

NUCOV

Northern Utah's Choices Out of Violence

Strategic Plan

4/2/10



UtahStateUniversity
CENTER FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Northern Utah's Choices Out of Violence, Prevention of Violence and Improved Services to Women with Disabilities in Utah (OVW Cooperative Agreement #2007-FW-AX-K003). Funded under the U. S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women's Education, Training and Enhanced Services to End Violence Against and Abuse of Women with Disabilities program (CFDA #16.529).

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Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Collaboration Members.....	3
Vision and Mission.....	4
History	4
Needs Assessment Summary	6
Methodology	6
Summary of Key Findings.....	7
Goals and Initiatives	9
Short-Term Initiatives	11
Goal 1	12
Goal 2	16
Goal 3.....	19
Goal 4.....	22
Goal 5.....	26
Long-Term Plans.....	29
Conclusion	30

Introduction

Collaboration Members

Northern Utah's Choices Out of Violence (NUCOV) is a collaboration of four partners focused on improving services to people with disabilities and Deaf people who are victims of violence. The four partners are:



Community Abuse Prevention Services Agency (CAPSA)

CAPSA is a private non-profit domestic violence shelter and rape crisis center that serves northern Utah. CAPSA has been providing shelter, advocacy, education and resources for more than 30 years. *CAPSA is where abuse ends and hope begins.*

CAPSA representatives to the collaboration are Jill Anderson, Executive Director, Kathryn Monson, Program Director, and LaLine Ray, NUCOV Project Coordinator.

Utah State University – Center for Persons with Disabilities (CPD)



CPD at Utah State University joins the expertise of researchers and faculty with community partners to address the most difficult challenges facing persons with disabilities

and their families.

CPD representative to the collaboration is Gordon Richins, Consumer Liaison.

OPTIONS for Independence (OPTIONS)



OPTIONS is a nonresidential, consumer driven Center for Independent Living where people with disabilities can learn skills to gain more control and independence over their lives.

OPTIONS representative to the collaboration is Cheryl Atwood, Executive Director.

Utah Division of Services for People with Disabilities – Northern Region (DSPD)



DSPD promotes opportunities and provides support for persons with disabilities to lead self-determined lives. It oversees home and community-based services for more than 4,000 people who have disabilities. Support includes community living, day services, supported employment services, and support for people with disabilities and their families.

DSPD representative to the collaboration is Deborah O'Dell, Administrative Program Manager.

Vision and Mission

NUCOV's vision is:

NUCOV envisions a future where a lasting collaboration of public and private entities work together to ensure people with disabilities and Deaf people who experience violence are aware of and have access to comprehensive services. It believes that as a result of this collaboration people will have access to services no matter where they enter the system and the option to live free of fear and violence.

NUCOV's mission is:

To ensure people with disabilities and Deaf people living in Cache and Rich counties of Utah who are victims of violence are aware of and have access to appropriate services, it is the mission of NUCOV to:

- Enhance the capacity of victim and disability service agencies to reach out and provide the protections and services needed, and
- Improve the coordination of supports and services between victim and disability service agencies.

History

In October 2007 the four partner organizations were awarded a three year cooperative agreement with the U. S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women (OVW). CAPSA has served as the prime contractor with subcontracts going to the other three collaborating organizations. In addition, a subcontract was given to Richard D. Baer, Ph.D., from Baer Management, Inc., who served as a project consultant from October 2007 through August 2009. During this time, he assisted with the original development of the collaboration charter and needs assessment. Technical assistance for the project has been provided by Vera Institute of Justice.

The cooperative agreement includes planning and implementation phases. The first two planning steps, developing a collaboration charter and a focus memorandum, were completed in 2008. Copies of these documents are available from the project or OVW. These steps were vital in helping to build the collaboration and in narrowing the collaboration's focus. This was accomplished through creating vision and mission statements and in defining how collaboration partners would work together throughout the process. A detailed needs assessment plan was also developed and approved by OVW in August 2009. The third step in the planning phase, conducting the needs assessment, is described in NUCOV's needs assessment report, also available from the project or OVW.

This strategic plan is the final step in the planning phase and describes what will take place during the implementation phase. Key findings from the needs assessment have

shaped the goals and initiatives outlined in this plan. These goals and initiatives will guide what changes can be made in the service delivery system in each organization in order to help survivors with disabilities and those who are Deaf access the comprehensive services they require.

Because of the way this grant process is structured, it has allowed collaboration partners the time needed to really focus on problem solving those implications brought up during the needs assessment. Normally, collaboration partners do not have the time to address issues that come up in a timely manner. Often smaller problems end up being passed over until they eventually begin to repeat themselves or become much larger in scope. Spending time in the previous phases of the grant process has given collaboration partners the time to get to know each other and develop an atmosphere of transparency and honesty in order to help each other discuss ideas and steps that can be taken to make the changes needed.

Needs Assessment Summary

NUCOV's needs assessment was designed to collect data in as safe and anonymous a way as possible in order to promote a feeling of safety and comfort for those participating, and to comply with Utah's laws requiring mandatory reporting by all citizens of child, vulnerable adult, and elder abuse.

NUCOV planned and wrote goals and tools for their needs assessment which included instructions and questions tailored to each individual audience. The assessment was conducted over the course of several months. Focus groups and interviews were conducted on four different levels for each organization where available: clients/consumers/survivors, staff, administrators, and boards of directors.

From the data collected, transcripts were made of all but four of the focus groups and interviews. Detailed notes from the note taker and facilitator were used in those instances. As transcripts and notes became available, collaboration partners read through them as a group and notes were taken by each member of the collaboration on what aspects of the groups and interviews had the most meaning for their organizations and for the collaboration as a whole. Results were then synthesized into key findings, including implications.

