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Assessing for Core Practices in Criminal Justice System Response to Domestic Violence: Using the Best Practice Assessment Guides to Analyze 911 & Patrol

Maren Woods, Courtney Chasse and Officer Katie Nash

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>> Hello everyone and welcome to this webinar on institutional analysis presented by Praxis International and the office on violence against women. We will present an introduction to the best practice assessment guide. My name is Maren Woods, I'm the program manager of the technical assistance project. We have a few others with us. I was going to introduce my coworker, she is off having a baby. That's her most important job today. Liz Carlson will be monitoring the chat and we have some guests with us that I will introduce. I'm going to pass this to Liz to give us some important participation tips for the Adobe connect webinar platform.

>> Hello everyone. It's good to be with you. Just to touch upon a few logistics for how to best have a good experience with this webinar platform. -- Platform. We would like to recommend a few tips. In order to make this session accessible to all users, we ask you primarily try to utilize private chat, if you have a question or a comment that you would like to interject. If you chat that privately to our web host, Patricia she will make a point of integrating that into the presenters and we will incorporate that question or comment into the conversation. I would like to direct your attention in that chat box the great bar on the far right, you will see an icon if you hover over, you will see it says pop options, clicking on that will allow you a variety of choices. We recommend you utilize those functions to your own preference. You notice at the bottom of your screen, the closed captioning's -- closed captioning is being relayed, right now. We anticipate high quality, invariably there are mistakes and we ask you to bear with us for those aspects, that are slight variations from what you heard. If you happen to be participating just by telephone today, feel free to send questions or comments to me directly by email, you can send a note to liz@praxisinternational.org. If you happen to be logged in with voice over IP Internet audio and you realize the sound quality is low or unstable, dial back in by telephone. You can remain connected to the webinar platform and dial in by telephone, once you have that connection you will be able to turn the volume off on your speaker. If you have trouble shooting needs, feel free to send a message or connect with the troubleshooting option of the

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platform and you will see it in the -- on your screen under the -- actually, now that I'm saying this I have not looked at it. Patricia, where is that troubleshooting options?

>> At the top right corner, there is a help button. When you click on that button choose troubleshooting and it should get your ad ons connected for you.

>> Thank you, for that. If you happen to get disconnected Adobe connect should reconnect to, if that is not the case, read join through your original link and you can dial back in by telephone, if you lose audio. With that, I will turn it back to you.

>> This is a new platform, we think it has enhanced the experience for all of our users and we do discover new things. Thank you for your help, Patricia. This is a tool that practice developed to assist communities in examining there responses to domestic violence from the nine point -- 911 calls to patrol investigations and decisions. Today's webinar will examine this coordinated response tool through the work of two communities. We will spend the next hour talking with the project coordinators from each of these communities and hearing about the experience in the impact and outcomes the processes have. Liz, would you type the link or copy the link into the chat, so people know where to access the guides.

>> Will do.

>> Thank you. Courtney is here with us today and Katie is with us from the Billings Police Department. Thank you to both of you for sharing your experiences with the guides in and dancing your CCR. I will introduce them more formally. It's helpful to go over background of why we develop these tools. One aspect of the work of coordinated community responses is to continually engage in reflection and assessment of our responses. We ask ourselves, are we all on the same page, are we sending messages of help and accountability? Who seeks and gets drawn into systems and why. Do our end -- interventions have harmful impacts or are they succeeding to make things better for battered women and the children? There are many tools currently available seeking to access your institutional responses. These tools are summarized in the opening articles inauguration of change seeker. If you have not checked out the change seeker please do that as soon as possible. It is a great resource. Liz, I will ask you to post the link to the newsletter. So we are all on the same page, I will go over the tools that practice has developed and you may hear any of us referred to these processes. The practice safety and

