This is will help in ensuring that the recommendations for enhancements are in line with those requirements (i.e., issues of safety for both clients/consumers and staff, mandatory reporting requirements, and confidentiality protocols at both organizations). Also, the work group will need to ascertain that their recommendations for policy enhancement and/or development are in accordance with the formal policy review procedures at both organizations.

The work group will focus upon the following policies and procedures for review. These have been specifically chosen due to the frequency with which these concerns arose during the needs assessment from all levels of each organization.

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For MESA:

1. Policies and procedures on training staff, volunteers, and interns to ensure that any additional trainings or policies enacted as a result of this grant are sustained and consistently applied.
2. Policies and procedures related to working with and providing services to people with disabilities, including:
 - a. Creating opportunities for individuals to request accommodations
 - b. Providing and meeting accommodation requests
 - c. Obtaining informed consent
 - d. Navigating guardianship; specifically understanding what is necessary and required while working to maintain consumer confidentiality

For Imagine!:

1. Current policies and expectations regarding confidentiality and assessing ways to maintain consumer confidentiality more consistently and appropriately; specifically, how disclosures of abuse are reported, recorded, and shared both within the organization and with team members.
2. Implications of M.A.N.E, in regard to what is mandated/a regulatory requirement vis-à-vis what is practiced and how it could best address the disclosures of sexual assault by survivors with disabilities.
3. Navigating guardianship; specifically understanding what is necessary and required while working to maintain consumer confidentiality.
4. Systems that inform staff response to the emotional needs of survivors in a trauma-informed manner.
5. Ability to provide resources, referrals, and other options for survivors that stem beyond the current Imagine! Behavioral Health Services (IBHS) option.
6. Trauma-informed considerations for treatment and service planning.
7. Evaluation of service plans to ensure appropriate therapeutic interventions that support the healing process for survivors.
8. Creation of support services which are adapted to a consumer's history of trauma that extends beyond behavioral interventions.
9. An ongoing process for assessing if consumers have experienced sexual assault.

Policies and procedures that address the focus areas listed above will be reviewed using the assessment tool and evaluated for being trauma-informed and disability-aware. After completing its assessment, the work group will create and present a report of recommendations and work plan for implementation for enhancing the existing policies and/or identifying areas for developing new policies and procedures with respect to both organizations. Also, the work group will utilize the information obtained regarding current legal and/or mandated requirements for each organization to help guide drafting their recommendations. Finally, the work group will submit the report of recommendations and work plan for review and approval for adoption to MESA/MHP and Imagine! respectively using the formal methods for policy change at each organization. It will then seek approval from the

Intersection Executive Committee and OVW respectively. On approval, the work plan will be ready for implementation.

Objective 1.4: Enhance and /or develop policies and procedures that are needed to fill gaps.

This will focus on implementing the work plan created and approved in Objective 1.3. It will aim at addressing the gaps by enhancing identified policies and procedures during the needs assessment at both Imagine! and MESA, as outlined in Objective 1.3. Additionally, per the recommendations from the review process, the work group would also develop policies that do not currently exist, utilizing the tool created in Objective 1.3 which will further contribute towards enhancing the experience of survivors with disabilities in receiving trauma-informed and disability-aware services from both organizations.

The draft of the enhanced and/or new policies and procedures will be submitted for review and approval of adoption to MESA/MHP and Imagine! using the formal methods for policy change at each organization. Following this, it will seek approval from the Intersection Executive Committee and OVW respectively. On approval, the enhanced and/or developed policies will be ready for implementation.

Objective 1.5: Develop training on enhanced and/or new policies and procedures for each organization and implement policy and procedure changes at both organizations.

After obtaining approval, to implement the enhanced and/or new policies and procedures, the work group will begin to create training module/s based on the recommendation report and work plan created, per Objective 1.3 for staff at both organizations. This objective aims that at least two trainings will be developed (one specific to each organization) regarding the enhanced and/or new policies and procedures. The work group may identify the need to develop additional training for specific groups that will be infused in to the current training system utilized by each organization. For example, the work group may determine the training for MESA staff is not relevant for MESA volunteers and may tailor the training to meet the needs of the identified group.

After the development of training module/s an appropriate evaluation tool will be developed to measure its effectiveness. The work group will seek approval from the Intersections Executive Committee and OVW respectively for both the products. On approval, training module/s will be implemented. For implementation the work group would identify training teams. The training teams will be responsible for scheduling and implementing the trainings. Once the trainings teams are established, they will implement the enhanced and/or new policy and procedure changes at each organization. The implementation will be pursuant as outlined in the "Piloting Implementation" section of this document on (pg.11). After pilot implementation, an evaluation will be conducted to assess the effectiveness of the trainings in both organizations and appropriate changes will be made as identified during the evaluation process. Finally, as a long-term initiative the enhanced and/or new policies will be implemented organization wide at Imagine!.