Methodology

In order to provide a basis for improving services for people with disabilities and Deaf people who have experienced violence, NUCOV established the following needs assessment goals that address the strengths and challenges of each organization as well as the interactive connections among the agencies:

1. Identify the existing strengths within each of the NUCOV organizations that can collectively be utilized to comprehensively serve people with disabilities and those who are Deaf who are victims of violence.
2. Identify existing barriers and challenges within each of the NUCOV organizations that limit their ability to comprehensively serve people with disabilities and those who are Deaf who are victims of violence.
3. Identify the existing working relationships among the collaborating organizations and conceptualize the ideal working relationships necessary to comprehensively serve people with disabilities and those who are Deaf who are victims of violence.

Methods

NUCOV spoke with 129 persons in either a focus group or interview format over the course of eight weeks using specific questions designed by the NUCOV collaboration partners. Participants included persons with disabilities, English and Spanish speaking survivors of domestic violence, organization staff, administration, volunteers, and boards of directors. Participants were recruited by the staff or administrator closest to the individual on a one-on-one basis. Eighteen focus groups as well as eleven interviews were conducted among the collaborative organizations.

NUCOV started conducting focus groups and interviews using separate facilitators but quickly recognized the benefits of having a consistent method. From that point, the focus groups and interviews were conducted by the same facilitator. This facilitator was available to provide additional information and answer questions about each group as collaboration partners analyzed the data.

Method of Data Analysis

NUCOV began analysis of the data by having transcripts made of the recordings from the focus groups and interviews. These transcripts were then read together as a collaborative group and discussion followed as to what information gained was most important for each organization to know. After analyzing the data, NUCOV partners synthesized this data into key findings and implications.

Summary of Key Findings

As the collaboration partners began working with the data collected from the needs assessment focus groups and interviews, one thing in particular stood out. Because CPD is subject to university procedures, influencing systems change for the entire organization is outside the collaboration's ability. A new understanding of how CPD works shows clearly that their focus is primarily research with some direct services. CPD will continue to act as a source of information and resources, but the collaboration will focus more on educating CPD staff to understand the relationships and services of each of the other NUCOV organizations rather than expect CPD staff to contribute to the implementation of systems change. Gordon Richins will continue to be an active participant within the collaboration as well as the contact between NUCOV and CPD within his consumer liaison position.

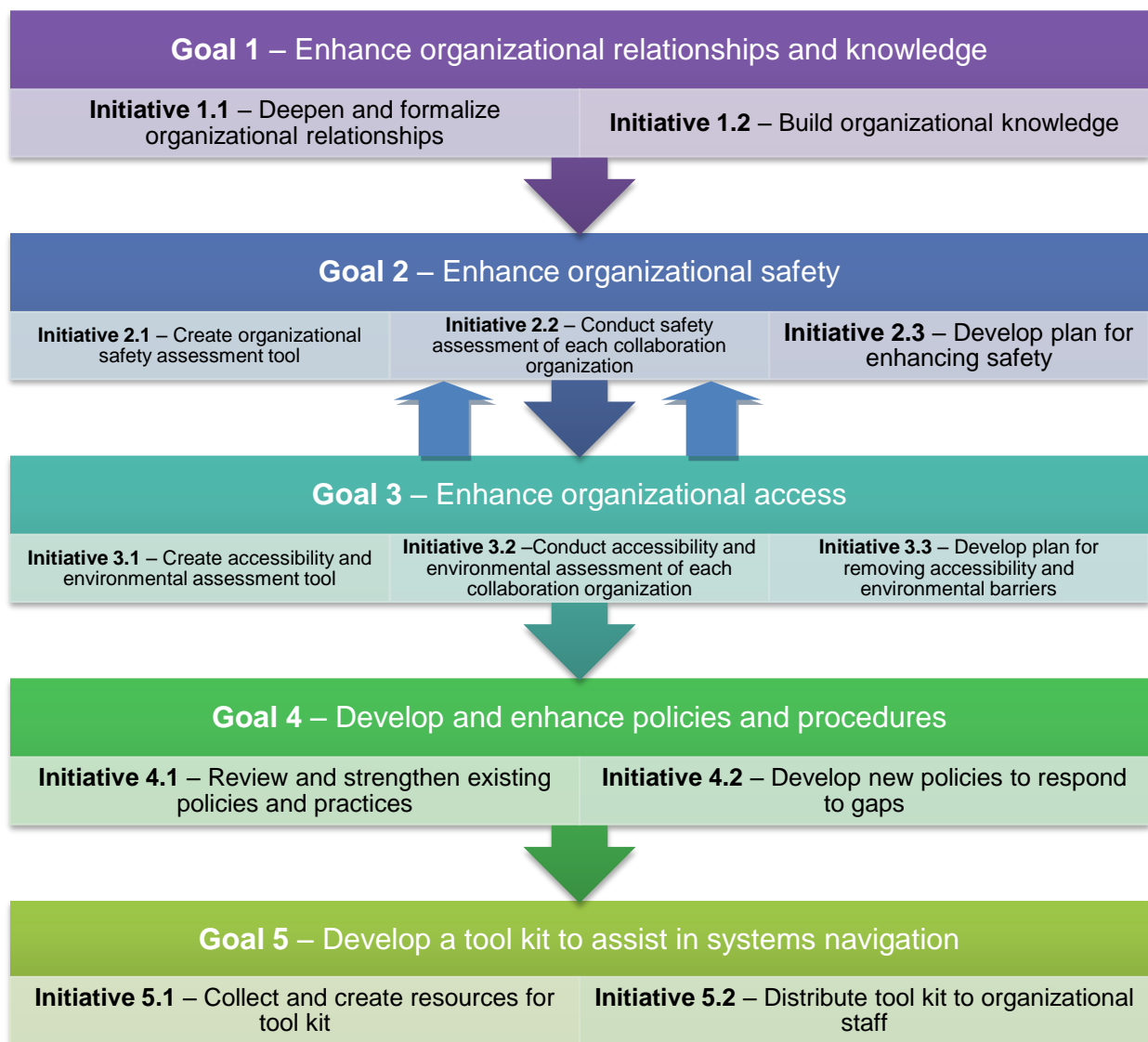
While analyzing the information gleaned from the needs assessment focus groups and interviews, there were times when it was difficult to separate the data into specific findings. Each main theme that appeared was interrelated with all the others to some degree. Information that appeared to fit under one key finding also had a strong implication under a different key finding. The following is a short summary of the key findings.