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accountability audit is a broad analysis and discovery regarding the criminal and or civil legal systems response to violence against women. This process has been used extensively across the United States. Practice assessment is a more focused analysis using checklists for best practices and this is what we will learn more about today. There are other tools developed by additional organizations such as the national clearinghouse on abuse in later life, they enhanced -- developed one for enhanced CCR. The battered women's project has tools for assessing and there are other tools available. We will send out the resources in a follow-up email, in case you are not participating in the chat. The blueprint for safety is another method of on construction engagement for institutional reform. It's a comprehensive assessment of the criminal legal systems response to battering that results in adoption of model policies. There is additional distinctive applications that have been developed and applied, those are more broad open-ended analysis and setting such as foster care. Today, the best practice assessment guides is what we are talking about. Since coordinated responses were talked about in the early 80s, we have learned a lot about work is structured to the legal system to enhance or diminish safety and accountability in domestic violence cases. We know much more now than we did 30 years ago about how to design interventions that account for battering, particularly in the legal system. The best practice assessment tools are a way to study the system and how it works in domestic violence cases. It locates gaps and helps teams see how work practices can be organized to account for domestic violence. The best practice phrase can make people nervous, the tools detailed in the guide are grounded in the accumulated experience of over 70 communities who vandalize there responses to domestic violence coupled with the research of the criminal justice intervention outcomes for women and children. The tools distilled this knowledge and help a system that was not designed to account for battering to coordinate actions and responses to enhanced safety for all victims. Liz will post an impact map that we just developed, that details assessment projects that have occurred across the country. It's highlighting some of the key projects we have been involved with or supported. The assessment guide is built around these best practices. It sets an expectation of agency and practitioner accountability to one another and to offenders and there system reform efforts. It's a set of tools for a small interdisciplinary group to review the response in these areas. Look at this cool animation. That was a surprise. The guides detail the steps of local coordinators such as Katie Orr Courtney that they would take to organize a team, develop a team and assembled the necessary documents. The team engages in a series of assessment to 70s that

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include mapping the steps involved analyzing 911 calls or law enforcement reports, analyzing agency policies. From the information collected through those activities the team develops findings and recommendations and a plan for change.

>> The process has a couple of features to note, it's a small interagency team that has a specific focus with checklist -- checklists of core practices. It's a partnership between the practitioner in the advocacy programs. The 's -- the process focuses on the way that work is put together to look at how the work is organized around concepts, policies and practices and how they are linked together to prove outcomes.

>> We will hear from Courtney and Katie, who led there communities in the practice assessment to enhanced or 911 and patrol response to battering. Courtney has taken this process through the -- to the prosecution charging point. We are focusing today, on how they have used this in relation to 911 and patrol response to battering. Katie is a domestic violence investigator for the Billings Police Department. She was a victim advocate at the YWCA in Great Falls, Montana. Courtney is the advocacy coordinator for hope and justice project in Maine. She also coordinates court advocacy services in the St. John Valley traditional -- transitional housing program. Courtney, can you tell us about your program and your community?

>> Hello everybody. Hope and justice is a nonprofit organization which assists people affected by domestic abuse and violence we work with people throughout means most northern County, which is on the Canadian border and our County is larger than Connecticut or Rhode Island combined. We have no major Highway from the start of our County to the end of our County. The hope and justice project has 18 advocates which cover three chapters, to transitional houses in the five district courts. Out of our 56 towns and cities, only 10 have there own local police department the other 46 plus the 119 townships are patrolled by the sheriff in state police. Sometimes response time can take up to two hours depending on the road conditions and how much coverage there is.

>> Thank you, Courtney. In contrast, we have Katie, who lives in a different community and Billings, Montana. Can you tell us about yourself, Katie?

>> Billings, Montana is the largest community in Montana. We have population of 110,000 people -- we are the only city to have over 100,000. It is the largest metropolitan area for

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hundreds of miles. We have people traveling to Billings from other states and surrounding communities, the population is made up of residents and nonresidents. We sit near to Indian reservations. Our Police Department has 146 officers, that includes command staff, detectives and patrol. We are shorthanded at this point. We are lucky to have nine or 10 officers on the street at any given point. I was feeling bad until I heard statistics from Courtney and now I feel like we are doing pretty well. For the population that we have, we are running very shorthanded. I am the domestic violence investigator. IT cases that have gone from the patrol doing the innocent investigation to our attorney's office, and they come to me.

>> If you are in the middle of a best practice assessment in your own community or you are conducting one or you are brand-new to the idea. This is your chance to learn from those who have completed them and worked with there teams to do that. Please, chat in your questions, or email them to those we will work them in to our discussion. We will also take breaks, during our call today to have those questions asked and respond.

>> One of the first questions that is important to ask is, what made you decide to engage in this process with your community? I think that helps communities understand where they are at an reflect on whether they are ready to do something like this. Katie, what led you to the domestic violence best practice assessment?