Initiative 2:

Enhance organizational culture (physical, attitudinal, communication, and programmatic) to provide safe, welcoming, and accessible services to sexual assault survivors with disabilities.

Rationale: The needs assessment highlighted a need to enhance each organization's culture. Culture broadly encompasses the current physical environmental, communication, and attitudinal cultures which limit our ability to provide safe, accessible and welcoming services to survivors with disabilities. As reflected in the Needs Assessment Report, both MESA and Imagine! are impacted by their current physical environment, communication, and attitudinal cultures which limit each organization's ability to provide safe, accessible, and welcoming services to people with disabilities who have experienced sexual assault. Addressing these limitations at the level of changing the imbedded culture within both organizations will enable the project to create sustainable changes at a systemic level.

For MESA, current limitations include the telephone hotline as the primary way to access services. As well as the propensity of MESA staff and volunteers to serve those they are most comfortable and skilled at serving, which currently does not include people with disabilities. Additionally, MESA often takes an academic approach to providing services and often screens out callers who they deem inappropriate if they are not able to "stay on track" in focusing on their sexual assault histories. Finally, MESA's physical location within the Mental Health Partner's building was a main area of concern highlighted during the needs assessment.

For Imagine!, the limitations include a culture that openly shares client information among staff as well as taking a parental view of consumers in decision-making and sexuality. Additionally, disclosures of sexual abuse at Imagine! are consistently viewed by staff as "allegations" that need to be investigated and verified. The current environment for responding to sexual assault at Imagine! is one of a lack of awareness of the prevalence of this type of abuse along with an overall discomfort among staff with the topic.

We anticipate that changes made in addressing each of the highlighted areas listed above will lead to organizational cultures that are safe, welcoming and accessible to survivors with disabilities. By modifying the way each organization provides services, survivors with disabilities will feel safe and open to seeking support from both organizations. This initiative proposes creating and utilizing a tool to conduct a safety and accessibility assessment at both organizations. In relation to Initiative 1, Intersections aims to create a policy that require the use of this tool on an on- going basis to ensure sustainability in the changes that are implemented in the long-term.

The following are key objectives and rationale of activities that Intersections will utilize to address change of culture at both organizations as identified in the needs assessment to create warm and welcoming environments for survivors with disabilities at both organizations.

Objective 2.1: Create a work group.

Intersections determined it is important to create a work group that will be charged with carrying out the activities associated with each initiative. The “Creation of Work Groups” section of this document on (pg.10) outlines specific criteria and elements that must be present in each work group. In addition to the criteria for all work groups, the work group for Initiative 2 will have representatives who have decision-making authority at their respective organizations, foundational knowledge about working at the intersection, and experience providing direct services at their organization.

Similar to the ways in which other work groups will be created, the current collaboration team members (the MESA representative, the Imagine! representative, and the Project Manager) will outline roles and responsibilities of work group members and recruit individuals for participation. After work group members have been selected, the current collaboration team members will provide an orientation session which will cover information about the development of Intersections, how the group approached and conducted the Needs Assessment, findings from the Needs Assessment, the Strategic Plan, and expectations from the work group members vis-à-vis a timeline, expected output/s and outcome/s.

Objective 2.2: Develop safety and accessibility assessment tool.

Intersections has determined that conducting a thorough safety and accessibility assessment is essential for both organizations to gain a deep understanding of the various environmental barriers that are present at each organization that may deter survivors with disabilities from disclosing sexual assault and accessing supportive services.

The work group will be charged with creating a safety and accessibility assessment tool. Some preliminary discussion and review reflects that many safety and accessibility assessments focus upon physical environments. However, the needs assessment highlighted the need to integrate the perspective of trauma-informed environments and thus, would focus on creating a tool which is both trauma-informed and disability-aware at each organization. Intersections determined that including trauma-informed components to the safety and accessibility tool is an essential element for ensuring a thorough safety and accessibility assessment.

The work group will undertake the following activities:

1. The work group will gather various safety and accessibility assessment tools for review. This will ensure that the group has a starting point from which to work. This review will be a key step in the development of our safety and accessibility review tool.
2. The work group will draft a safety and accessibility assessment tool unique to the Intersections to be used at both MESA and Imagine! after researching already-developed safety and accessibility assessment tools.
3. The work group will ensure the tool includes a trauma-informed lens.

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4. Upon completion of the development of this tool, it will be presented to the Intersections Executive Committee for review and approval.
5. After obtaining the approval from the Executive Committee, the tool will be submitted to the OVW for approval.
6. Upon receiving OVW approval, Intersections will be ready for conducting the safety and accessibility assessment at both organizations.

Intersections envisions this tool will be a sustainable product as each organization will continue to utilize it beyond the implementation phase as an integral part of its ongoing work.