Key Findings

1. **Targeted policies, procedures and practices** – There is a lack of adequate policies, procedures and practices within the partner organizations for responding to the specific needs of survivors with disabilities.
2. **Resources including funding, time, reallocation of resources** – Demands on the partner organizations are so high that it is extremely challenging for them to address the complex needs of survivors of abuse with disabilities or who are Deaf.
3. **Organizational relationships** – There is a lack of meaningful collaborative working relationships among partner organizations. There is not a clear understanding between abuse and disability organizations regarding services available to survivors/clients/consumers. There is a significant gap for survivors who also have mental health issues.
4. **Training and education** – There is a lack of awareness regarding what services are available for survivors with disabilities and how to access them. There is a fundamental lack of knowledge and understanding at the organizations about disability and abuse which leads to feelings of fear when working with survivors with disabilities.
5. **Environmental issues:**
 - a. **Welcoming** – A welcoming environment is critical to people when accessing services. We found that organizations varied in their ability to provide a welcoming environment.
 - b. **Safety** – Safety concerns are paramount to both survivors and staff. We found that not all organizations are aware of the safety considerations important for dealing with issues of domestic violence and abuse.
 - c. **Accessibility** - There are areas for improvement in our organizations in how accessible services are for survivors with disabilities. There are accessibility concerns present in physical, attitudinal, programmatic, and transportation areas.
6. **Service system navigation** - Navigation of the service system is limited by the lack of knowledge on the part of survivors and staff regarding existing services and resources.

Goals and Initiatives

After discussion and during a site visit from Vera technical assistants, goals with initiatives were decided upon by collaboration partners. These are described in more detail in the next section. NUCOV's short term goals are planned through September 30, 2011. Even though the grant ends September 30, 2010, collaboration partners are committed to working beyond that timeframe in order to achieve the goals outlined and to build a proper foundation for future endeavors.



During the needs assessment process, clear key findings emerged across the disciplines and throughout the focus groups. These goals and initiatives were chosen to

directly address the concerns raised by focus group participants. The anticipated outcome will be sustainable change within and among the collaboration organizations to more effectively serve survivors who are Deaf or have disabilities.

In order to encourage collaborative work among partner staffs as well as increase buy-in, NUCOV will begin the implementation phase with a kick-off event. Strong relationships have been key to the project's success and collaboration partners feel it is important to recognize this lesson learned throughout the planning phase and especially the needs assessment process.

Workgroups will be the medium through which staff will deepen collaborative relationships among the organizations. In order to accomplish the stated goals and achieve sustainable systems change, collaboration partners will structure the work by assigning staff from each organization to workgroups. Collaboration partners will oversee and also participate in the workgroups. These workgroups will be identified by the initiatives they are assigned and will work on tasks directly related to the stated goals and within the timeline given to them.

Though each is interconnected to some degree with the others, the collaboration partners have decided to put the goals and initiatives in a specific order. The order is based on the idea that each goal and initiative builds on the next and will strengthen the foundation being laid for long-term sustainability plans. The exception is with goals 2 and 3 regarding enhancing organizational safety and access. As these two goals are so interrelated, the tools and assessments developed by these workgroups will be conducted concurrently.

Short-Term Initiatives

The initiatives chosen by NUCOV to be completed during the grant implementation phase include many key activities designed to build on each other and lay the foundation for long-term goals. The goals identified here are critical and must happen first in order for future endeavors to be successful. NUCOV partners understand that time is needed to accomplish all that has been identified and they are committed to finishing the work. The tables included here will show months that are outside the current timeframe of this grant, but are included for collaboration planning purposes.

NUCOV will develop two MOUs over the implementation process. The first will outline each organization's roles and responsibilities during the implementation phase. Collaboration partners believe that by deepening and formalizing organizational relationships, a stronger foundation will be laid that will increase the effectiveness of the collaborative partnerships. As organizational knowledge and relationships are built among the staff, an increased understanding of how each organization works and how they can work better together will be gained. It is anticipated that this understanding will expand the commitment of the staffs in enhancing the safety, accessibility, and welcoming environment at each organization.

Before assessments are made regarding these areas of enhancement, the second MOU regarding the sustainability of how those organizational relationships will be maintained will also be developed. This will include details regarding on-going meetings and trainings, tool kit updates, universal policies and procedures, and continued working relationships. NUCOV anticipates the organizational commitment to work at the intersection of abuse and disabilities will become part of the service provision culture within our communities. The best assurance of sustainability is the collaboration partners' vision and passion for this work.

