

September 9, 2016

To: Sylvia Pauling

Office on Violence Against Women (OVW)

Re: Narrowing the Focus Memo- Triumph Omaha Collaboration

## **History of the Collaboration**

In 2015, the Domestic Violence and Behavioral Health Collaboration Project was proposed in response to the Training and Services to End Violence Against Women with Disabilities Grant Program Solicitation by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.

## **Collaboration Partners**

The Triumph Omaha partnership is composed of three agencies: The Women's Center for Advancement, Community Alliance, and Catholic Charities. Each organization provides a unique perspective to the collaboration.

The Women's Center for Advancement (WCA) will bring their experience around domestic violence to the project. The WCA is the largest service provider for survivors of domestic violence in Douglas County, which is located in Omaha, NE. The WCA takes a trauma-informed approach to all of its services.

Community Alliance brings its experience in serving adults with serious mental illness. Community Alliance is the only organization in Omaha, NE with a sole focus on this population. They believe in the potential of recovery for all individuals who have a mental illness and have played a critical role in the Omaha community since 1981.

Catholic Charities will be bringing their experience around mental illness and co-occurring substance use disorders to the work of the collaboration. Founded in 1926, Catholic Charities provides human services programming to individuals in the Omaha area. Catholic Charities served approximately 5,500 individuals needing behavioral health services in 2014.

## **Target Population**

Triumph Omaha is dedicating its efforts towards domestic violence victims with co-occurring behavioral health needs, specifically those with severe and persistent mental illness (SPMIs) and/or a substance use disorder (SUD) in Douglas County, Omaha, NE. This area of focus was chosen because each organization in the collaboration comes into frequent contact with individuals who have a SMPI and/or SUD. The agencies that make up Triumph Omaha have a rich history of serving the people of Douglas County and are well positioned to create sustainable change for the target population.

All agencies involved in this partnership believe that collaboration is key in addressing the needs of survivors of domestic violence who have a SPMI and/or SUD. When working with individuals in this population who are in crisis, it can be difficult to develop a plan to serve them. In turn, this can affect the individual's ability to be safe.

In addition, SPMIs affect executive level thinking, and a person can become immobilized if they are presented with a difficult situation. The individuals that represent this population are at a high risk of being victimized, especially if they suffer from a SUD as well. Individuals who have a mental health and/or substance use disorder make up a large percentage of the population that the Women's Center for Advancement, Catholic Charities, and Community Alliance serve.

Triumph Omaha believes that every individual served by one of the organizations in the collaboration should be treated as having some level of trauma or behavioral health need. The collaboration recognizes that all clients have diverse strengths and needs. We are committed to creating a system of coordinated, person-centered care for the individuals we serve who are accessing mental health and domestic violence services.

Respectfully submitted,

Johanna Jones

Project Director, Triumph Omaha, Douglas County, Omaha, NE

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