Objective 2.3: Develop a safety and accessibility assessment team.

After the safety and accessibility tool has been created and while waiting for OVW approval, the work group will begin taking steps to formulate an assessment team which will be responsible for conducting the safety and accessibility assessment.

The work group will undertake the following activities:

1. The work group members will develop selection criteria for those who will conduct the safety and accessibility assessment. This team will be called the assessment team.
2. The work group will develop the scope of work including roles and responsibilities for assessment team members.
3. The work group will recruit members based on the criteria that represent both MESA and Imagine!.
4. An orientation for the assessment team to the project will be created. The orientation will include an overview of the grant project; basic information about Imagine! and MESA; present the Needs Assessment findings; present the Strategic Plan, and review expectations vis-à-vis a timeline, expected output/s and outcome/s of assessment team members. After orientation and upon receiving necessary approvals, the assessment team will also be trained in the assessment tool following which they will move forward and complete activities outlined in Objective 2.4.

Objective 2.4: Conduct a safety and accessibility assessment at both organizations.

After the assessment team has been oriented to the project and trained in the safety and accessibility tool approved by OVW, the assessment team will determine timelines for completion of the safety and accessibility assessment at both organizations. After this the team will schedule and conduct the safety and accessibility review at both organizations. Upon completion of the safety and accessibility review, the assessment team and the work group will compile the findings into a thorough report. This report will identify and make recommendations for improvements and changes at both organizations.

Objective 2.5: Create a work plan for implementation of safety and accessibility assessment findings.

Based on the report of recommendations from Objective 2.4 the work group will create a detailed work plan of implementation for each organization. The work plan will outline the steps each organization should take in implementing the findings. The report of recommendations and implementation work plan will be presented to the Intersections Executive Committee for review, feedback and approval. Following this, the report and implementation work plan will be submitted to OVW for approval.

Once all necessary approvals have been obtained, the work group will implement the safety and accessibility assessment work plan in accordance to the “Pilot Implementation” section of this document outlined on (pg.11). Intersections anticipates that the organization wide implementation of this work plan at Imagine! will take place as part of the long-term initiatives.

As a result of this initiative, both MESA and Imagine! will gain a deeper understanding of changes that need to take place in order to effectively work at the intersection of sexual violence against people with disabilities. Further, this will lend to changing the culture at both organizations to be in line with disability-aware and trauma-informed philosophies to provide a safer and welcoming environment to survivors with disabilities. We believe that this will result in survivors with disabilities feeling more comfortable in accessing services from MESA and disclosing incidents of abuse and sexual violence at Imagine!, which will in turn be better prepared to respond effectively.

Initiative 3:

Enhance organizational capacity for working at the intersection of sexual violence and people with disabilities (knowledge, skills, comfort, and confidence).

Rationale: During the needs assessment, we learned that both MESA and Imagine! lack the capacity for working at the intersection of sexual violence and people with disabilities. Capacity includes the time and financial ability, as well as the comfort, nuanced skills, confidence, knowledge, and prioritization within the staff and organizations to provide trauma-informed and disability-aware services for survivor of sexual assault with disabilities.

Several areas were highlighted regarding the lack of capacity specifically for each organization. For MESA, the lack of capacity includes time and resource limitations, the location of service provision, the inability to discern callers with disabilities, and the overall lack of comfort, skills, and knowledge among staff and volunteers in serving people with disabilities.

For Imagine!, the lack of capacity includes time and resource limitations such as high workloads, current staff training, and the need for vicarious trauma support for staff. In addition, Imagine! staff lack knowledge of the dynamics of sexual assault, how to respond to disclosures, and how to provide trauma-informed services beyond state-mandated reporting procedures.

Intersections has determined that this specific initiative is needed because it is central to providing comprehensive and quality services to survivors with disabilities. This initiative will result in an expanded capacity at both organizations to work at the intersection of sexual violence against people with disabilities. As a result, survivors with disabilities will feel more comfortable in seeking supportive services from MESA and disclosing experiences of sexual violence at Imagine! as they will be met with knowledgeable and highly skilled professional staff, who are comfortable in working with and honoring the choices of survivors with disabilities.

The following are the key objectives and rationale of activities towards addressing the issues identified in the needs assessment with regard to enhancing organizational capacity to best serve survivors with disabilities.

Objective 3.1: Create a work group.

Consistent with other objectives outlined in this strategic plan, Intersections will create a work group that will be charged with carrying out the activities associated with this initiative. The “Creation of Work Groups” section of this document (pg.10) outlines specific criteria and elements that must be present in each work group. In addition to the criteria for all work groups, the work group for Initiative 3 will have members who demonstrate foundational knowledge of sexual assault, trauma-informed, and/or disability-aware philosophies. Additionally, members of this work group will have experience with training development.