While enhancing safety, accessibility, and welcoming environments is critical to providing services for survivors with disabilities, it is also essential to ensure that proper policies and procedures are in place to guide staff. Existing policies and procedures, including practices, need to be evaluated and revised as necessary, and new policies and procedures to cover any gaps not already addressed will need to be created. These will include any uniform policies that will be used by each organization in order to ensure that individuals seeking services will be provided optimal services regardless of where they enter the service system. In order to help staff facilitate easier navigation of the service system for survivors with disabilities, a tool kit will be developed that will include information for accessing services from organizations outside the collaboration.

Goal 1 - Enhance organizational relationships and knowledge										
Initiative	Steps	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1.1 Deepen and Formalize Organizational Relationships	1. Develop MOU for implementation	X								
	2. Hold "kick-off" event									
	a. Determine the goals and desired outcomes of the event	X	X							
	b. Develop logistics and plan agenda	X	X							
	c. Convene the event		X	X						
	3. Convene collaboration team in-service meetings (Munch & Mingle)									
	a. Develop agenda and structure for collaboration team meetings			X						
	b. Collect lessons learned and give feedback to the workgroups			X		X		X		
	4. MOU for sustainability of organizational relationships					X	X			
	5. Form interdisciplinary workgroups to address product development								X	
1.2 – Build Organizational Knowledge	1. Convene a series of trainings to build core competencies of staff									
	Series One - DV/SA and Disability 101									
	a. Determine the curriculum to use		X							
	b. Get OVW approval			X						
	c. Deliver the training				X	X				
	Series Two - Safety Planning and Mandatory Reporting									
	a. Determine the curriculum to use			X						
	b. Get OVW approval				X					
	c. Deliver the training						X	X		
	Series Three - Specific disabilities; resources; providing services									
	a. Determine the curriculum to use				X					
	b. Get OVW approval					X				
	c. Deliver the training								X	X
	2. Begin workgroup meetings									
	a. Orientation to roles and responsibilities			X	X					
	b. Learning to work as a collaborative team				X	X	X	X	X	X
3. Workgroup training on intersection of DV and Disability										
a. Gather feedback from workgroups on what they need training on				X	X	X	X	X	X	
b. Train according to needs				X	X	X	X	X	X	

Goal 1 – Enhance organizational relationships and knowledge

An important lesson learned by the collaboration partners is that working together as a group, though sometimes more time consuming than working individually, is essential to the quality of the work outcomes. During the grant process, collaboration partners discovered that in order to work in a truly collaborative way, more time was required because of the need for consensus. When partners split up tasks, the time gained initially was lost when the partners came back together and attempted to reach a consensus on the work done. In addition, the process itself was key to making this discovery. Because of the importance of this lesson, collaboration partners have deemed it valuable to afford these opportunities to the workgroups, and have built in time for staff to learn and work on relationship building. NUCOV feels that in order to ensure their staffs have a deeper understanding of the project and to help them know what to expect while implementing systems change, deepening relationships and building a knowledge base for each organization must be the first step.

Initiative 1.1 – Deepen and formalize organizational relationships

The first task for NUCOV during the implementation phase of this grant is to develop an implementation memorandum of understanding between each of the collaboration organizations. The purpose of this MOU will be to help staff and boards gain greater clarity on collaboration goals and processes throughout the implementation phase. A second MOU will be developed later in this initiative, but will focus on the sustainability of the organizational relationships and the system changes made. The implementation MOU will outline how workgroups will be organized and operate. This will include a commitment by collaboration partners to support staff with time and resources necessary to accomplish workgroup tasks. Decisions will be made concerning shared space for meetings as well as the sharing of other resources including technical assistance. Specific details will be outlined within the implementation MOU.

In order to better present the goals and processes outlined in the grant, NUCOV will hold a kick-off event. All organizations involved will be introduced to each other and key stakeholders from the community and legislative bodies will be invited to attend. This event will have a carefully planned agenda to meet the goals and desired outcomes decided upon by collaboration partners. The purpose of the kick-off event is to showcase the needs assessment results and present the implementation plan, as well as to generate enthusiasm and support for the project. In addition, this event allows the various staffs, boards, and other community stakeholders to come together to initiate collaborative relationships on a face-to-face basis. Legislative representatives will be invited in order to create support and understanding of identified needs of survivors with disabilities. Additionally, support for future and expanded projects on a statewide basis will be cultivated.

Collaboration partners feel it is imperative to continue relationships among organizations on a long-term basis. To accomplish this, collaboration team in-service meetings will be held. Initially, they will be held every other month and quarterly thereafter. As more effective services are developed, NUCOV expects the numbers of survivors with disabilities seeking services will be higher than what is currently being seen. This will be a challenge for staff to work with and having meetings where specific examples can be shared will be invaluable. The purpose of these meetings will be to not only continue building relationships between organization staffs, but to get the groups together to talk about what they have learned, what barriers they are faced with, what barriers they were able to overcome and how, and suggestions on what to change in order to improve the services at each organization and the relationships between them. While they will be informal discussions, meetings will be structured with agendas and a regular schedule, and will have confidentiality rules that must be followed by the assigned staff from each organization. Those attending will collect lessons learned at these meetings and take them back to the staff of their respective organizations. Some of the information gathered will be used to help workgroups as they develop solutions to the tasks assigned to them.

A memorandum of understanding for sustainability of the relationships between each organization will be developed after the collaboration team in-service meetings have begun. This MOU will clarify the roles and responsibilities of each organization and outline their commitment to long-term systems change.