>> I work with the city attorney's office, the cases that have come to them for prosecution. I work closely with the victim witness program and the prosecutor. The victim witness director and I noticed there were routinely, similar errors in most of the investigations and reports we were seeing we decided we wanted to figure out why the errors were happening and whether or not we could fix the problem instead of just complaining. She and I were familiar with the concept of the blueprint for safety and the community response. We knew a service providers we needed to be aware of the provider that handled the case prior to us in the provider that would handle the case after our services. We knew we could not assess the patrol response, unless we looked at our 911 call takers and dispatchers. That's how we decided to look at the best practice assessment using the call taking, 911 and patrol response guidelines.

>> Courtney, how about you? You are based out of an advocacy program. How did you decide to work with the tools?

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>> Over the many years of our organization helping victims of domestic violence, we've heard multiple stories from the Dems on there experiences dealing with the criminal justice system. We've heard many stories from the criminal justice system working with victims. We've done countless presentations to law enforcement, wheel we felt we were missing something. We looked into various assessments available and after conversations we decided the domestic violence best practice assessment was best for our community. We are large County with a small population and limited resources. The resources we have work well together. Due to limited resources, people did not have the time to commit. Doing this, we felt that

>> This was the best way to go.

>> Thank you. We worked with both Katie and Courtney to help them troubleshoot and tailor the process Tulare local community. The first step is pulling your team together. That's an interesting process for communities, especially if you are an advocacy program trying to enhance working relationships or if you're in the system and you are connecting with others you don't normally connect with. Courtney, how did you put your team together?

>> We had three local police to marmots interested in participating. The Department chief selected the officer or officers that would represent the department on the team. Our prosecutor's office chose the representatives that they wanted from there office and Hope & Justice Project appointed three advocates, we ended up doing three assessment at once. We needed three advocates.

>> Katie, about you?

>> Our project started small. All of our team members were taking part in the assessment in addition to our regular work. The team consisted of myself, a dispatcher in the victim witness program director. In subsequent assessments, we included a community-based advocate. Which 06 cases at random and we looked at the entire case instead of portioning the dispatch side in the patrol response to myself, all three of us looked at the entire case from start to finish and then met, six times throughout the year to conduct the assessment.

>> This reflects what we recommend for suggested team members. There are qualities of team members that are important to consider. It's best if people aren't assigned to a project as a punitive action, it's best if they want to pause and reflect and think about the response and

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how the responses coordinated by structures. In terms of the disciplines represented on the teams, what Katie and Katie both described reflects our suggestions.'s

>> The buy-in pieces interesting, we can't just say, give me a dispatcher. A lot of practitioners aren't chomping at the bit to do something like this, other than you, Katie, who came to this year's most -- yourself. How did you get buy-in from the 911 center and your supervisors and victim witness?

>> I received grant funding which supplements my position within the department. As part of that, I like to have a proactive project each year to keep my grant applications innovative. I like to show I am trying to move forward and be proactive, with the problem of domestic violence in the community, rather than reactive. That is where the projects came from. I supervisors, I told them I wanted to do the assessment I felt I could fit it in. They said go ahead, I don't think they knew the scope or the outcome. They trusted I would be able to do it. As far as getting a dispatcher, I just contacted the super but -- supervisor and they 71 -- sent me one. They were willing to help in the dispatcher that came was very willing to be there and eager to learn and make a difference with us.

>> That's great. Leveraging a lot of relationships to pull your team together. Courtney?

>> First, I scheduled a mini training provided the escape on what a best practice is. After this I knew which departments would participate. In order for me to get the police reports, we needed approval from our district attorneys office. I scheduled a meeting with all practitioners involved in the domestic violence case. I invited the supervisor from the dispatch center, the chief from the local police and the Sheriff and state police. I also included the victim witness advocate, probation officer, child protective services, District Attorney's Office and a judge. At this meeting, I conducted a best practice assessment training to educate everyone on the best practice assessment and I spoke of the importance of conducting the assessment. We watched them video and did a community mapping exercise which had a cute it -- huge impact. The district attorney asked questions and showed willingness to participate, in front of all the others. I jumped on this opportunity and scheduled a one-on-one with the district attorney. At this meeting, we discussed what I needed from the district attorney and they were able to get me the police reports and got everything ready that I needed for the assessment.

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>> I love these examples. Oneself motivated investigator bringing the process to her supervisors and the other an outside community-based agency, who leveraged relationships in a small community to get everyone on board. I want to pause, I see questions in the chat and I think someone else contacted Patricia with the question. One question for Courtney, you serve such a huge area and I know you are well connected. It's about taking this approach across the state, how would you coordinate something like this in a statewide effort? You can speak to your experience working with this in different jurisdictions, what you thought?