Similar to the ways in which other work groups will be created, the current collaboration team members (the MESA representative, the Imagine! representative, and the Project Manager) will outline roles and responsibilities for work group members and recruit individuals for participation. After work group members have been selected, the current collaboration team members will provide an orientation session which will cover information about the development of Intersections, how the group approached and conducted the Needs Assessment, findings from the Needs Assessment, the Strategic Plan, and expectations from the work group members vis-à-vis a timeline, expected output/s and outcome/s.

Objective 3.2: Build foundational knowledge and skills for being trauma-informed at both organizations.

In conducting the needs assessment, staff members and volunteers from both organizations indicated low confidence in their skills and knowledge regarding trauma-informed philosophies. These skills are fundamental to working at the intersection of sexual assault against people with disabilities. To address this, the work group will focus on how staff members at both organizations currently receive trainings and where trauma-informed philosophies are included, missing, and/or could be enhanced.

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The work group will undertake the following activities:

1. The work group will begin by collecting and reviewing all relevant trainings that are currently offered at each organization including elective and mandatory trainings.
2. After the review and analysis of current trainings, the work group will identify areas where trauma-informed philosophies can be infused into existing training programs.
3. The analysis and review will also highlight gaps in current trainings where trauma-informed philosophies need to be addressed.
4. The work group will develop curricula to address the gaps.
5. The work group will develop an evaluation tool to assess for effectiveness of the training curricula.
6. The work group will create a work plan for implementation of the curricula.
7. Once the curricula, work plan for implementation and evaluation tool have been developed, they will be presented to the Intersections Executive Committee for review, feedback and approval.
8. Once approval has been obtained from Intersections Executive Committee, all three products will be sent to OVW for approval.
9. Upon obtaining approval from OVW, the work group will pilot the new training curricula at both Imagine! and MESA which will be conducted pursuant to the “Piloting Implementation” section of this document outlined on (pg.11).

In order to ensure sustainability, these trauma-informed trainings will become infused into current training programs at both organizations. In the long-term Intersections will develop a policy and obtain respective approvals for consistent and on-going implementation of new training curricula. This will demonstrate a commitment to understanding how trauma impacts individuals seeking their services and a commitment to responding effectively. Specifically implementing trauma-informed trainings will enhance the capacity for each organization to work at the intersection because staff will feel increasingly comfortable in working with survivors with disabilities. Staff of both organizations will understand common reactions to trauma and how to respond confidently and competently. This reflects how each initiative is interlinked and makes a sustainable impact, with one change catapulting and/or supporting an action for change from another initiative.

Objective 3.3: Build foundational knowledge and skills for being disability-aware at both organizations.

In conducting the needs assessment, it became apparent that staff and volunteers at MESA are uncomfortable and have a low level of confidence for working with people with disabilities. Increasing knowledge and skills for being disability-aware is essential to providing quality services when working at the intersection. It was also apparent that the disability-aware lens is often lost by staff at Imagine! when responding to disclosures of sexual assault. Because of this, it has been determined that staff at both organizations will benefit from additional training regarding disability-aware philosophies.

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The work group will undertake the following activities:

1. The work group will begin by collecting and reviewing all relevant trainings that are currently offered at each organization including elective and mandatory trainings.
2. After the review and analysis of these trainings, the work group will identify areas where disability-aware philosophies can be infused into existing training programs.
3. The analysis and review will also highlight gaps in current trainings disability-aware philosophies need to be addressed.
4. The work group will develop a curricula and work plan for implementation to address the gaps.
5. The work group will develop an evaluation tool to assess for effectiveness of the training curricula.
6. Once the curricula, work plan for implementation and the evaluation tool have been developed, it will be presented to the Intersections Executive Committee for review, feedback and approval.
7. Once approval has been obtained from Intersections Executive Committee, all three products will be sent to OVW for approval.
8. Upon obtaining approval from OVW, the work group will pilot the new training curricula at both Imagine! and MESA which will be pursuant to the "Piloting Implementation" section of this document outlined on (pg.11).

In order to ensure sustainability, the disability-aware trainings will be infused into current training programs at both organizations. In the long-term Intersections will develop a policy and obtain respective approvals for consistent and on-going implementation of new training curricula. This will enhance the capacity for each organization to work at the intersection because staff will feel increasingly comfortable in working with survivors with disabilities because they will have a deeper understanding of disability. Further, both organizations will demonstrate a commitment to creating a culture that is disability-aware and providing services that are inclusive to survivors with disabilities.

Objective 3.4: Build foundational knowledge of sexual violence for Imagine! staff.