Administrators from each organization will assign their staff to interagency workgroups with representation from each organization. These workgroups will work on various goals the collaboration has set. During this beginning stage, those in the workgroups will focus on developing solutions and products based on their assigned tasks. Complete descriptions will be developed by collaboration partners to build a framework that will inform workgroup participants as to who the decision makers are and how decisions will be made. It will also include background information on why they are working on the assigned tasks and how they are interrelated with the other initiatives.

Participation in the workgroups will make it possible for staff to be more effective as well as efficient in their future work in serving survivors with disabilities by allowing them the time to discuss, problem-solve, and be a part of the decision making process. An additional by-product of these workgroups will be establishing ongoing organizational relationships and gaining a more clear understanding of each organization. Because of the structure of this grant process, collaboration partners have been able to allow time within their regular work scope to develop collaborative relationships. In order to create organizational systems change, administrators are committed to modifications of staff responsibilities that will allow them time to establish similar collaborative relationships.

Initiative 1.2 – Build organizational knowledge

During the needs assessment, it became clear that staff from all organizations felt a need to better understand the implications of working with survivors who have disabilities or who are Deaf. Organizational knowledge will be developed through education that will not only increase the capacity of staff to serve survivors with disabilities, but will also inform the work assigned to the individual workgroups. The core competency trainings will be developed and presented prior to the final organization of the workgroups.

In order to help each organization's staff develop these core skills, three sets of competency trainings will be given:

- The first series will focus on domestic violence/sexual assault and disability 101.
- The second series will be about safety planning and mandatory reporting. In particular, safety planning will be specifically for staff in-house and in the field and mandatory reporting training will help staff understand what it means and how to provide services after reporting. This is an important step to staff being able to understand completely the universal mandatory reporting policy NUCOV will develop and implement.
- The third series will be about specific disabilities and limitations, resources available, and how to meet survivor's needs by providing services.

NUCOV will determine the curriculum that will be used and get OVW approval before presenting the trainings. NUCOV partners will gather existing materials already being used by their agencies as well as curriculum developed during an earlier grant by some of the collaboration partners. A review of these curricula will be conducted by the partners to determine which will be best to teach the core competencies of the staff at each organization. Trainings will be facilitated by collaboration partners and staff.

Following the competency trainings the workgroups will be organized and will begin meeting to work on the goals and tasks assigned to them. Each workgroup will be given an orientation to help them understand their roles and responsibilities, as well as the timeline they will be working under and the resources available to them. Continued meetings will allow staffs to get to know each organization better and what services are or are not available at each organization. Regular feedback from these meetings will be requested by collaboration partners. These meetings will be held in conjunction with the core competency trainings.

Collaboration partners will request regular feedback from each workgroup. Based on this feedback, on-going training will be developed to meet identified needs for helping staff work at the intersection of domestic violence and disabilities. While some training may be for a specific workgroup to help them address tasks given to them, some training may also be done on an organizational level and a collaboration level as needed. This intersection training will be adjusted according to the audience and will be administered by collaboration partners.

Goal 2 – Enhance organizational safety									
Initiative	Steps	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
2.1 – Create Organizational Safety Assessment Tool	1. Determine parameters of the safety assessment tool	X							
	2. Collect and review any existing safety assessment tools	X	X						
	3. Create and review safety assessment tool		X	X					
	4. Send to OVW for approval			X					
	5. Assemble and train safety assessment team				X				
2.2 – Conduct Safety Assessment of Each Collaboration Organization	1. Conduct safety assessment for CAPSA				X				
	2. Conduct safety assessment for DSPD				X				
	3. Conduct safety assessment for OPTIONS				X				
2.3 – Develop Plan for Enhancing Safety	1. Analyze information found in safety assessment					X			
	2. Prioritize findings for making changes					X			
	3. Create plan for implementation for necessary changes					X			
	4. Begin implementation based on existing resources						X	X	X

Goal 2 – Enhance organizational safety

During the needs assessment process, it was notable that disability staff were particularly concerned about safety when providing services, both in-house and in the field. They were concerned about safety for themselves and safety for the survivor and how to optimize it. Survivors especially indicated that safety is critical to feeling welcome and making it possible to receive services. If staff is prepared, confident, and safe, clients will feel safer in disclosing their abuse. Because of the close relationship of safety and accessibility, the assessment work described here will be conducted concurrently with the work described in goal 3.

Initiative 2.1 – Create organizational safety assessment tool

To determine what changes need to be made at each organization to enhance the safety of staff and survivors, workgroups will create a safety assessment tool. To begin, they will determine the parameters of the tool. Consideration will be given to language and physical environment needs. Key to encouraging feelings of safety is to be mindful of language used. For instance, it is important to not use language that would inadvertently cast blame on survivors. Along with language considerations, critical to safety of staff and survivors is the structure and safety elements applied in the physical environment.

Workgroup participants will then collect and review existing safety assessment tools available. After a thorough review, these tools will be used as a template in creating a safety assessment tool that can be used by each collaborative organization. This will then be reviewed for any necessary changes. Following approval by OVW, a team will be assembled and trained on how to do safety assessments.

Initiative 2.2 – Conduct safety assessment of each collaboration organization

Safety assessments of CAPSA, DSPD, and OPTIONS will be conducted by the team using the safety assessment tool as described under initiative 2.1. Administrators and key staff from each organization will be part of the assessment team in order to utilize individual expertise and improve the effectiveness of the assessments. Assessments will be scheduled immediately following OVW approval.

Initiative 2.3 – Develop plan for enhancing safety

After safety assessments have been conducted of each collaborative organization, the results will be analyzed and the findings will be prioritized as to which changes need to

be made first. From the findings, a plan will be created for implementing the necessary changes based on existing resources. Any long-term changes that need to be made will initially be based on existing resources, but will also be prioritized based on any new resources that may become available in the future.

Goal 3 – Enhance organizational environment									
Initiative	Steps	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
3.1 – Create Accessibility and Environmental Assessment Tool	1. Determine parameters of the accessibility and environmental assessment tool	X							
	2. Collect and review any existing accessibility and environmental assessment tools	X	X						
	3. Create and review accessibility and environmental assessment tool		X	X					
	4. Send to OVW for approval				X				
	5. Assemble and train accessibility and environmental assessment team				X				
3.2 – Conduct Accessibility and Environmental Assessment of Each Organization Collaboration	1. Conduct accessibility and environmental assessment for CAPSA				X				
	2. Conduct accessibility and environmental assessment for DSPD				X				
	3. Conduct accessibility and environmental assessment for OPTIONS				X				
3.3 – Develop Plan for Removing Accessibility and Environmental Barriers	1. Meet with each organization to review findings from the accessibility and environmental assessment					X			
	2. Prioritize findings for making changes					X			
	3. Create plan for implementation for necessary changes					X			
	4. Begin implementation based on existing resources						X	X	X

Goal 3 – Enhance organizational environment

A welcoming environment is critical to feeling safe. It is also key to enhancing accessibility, not only physically, but attitudinally and programmatically. During the needs assessment, staff and survivors/clients/consumers identified the physical challenges of existing buildings and facilities, including physical barriers, parking, and building navigation. Staff also portrayed a certain amount of reluctance or fear due to their perceived lack of knowledge in being able to serve people with disabilities. Clients mentioned the need for staff to have diversity training in order to better understand cultural, socioeconomic status, as well as disability accommodation differences. It was noted more than once that if the environment is attractive, organized, and looks “normal,” it feels more like home. This allows survivors/clients/consumers a place where they can feel safe and where accessibility barriers on all levels can be minimized, if not eliminated altogether. Because of this, safety considerations will be closely tied to this assessment process and both assessments will be conducted concurrently.

Initiative 3.1 – Create accessibility and environmental assessment tool

To determine what changes need to be made at each organization to enhance the organization’s accessibility and environment, workgroups will create an accessibility and environmental assessment tool. Environmental considerations will not only revolve around ensuring the organizations are physically accessible, but also welcoming and inviting.

Initially, the workgroups will determine the parameters of the assessment tool. They will then collect and review existing accessibility and environmental assessment tools available. After reviewing existing tools, an accessibility and environment assessment tool which can be used by each collaborative organization will be created and reviewed for any necessary changes. Once a tool has been created, and OVW has approved, a team will be assembled and trained on how to conduct assessments based on the tool created.

Initiative 3.2 – Conduct accessibility and environmental assessment of each collaboration organization

Accessibility and environment assessments of CAPSA, DSPD, and OPTIONS will be conducted by the team using the assessment tool as described under initiative 3.1. Administrators and key staff from each organization will be part of the assessment team in order to utilize individual expertise and improve the effectiveness of the assessments. Assessments will be scheduled immediately following OVW approval.

Initiative 3.3 – Develop plan for removing accessibility and environmental barriers

After accessibility and environment assessments have been conducted of each collaborative organization, the assessment team will meet with the boards, administration, and staff of each organization in order to share their findings. These findings will be prioritized as to which changes need to be made first. From the findings, a plan will be created for implementing the necessary changes based on existing resources. Any long-term changes that need to be made will initially be based on existing resources, but will also be prioritized based on any new resources that may become available in the future.

Goal 4 – Develop and enhance policies and procedures to guide staff while providing services to survivors with disabilities													
Initiative	Steps	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
4.1 – Review and Strengthen Existing Policies and Practices	1. Gather existing policies and procedures from each organization	X											
	2. Analyze the effectiveness of existing policies	X	X										
	3. Review legal requirements with workgroups regarding existing policies and procedures	X	X										
	4. Collect "best practices" and resources for each policy	X	X	X									
	5. Cross reference and incorporate "best practices" with current policies		X	X	X								
	6. Revise existing policies and procedures		X	X	X								
	7. Vetting through appropriate channels				X	X							
	8. Revise if necessary					X							
	9. Final approval by appropriate channels					X	X						
	10. Send to OVW for approval						X						
	11. Trainings to "roll out" enhanced policies								X	X			
	12. Integrate enhanced policies - develop on-going training and feedback schedule									X	X		
4.2 – Develop New Policies to Respond to Gaps	1. Develop list of needed policies				X	X							
	2. Review legal requirements regarding policies and procedures				X	X							
	3. Collect "best practices" and resources for each policy					X							
	4. Look at existing policies from other organizations					X	X						
	5. Draft policies						X	X					
	6. Staff review of drafted policies							X					
	7. Vetting of new policy draft through appropriate channels								X				
	8. Revise if necessary									X			
	9. Final approval by appropriate channels									X	X		

10. Send to OVW for approval											X		
11. Trainings to "roll out" enhanced policies												X	X
12. Integrate enhanced policies - develop on-going training and feedback schedule													X

Goal 4 – Develop and enhance policies and procedures to guide staff while providing services to survivors with disabilities

NUCOV partners have determined through the needs assessment process that all of the collaboration organizations have existing policies that are lacking in their ability to address serving survivors with disabilities and who are Deaf. In response to concerns expressed by focus group participants, it has been determined that a review of relevant existing policies and procedures is essential to understanding the limitations and strengths of each policy and what can be changed to strengthen them. While collaboration partners understand that areas of all relevant policies and procedures may need attention, the workgroups will prioritize the most pressing identified areas relative to service provision for survivors with disabilities. Once a review has been completed, workgroups will revise those that need to be changed and create new policies and procedures to address the needs for each organization to better serve survivors with disabilities or who are Deaf.