The needs assessment highlighted the need to enhance the foundational knowledge about sexual violence for Imagine!'s staff. Intersections recognizes that Imagine! staff do not need to become experts in the field of sexual violence; however, staff will feel more comfortable and become more responsive to disclosures of sexual abuse from people with disabilities if they have a foundation to call upon if/when they receive a disclosure from an Imagine! consumer. This is a key piece of increasing Imagine!'s capacity for serving survivors with disabilities.

The work group will undertake the following activities:

1. The work group will begin by collecting and reviewing all trainings that are currently offered at Imagine! regarding sexual violence.
2. The work group will develop a curriculum specific to sexual violence.

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3. The work group will develop a work plan for implementation to integrate this curriculum in on-going trainings to build the foundational knowledge of sexual violence among staff at Imagine!.
4. The work group will develop an evaluation tool to assess for effectiveness of the training curriculum.
5. Once the curriculum, work plan for implementation and the evaluation tool have been developed, it will be presented to the Intersections Executive Committee for review, feedback and approval.
6. Once approval has been obtained from Intersections Executive Committee, all three products will be sent to OVW for approval.
7. Upon obtaining approval from OVW, the work group will pilot the new training at Imagine! which will be conducted pursuant to the "Piloting Implementation" section of this document outlined on (pg.11).

To ensure sustainability in the long-term, Intersections will develop a policy and obtain respective approvals for consistent and on-going implementation of this new training curriculum which makes this training essential for all staff at Imagine!. This will further shift the culture at Imagine! to indicate to both staff and consumers that Imagine! is a safe place to disclose incidents of sexual abuse and violence. Additionally, in the long-term, Intersections will work on developing a plan of on-going training series which will go beyond the foundational knowledge on sexual violence to support continuing and advanced education in this area for Imagine! staff.

Objective 3.5: Build foundational knowledge of disabilities for MESA staff.

Similar to the finding that Imagine! needs to build upon its foundational knowledge of sexual violence, the needs assessment also highlighted the need for MESA to obtain foundational knowledge about disabilities. Intersections recognizes that it is not realistic or reasonable to expect MESA staff to become experts in the field of disabilities; however, staff will feel more comfortable and have more 'response-ability' to the unique needs of survivors with disabilities if they have a foundation to call upon. Ultimately, this will be a key piece of increasing MESA's capacity for serving sexual assault survivors with disabilities.

The work group will undertake the following activities:

1. The work group will begin by collecting and reviewing all trainings that are currently offered at MESA regarding disabilities.
2. The work group will develop a curriculum specific to understanding disabilities.
3. The work group will develop a work plan for implementation to integrate this curriculum in on-going trainings to build the foundational knowledge of disabilities among staff and volunteers at MESA.
4. The work group will develop an evaluation tool to assess for effectiveness of the training curriculum.

5. Once the curriculum, work plan for implementation and the evaluation tool have been developed, it will be presented to the Intersections Executive Committee for review, feedback and approval.
6. Once approval has been obtained from Intersections Executive Committee, all three products will be sent to OVW for approval.
7. Upon obtaining approval from OVW, the work group will pilot the new training at MESA. Pursuant to the “Piloting Implementation” section of this document outlined on (pg.11) the training will be given to all MESA staff.

To ensure sustainability in the long-term, Intersections will develop a policy and obtain respective approvals for consistent and on-going implementation of this new curriculum which makes this training mandatory for all staff at MESA. By creating a policy which mandates this, MESA will further shift its culture to indicate that MESA is a warm, welcoming and accessible place for sexual violence survivors with disabilities. Additionally, in the long-term, Intersections will work on developing a plan of on-going training series which will go beyond the foundational knowledge on disabilities to support continuing and advanced education in this area for MESA staff.

Initiative 4:

Enhance and formalize the relationship between MESA and Imagine!.

Rationale: Intersections recognizes that in order for all these changes to be long-lasting, meaningful, and sustainable, another core need identified is to enhance the existing relationship between MESA and Imagine!. Currently, MESA and Imagine! lack a solidified partnership, both formal and informal, for working together at the Intersections. Staff members at both organizations focus on offering their respective services and lack awareness and knowledge about services offered by the other organization. Consequently, neither organization perceives the other as a resource for their clients/consumers.

For example, MESA currently does not market its services in places that are frequented by or accessible to people with developmental disabilities in the community. As for Imagine!, it has not historically viewed MESA as a resource for its consumers who have experienced sexual assault. Given that MESA and Imagine!’s partnership is solely grounded in Intersections, it is imperative for this relationship to grow beyond this collaborative venture in order to be felt and valued on all levels of each organization. Ultimately, this will enable our clients/consumers to access services that will be responsive, seamless and fully accessible, provided by a network of highly skilled professionals who are comfortable working with and honoring the choices of survivors with disabilities.

This initiative embarks on the objective of creating opportunities and/or avenues to develop systems and processes at both organizations that will foster formal and informal exchanges between the two organizations. It envisions the creation of a formal system to seek expertise and consultation from each other. It will streamline a process which, when practiced will be institutionalized as part of both organizations, making a sustainable systemic change.