NUCOV has decided to use two separate workgroups to accomplish this goal. The first workgroup will focus on existing policies and will be comprised of staff from each organization. Collaboration partners will determine the initial policies and procedures that need to be reviewed based on needs assessment findings. This group will review and work on the revision process of existing policies and procedures. The second workgroup will consist of collaboration partners and others as assigned, who will utilize the recommendations made by the first workgroup as well as feedback received from the interagency in-service meetings regarding the need for the creation of new policies and procedures.

Initiative 4.1 – Review and strengthen existing policies and practices

To begin the review of existing policies and procedures, workgroups will be given policies and procedures from each organization. They will then analyze the effectiveness of the policies in serving survivors with disabilities. The workgroups will prioritize those policies that have the greatest impact upon service provision. Consideration will also be given to the organization's ability to implement and sustain the change. Collaboration partners will review and approve the recommended priorities.

Workgroups will then collect best/promising practices and any other resources that could strengthen each policy. Collaboration partners will encourage them to utilize Vera technical assistants, as needed, as well as other grantees and the Accessing Safety Initiative website. The best/promising practices will be cross referenced and incorporated into the existing policies. Before remodeling the policies, workgroups will review any legal requirements necessary regarding the policies and procedures. Revisions of the existing policies will then take place and a draft of the new and improved policies and procedures will be presented to the appropriate channels for

approval. Those channels will include boards of directors, administration, and an attorney who will check for legal compliance. The revised policies and procedures will be presented to front line service providers from each organization to gain their feedback regarding the feasibility of implementing these changes. Additional revisions may be made based on their recommendations.

Further revisions will be made as necessary and a final approval by appropriate channels will be made before the revised policies and procedures will be sent to OVW for approval. Once approval has been received from OVW, trainings for each organization on the enhanced policies will take place in order to ensure sustainability. These enhanced policies will then be integrated into on-going trainings and feedback sessions in order for current staff to receive updates and review, and to incorporate policy training into new employee orientation. It is expected that through this process, these policies will become integrated into organizational practice.

Initiative 4.2 – Develop new policies to respond to gaps

The process for developing new policies to cover gaps the existing policies cannot cover will be similar to the process described for initiative 4.1. However, the workgroup developing the policies will consist mainly of collaboration partners who also fill an administrative role from within the organizations. NUCOV believes it is important that collaboration partners be the main creators of new policies to help ensure sustainability for the changes being implemented. In addition, as administrators, they have previous skills, knowledge, and experience necessary for policy development. Throughout this collaborative process the partners have also been able to understand the legal and logistical requirements that are critical to consider when writing new policies and procedures. The development of these policies and procedures will be based on recommendations made by the workgroup that reviews current policy as well as suggestions made at interagency in-service meetings.

The first step will be to develop a list of needed policies. Initially, this list will be based on the needs assessment findings, but will be pared down based on workgroup feedback. Legal requirements regarding the policies and procedures will then be reviewed, and best/promising practices and resources for each policy will be collected. Policies from other organizations within the community and within this grant process will also be reviewed for possible ideas. New policies and procedures will then be drafted.

Direct service staff, or staff most affected by each policy, will be asked to review and evaluate the policies for any changes needed based on their experiences. Revisions will be made by collaboration partners before being presented to the appropriate channels for approval. Based on their feedback, revisions will be made as necessary. The new policies and procedures will then be sent to OVW for approval. Trainings for the new policies will take place in each organization and will be integrated into on-going policy trainings and feedback sessions.

Goal 5 – Develop a tool kit to assist in systems navigation									
Initiative	Steps	Aug 2011	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
5.1 – Collect and Create Resources for Tool Kit	1. Determine vision and purpose for the tool kit	X							
	2. Survey any existing formats	X							
	3. Survey existing resources in the community	X							
	4. Identify organizations to engage in interactive discussion groups	X							
	5. Develop questions for interactive discussion groups		X						
	6. Develop a detailed agenda for organization engagement		X						
	7. Invite identified resource organizations to inform the workgroups		X						
	8. Hold interactive discussion groups			X					
	9. Develop a proposed outline for contents of kit			X					
	10. Develop tool kit				X				
	11. Send to OVW for approval					X			
	12. Develop up-datable training curriculum					X			
	13. Develop a process for updating tool kit and tool kit training						X		
5.2 – Distribute Tool Kit to Organizational Staff	1. Train staff on using tool kit					X			
	2. Convene meetings within individual collaboration organizations to get feedback and update tool kit (quarterly moving to annually)							X	X
	3. Convene meetings with all stakeholders to get feedback and update tool kit (semi-annually)							X	X

Goal 5 – Develop a tool kit to assist in systems navigation

Difficulty in navigating the service system was identified by survivors, consumers, and clients from each organization. Administrators feel it is vital that staff are able to help them navigate the system more effectively. At the same time, staff identified their need for more information in order to accomplish that goal. In particular, staff voiced the need to have more clarification on what is and is not available throughout the community and how to integrate their information with other groups.

To address this issue, collaboration partners have decided to create a tool kit that will assist and guide staff in helping those they work with navigate the service system. This tool kit will not only be a guide to services but will include key questions staff can ask or alternate ways of saying things in order to get the information needed.