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Simultaneously, events of a social nature are intended at creating a space for building relationships, dialogue, shared learning, raising awareness and increasing visibility of the vision and mission of Intersections. It aims that such social and professional events will be open for participation to all staff, volunteers and interns from both organizations. These will further generate camaraderie and solidarity between staff members from both organizations, leading them to recognize and utilize each other's expertise as and when needed.

Thus, this initiative when partnered with initiatives 1, 2, and 3 will result in laying a solid foundation for a long-term relationship between MESA and Imagine! that will strengthen and expand for future work beyond this grant funding.

The following are the key objectives and rationale of activities for enhancing and formalizing the relationship between MESA and Imagine!.

Objective 4.1: Create a work group

Consistent with other objectives outlined above, Intersections will create a work group that will be charged with carrying out the activities associated with this initiative. The "Creation of Work Groups" section of this document (pg.10) outlines specific criteria and elements that must be present in each work group. In addition to the criteria for all work groups, the work group for Initiative 4 will include, but not be limited to having leadership from both organizations, individuals who are responsible for public relations, individuals who have experience and/or do provide direct services at their respective organization, and volunteers.

Similar to the ways in which other work groups will be created, the current collaboration team members (the MESA representative, the Imagine! representative, and the Project Manager) will outline roles and responsibilities of work group members and recruit individuals for participation. After work group members have been selected, the current collaboration team members will provide an orientation session which will cover information about the development of Intersections, how the group approached and conducted the Needs Assessment, findings from the Needs Assessment, the Strategic Plan, and expectations from the work group members vis-à-vis a timeline, expected output/s and outcome/s.

Objective 4.2: Create systems to enhance communication between staff members of both organizations.

Within the purview of this objective, the work group will brainstorm to identify and develop ways to enhance communication between MESA and Imagine!.

These will include, but not be limited to, the following activities:

1. A 'Meet and Greet Event': open to all staff, volunteers and interns. The work group will plan and develop a 'Meet and Greet Event'; it will promote this event to encourage much participation from both organizations. This activity will create an opportunity for

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both organizations to come together to learn about the shared the vision, mission, and activities of Intersections. This will give the collaboration visibility and raise awareness. It will allow individuals from MESA and Imagine! to acknowledge each other's work and recognize their critical contribution towards the community. The informal social nature of the event will allow people to network, build relationships and develop a shared ownership on the issue of best serving the survivors of sexual assault with disabilities. This activity will also bring people up to date with the project and its future plans. It will help create a buy-in among staff in both organizations which help towards seeking their support and/or participation during the implementation phase.

2. 'Lunch and Learns': The work group will develop a plan to organize 'Lunch and Learns' on a quarterly basis. The 'Lunch and Learns' will be open for all staff, volunteers and interns from both organizations. These content-specific presentations will focus on the broader issue of sexual assault and disabilities with the ultimate aim of building knowledge of staff from both organizations which will facilitate cross sharing of expertise.
3. 'Dialogues at the Intersection': The work group will develop a series of discussion forums to create an opportunity for both MESA and Imagine! to present views and have issue-based discussions. The 'Dialogues at the Intersection' sessions will take place twice a year. This will create a space to dialogue about important and relevant issues and provide an opportunity for ongoing input into the work of the project. This will also help raise and/or address concerns, problem solving, and build on our strengths to better serve survivors with disabilities. The topics of discussion will be related to Intersections and that which stemmed from the Needs Assessment. It will include, but not be limited to, maintaining confidentiality and privacy for survivors; creating a trauma-informed work culture; consent and informed consent, and issues pertaining to guardianship.
4. Cross-organizational presentations: establish a system for a representative from MESA and Imagine! to present a brief overview of their work on the topic of survivors with disabilities and Intersections at each others Orientation Program, Supervisors Meeting, and volunteer training programs. This is aimed at creating awareness among staff, volunteers and interns on the existing partnership between MESA and Imagine!. Intersections foresees this to take place on a continued basis which will reinforce the relationship between both organizations.
5. Electronic Mediums: The work group will brainstorm ways to enhance relationship between MESA and Imagine! through electronic mediums, for example; link to each other's website and/or developing a bi-monthly newsletter on Intersections. This is intended at keeping staff at both organizations engaged and updated with the ongoing activities and overall progress of the project work. This will also provide momentum and motivation to those who are directly involved in implementation work as well as create visibility for the work of Intersections.

The above activities are geared at creating avenues on a continuum to increase opportunities for both organizations to come together and build a relationship beyond the current Intersections collaboration team. The work group will use the above activities as a starting

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point and further build upon them. The work group will generate a detailed report of recommendations and a comprehensive work plan for implementation. The report will include detailed information on how to set up the recommended systems, timelines for completion and develop a tool for evaluation and feedback. Once complete, it will seek approval from the Intersections Executive Committee. Upon obtaining approval from Intersections Executive Committee, the report and work plan for implementation will be sent to OVW for approval. Upon receiving approval from OVW, the work plan will be implemented for both organizations.

Objective 4.3: Create a method for MESA staff and volunteers to obtain consultation from Imagine! about working with survivors with disabilities.

This objective will create a formal system by which MESA staff and volunteers may obtain case-based consultation from Imagine! after receiving a disclosure of sexual assault from a person with disabilities. This consultation process will be designed to share valuable strengths, resources, and expertise which will benefit both organizations and the people we serve on an on-going basis. This will enhance MESA's response to survivors with disabilities and also encourage MESA's staff and volunteers to seek support from Imagine!

To complete this objective, the work group will undertake the following activities:

1. Create a Liaison Team comprised of key Imagine! staff representing critical service areas. For example, the team may include representatives from Case Management, Imagine! Behavioral Health Services (IBHS), Innovations Adult Residential Services, Family Services and /or Day Services in Imagine!.
2. Once the Liaison Team is formed, they will develop a formalized process through which MESA staff can obtain case-based consultations and support. The process will necessarily include how issues of confidentiality and safety will be maintained. It will also need to be in accordance with the legal and mandatory requirements followed in each organization.
3. Simultaneously, the work group will meet with key MESA decision makers to ascertain which MESA staff and volunteers will be able to use this system.
4. Finally, the work group will document the process and develop a report of recommendations along with a work plan for implementation. This report will include detailed information on how to set up the recommended system, timeline for completion and also to develop a tool for evaluation and feedback.
5. Once complete, it will be presented to the Intersections Executive Committee for review, feedback and approval.
6. Once approval has been obtained from Intersections Executive Committee, the report will be sent to OVW for approval.
7. Upon obtaining approval from OVW, the work group will pilot the implementation pursuant to the "Piloting Implementation" section of this document outlined on (pg.11).

Objective 4.4: Create a method for Imagine! staff to obtain consultation from MESA on working with survivors of sexual assault.

The process for completing this objective will parallel that taken in Objective 4.3. The aim of this objective is to create a formal system by which Imagine! staff will obtain case-based consultation from MESA upon receiving a disclosure of sexual assault from a person with disabilities. This will enhance Imagine!'s response to survivors with disabilities and also encourage staff to seek support from those who have expertise in this area.

To complete this objective, the work group will undertake the following activities:

1. Create a Liaison Team comprised of key MESA staff representing Client Services and the executive level decision makers
2. Once the Liaison Team is formed, they will develop a formalized process through which Imagine! staff can obtain case-based consultations and support. The process will necessarily include how issues of confidentiality and safety will be maintained. It will also need to be in accordance to the legal and mandatory requirements followed in each organization.
3. Simultaneously, the work group will meet with key Imagine! decision makers to ascertain which Imagine! staff will be able to use this system.
4. Finally, the work group will document the process and develop a report of recommendations along with a work plan for implementation. This report will include detailed information on how to set up the recommended system, timeline for completion and also to develop a tool for evaluation and feedback.
5. Once complete, it will be presented to the Intersections Executive Committee for review, feedback and approval.
6. Once approval has been obtained from Intersections Executive Committee, the report will be sent to OVW for approval.
7. Upon obtaining approval from OVW, the work group will pilot the implementation pursuant to the "Piloting Implementation" section of this document outlined on (pg.11).

By implementing systems for cross consultation, both organizations will benefit from having access to a wealth of knowledge and expertise at their fingertips. The aim for objective 4.3 and 4.4 is that staff will be trained on how to access consultation from each other. For Imagine!, it will become infused into their trauma-informed response to survivors with disabilities, and for MESA, it will be infused with their disability-aware response to survivors.

Objective 4.5: Create support systems for vicarious trauma for staff at Imagine!

This objective is specific to Imagine! and an area which was identified as a concern for staff at Imagine! in the Needs Assessment and as a strength of MESA. It was recognized that vicarious trauma among staff at Imagine! was essentially due to heavy work loads and burnout paired with a lack of meaningful emotional support. This is seen as an impending barrier for staff to take on additional training, tasks, procedures and functions that will be needed to provide

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consistent and appropriate support for survivors with disabilities. As a result, if these areas are not addressed, they could create significant barriers for Imagine! to be fully successful in achieving systemic change. Since MESA, comparatively, has been able to better manage vicarious trauma and has an established successful supervision model for supporting staff, volunteers and/or interns, it was identified as a resource to provide expertise and support to Imagine!. Intersections believes that providing improved support systems for Imagine! staff to deal with vicarious trauma will eventually lead to greater 'response-ability' and enhanced quality of services towards consumers at the intersection.