Initiative 5.1 – Collect and create resources for tool kit

The first step in creating a tool kit for staff is to determine the purpose and vision of the tool kit. To do this, workgroups will survey any existing tool kit examples that may be available, both from previous grantees and from the local community. Other resources in the community will also be explored and any new insights on navigating the system will be documented. For example, during a previous experience working with a local agency, it was discovered they had something called “Z funds” that was important for clients to ask for. No one knew what the name meant, not even the agency that had them, but by asking for them clients were able to move through the system a little easier. This type of information can be very valuable.

In order to better understand what local agencies require of clients coming to them, NUCOV has decided to invite key agencies to participate in interactive discussion groups. Workgroups will identify the agencies they would like to invite and then develop probing questions to be used during the discussion groups in order to elicit the information needed. Agendas of these discussion groups will also be developed before the agencies are invited to attend. In order to gain a better understanding of the agencies involved, it is important that these discussion groups are interactive and not just presentations. Workgroups will focus on creating agendas and questions that will allow for that to happen.

Once information and resources have been gathered, workgroups will develop a proposed outline for the tool kit contents. This will include describing what will be in it as well as how it will look and what format(s) it will be in. With changes constantly happening throughout the community, this tool kit must be a dynamic, living document that can be easily updated and maintained. Preferably, it would be in electronic format with everyone having the ability to put it in hard copy. One aspect of the tool kit would

be the ability for staff to be able to have discussions about the contents as new insights are discovered. This could be accomplished by using an online forum or other similar options.

Once the tool kit has been developed, it will be submitted to OVW for approval. Following the approval process, a training curriculum will be outlined. Initially, the training will focus on how to use the tool kit and why it was developed. It will include training on how to develop advocacy techniques and skills, and will be an on-going, evolving process. The training curriculum will be updated as the tool kit itself is updated, so as to keep it up to date on needed, relevant information. It will also be designed to fit within the regular training structure and organizational culture of each organization in the collaboration.

Finally, within the sustainability MOU, details will outline who will be responsible for making sure the updates are completed and how they will be done.

Initiative 5.2 – Distribute tool kit to organizational staff

Using the training developed in initiative 5.1, staff at each collaborative organization will be trained on using the tool kit developed by workgroups. A quarterly meeting will be held within individual collaboration organizations to gather feedback on how the tool is working and to update sections with any information changes. This meeting will gradually be changed into an annual meeting as the tool kit and its contents are better solidified. The focus of the meetings will be on finding out what is working, what is not, and what information from the organization needs to be taken to the semi-annual stakeholders meeting.

Semi-annual stakeholders meetings will be held in order to gather the feedback received during the quarterly organizational meetings and to update the tool kit so each collaborative organization knows what changes in information have taken place since the last update. These meetings will also explore what is and is not working among the organizations, their relationships with each other and with other agencies in the community.

Long-Term Plans

The short-term initiatives described in this plan will deepen the relationships between the collaboration organizations and help staff develop skills necessary to continue working collaboratively. These relationships and skills are the foundation NUCOV will use to continue with long-term goals. NUCOV has identified several long-term activities that will be important in order to continue implementing the necessary systems changes. Some activities, already identified above, will start within this grant period but be on-going, long-term in scope. These will include on-going trainings, safety and accessibility assessments and necessary changes. It is NUCOV's goal to have these become part of the organizational culture at each organization.

Though currently operating as a local collaboration, each collaboration partner hopes to be able to share the information gained from this grant process, as well as lessons learned and policies and procedures developed during the implementation phase, with other organizations throughout the state of Utah. Replicating this work throughout the state would enable other organizations to use the best/promising practices NUCOV has identified and created through this grant.

In addition, items of interest that came up repeatedly during the needs assessment were the areas of mental health and law enforcement. While these areas need more work in order to continue making systems changes that will enhance services to survivors with disabilities, they do not fall within NUCOV's focus under this grant's parameters. Future funding will allow the collaboration to address these critical areas at a later date. NUCOV will look for new funding in order to find ways of working on these items of interest.

NUCOV has determined that the collaborative setting developed during this grant process has been rewarding and beneficial for each organization involved. Collaboration partners have decided to continue to work together in the future and will develop a sustainability MOU outlining the roles and responsibilities needed in order to properly invest the time and resources of the individual organizations.

While some initiatives started during this grant process will take longer to implement than others, collaboration partners will continue to look for additional funding to continue the implementation and training. Additional money could potentially allow NUCOV to reach out to other organizations in the community that are utilized by survivors/clients/consumers in order to create better, meaningful relationships and to continue to enhance services. In addition, NUCOV will look for other ways to leverage resources available in the community. Knowing how much community buy-in can support projects like these, collaboration partners will continue being ambassadors for each other's organizations and trust that it will lead to an increased awareness of the project and the needs of survivors with disabilities.

Conclusion

During NUCOV's needs assessment, the intense level of passion expressed in each of the focus groups from the boards, administration, staffs, and in particular the survivors/clients/consumers, has led to increased resolve to create safe and accessible services for survivors with disabilities and those who are Deaf. The goals and initiatives outlined in this strategic plan were chosen specifically to address the concerns raised by needs assessment participants. Throughout the grant process, NUCOV has learned many lessons that have allowed them to work more effectively together and are excited to give their staffs the same opportunity. With this increased passion and a better understanding of the needs of survivors with disabilities, collaboration partners trust that through the implementation of these initiatives, systems change will occur and be sustained. NUCOV believes that as a result of this collaboration people will have access to services no matter where they enter the system and the option to live free of fear and violence. This will benefit survivors with disabilities in our community and will ripple throughout the state.