To complete this objective the work group will undertake the following activities:

1. The work group will begin by reviewing and identifying areas where Imagine! is currently providing staff support, training, and resources specific to vicarious trauma.
2. The work group will also research best-practices for responding to vicarious trauma and gather information on what other organizations are doing to address issues of vicarious trauma.
3. The work group will review MESA's supervision system as one of the best-practices.
4. Upon completion of this review, the work group will analyze their findings and compile a report and a work plan for implementation which will include specific recommendations for systemic change at Imagine!. Recommendations will include how to utilize the expertise of MESA on an on-going basis to support addressing vicarious trauma specific to working with consumers who have experienced sexual assault. This could include but not be limited to MESA offering trainings to Imagine! staff/supervisors on the issue of vicarious trauma; lending expertise on modeling their supervision system at Imagine!; and/or providing support to Imagine! staff through the MESA hotline.
5. Finally, the work group will document the process and develop a report of recommendations along with a work plan for implementation. This report will include detailed information on how to set up the recommended system, timeline for completion and also develop a tool for evaluation and feedback.
6. Once complete, it will be presented to the Intersections Executive Committee for review, feedback and approval.
7. Once approval has been obtained from Intersections Executive Committee, the report will be sent to OVW for approval.
8. Upon obtaining approval from OVW, the work group will pilot the implementation pursuant to the "Piloting Implementation" section of this document outlined on (pg.11).

This objective will result in an enhancement of Imagine!'s response to vicarious trauma and provide support for Imagine! staff when responding to survivors with disabilities. The partnership of MESA and Imagine!, beyond the direct impact, will further fortify the relationship between them, where they will value each other as a resource and support which would last beyond the scope of this project.

VI. LONG-TERM INITIATIVES

Intersections has developed the following long-term initiatives to focus on beyond the scope of the current funding. These initiatives aim at furthering the provision of seamless, accessible, trauma-informed and disability-aware services for survivors of sexual assault with disabilities, both at our own agencies as well as other service providers in the community. These initiatives are premised on the successes of our short-term initiatives and will be carried out by trained staff at both organizations.

- Intersections will build on the success of the short-term initiatives in the areas of evaluating and establishing policies and procedures, training curricula, formal consultation, and support systems. Due to the size of Imagine!, these initiatives will be piloted in only one area of the organization (Innovations Adult Residential Services) through the end of the no-cost extension period. The goal of this long-term initiative will be to extend these initiatives throughout Imagine!.
- Intersections will evaluate the feasibility of sharing the enhanced policies and procedures which are trauma-informed and disability-aware to other disability and sexual assault service providers in Boulder and Broomfield counties. These organizations could include the local disability advocacy organizations (Association for Community Living), The University of Colorado (Victim Advocacy and Disability Services), and other service provider organizations affiliated with Imagine!
- One of our key findings was that disclosures of sexual abuse at Imagine! are consistently viewed by staff as ‘allegations’ that need to be investigated and verified. This finding points to a culture of questioning versus believing survivors of sexual assault. This culture is, in fact, prevalent throughout organizations serving at-risk adults, especially those required to follow state mandates for reporting abuse and neglect. Intersections envisions building on our existing collaborative relationships (such as the Sexual Assault Response Council, The Elder Justice Coalition, Adult Resources for Care and Help), in order to raise awareness, share information, provide resources and tools for understanding the complexities of the impact of sexual assault on people with disabilities; specifically, on the culture of disbelief within service provider organizations.
- Intersections aims to create a tool-kit to help disability service organizations who serve survivors of sexual assault address issues of vicarious trauma among staff. This may include but not be limited to training modules and workshops, best practices for supervision, and organizational assessments with regard to vicarious trauma.

VII. CONCLUSION

The Intersections strategic plan is multi-pronged and endeavors to integrate and embed trauma-informed and disability-aware philosophies within both organizations. This will be done through enhancing and/or developing our policies and procedures; changing the existing physical, attitudinal, communication and programmatic cultures; building and strengthening organizational connections; enhancing organizational capacity, and developing a network of highly-skilled professionals working with ‘response-ability’ for survivors with disabilities. Intersections envisions that the collective impact of these four initiatives will create sustainable systemic change within both MESA and Imagine!. This collaborative outcome will result in transforming our organizational cultures and enhancing our services to be responsive, accessible and seamless for sexual assault survivors with disabilities. The conceptualization of change within the scope of this project is centered on systems addressing structural inadequacies when responding to the complexities of people at the intersection of sexual assault and disabilities. This change, being process-based, will be gradual and ingrained into the fabric of both organizations which will fulfill our vision to better serve sexual assault survivors with disabilities, making them feel safe, in control, valued, heard and respected.