>> I'm not sure exactly how a state wide approach would work, just conducting one big assessment would -- many assessments would work better. In my experience, what we do here is much different than the response in the southern portion of the state of Maine. I recently spoke at a conference on best practice assessments that encouraged other organizations in the state of Maine to get on board. If everyone were to compare the results, we could have a statewide recommendations.

>> I will just say, there are a couple of states that have a promoted use of safety and accountability audit methodology through the coalition or another state agency. That state coalition or agency learned as much as they could about the process, to support the local communities in doing that work. Also, connecting with us at practice. We are the keeper and can help support the coalition and the communities. There is an interesting development in the state of New Jersey, they passed legislation for safety audits to be conducted across the state. That did not come with adequate funding to support it, the division on women, a state agency in New Jersey is taking the leadership and gathering pilot communities to test the process. I hope that answers your question. Please chat in another question if you have a follow-up. One other question is about the buy in peace with law enforcement. They seem reluctant, maybe not enthusiastic to engage. Prosecution seems open but is overwhelmed with the workload. Katie, what is your advice for approaching law enforcement or a prosecutor's office, about the time it takes to do this and what the benefits are. How would you get buy-in from those reluctant agencies?

>> If you can approach the situation with effort put in on the front end of the situation in doing this assessment, will improve investigations and the ability to prosecute. Maybe, that would relieve a little bit of the work being put in, to revise cases that are struggling at that point or if

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they are struggling to do investigations, maybe having the knowledge of the best practice way would make it easier. Phrasing it, doing this work may make things easier in the long run, might be the way to approach things. You need supervisor Brian and command staff buy-in to move the process forward.

>> Support the changes on the other side. Courtney, what is your advice for getting buy-in from law enforcement and prosecution?

>> My thought is, when we first started we didn't have buy-in from all of our law enforcement agencies. Just by doing the three that were willing to participate and having a good report come out of that has encouraged other agencies to participate in the future. I think working well, at least with one agency that may be willing could encourage the other agencies to buy in in the future.

>> That's a great suggestion and something -- one of those founding principles, start where the door is open, demonstrate some success in engaging with that system and making changes they can feel proud of and promote and take two other agencies who might be interested. Any other chat questions, Patricia or Liz?

>> Not so far.

>> Nothing on my end.

>> I had a question, this buy-in face has so much work in building the relationships in developing the buy-in. Sometimes hindsight is 2020, looking back is there anything you would have done differently to prepare for this process and support the changes he wanted to see, at this phase where you were pulling together your team or doing the buy-in piece. Courtney? Is there anything would've done differently?

>> Not necessarily different, I would have liked to have had a judge be on board with the buy-in and get their feedback on the changes within the system. I thought that would have been important, I could not get that buy-in and I'm still trying to work at that.

>> That's good insight. Katie, how about you?

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>> Yes. We would've included a community-based advocate during the first assessment, instead of a victim witness director and I would have included someone from my command staff, while I recommended changes, I don't have the authority in my department to make them happen. Having someone with the authority to enact the changes would've made a big difference.

>> Great insights. If there are no further questions, we will move on. What if -- what did you find out and what did you do about it? Katie, the assessment process is a lot of data gathering and you look at a lot of files, you do the mapping exercise, what did you find out about your response in your community?

>> Looking at the 911 call taking dispatching and patrol response, the errors from call taking in dispatching had a lot to do with follow-up questions about past history of violence, strangulation and whether or not there were children present. Especially, when the call was lagging and they were just trying to keep the caller on the line. Questions they could be asking had they been trained to ask them. Dispatchers were often sending officers to the cost labeling them as disturbances, rather than domestics even when they knew there was a domestic relationship. One thing we suggested, whenever possible these calls should be dispatched as domestic, so the officers know what they are going to. I followed up with a supervisor and learned due to a system upgrade, they tried to limit the number of call types of dispatch, no matter what they were being dispatched as disturbances. I am now trying to work with my command staff to rectify that situation. They knew -- do need to be dispatched as domestic. We also found our officers were not asking about history of violence. There were report writing issues, the officers went different should -- differentiating between formal statements and excited utterances which makes the difference for the prosecutor. Those were some of the issues we needed to address for the next stage, so the prosecutor's office had a better case to work with. We also determined, some of the consistent carriers -- errors could be caught by supervisors. Our supervisors can return reports to officers in that led us to our second best practice assessment where we focused solely on patrol response. In that group we added myself, the victim witness program director, the community-based advocate and a sergeant. We just finished up with that assessment, we are able to determine with the help of the commander, what the command staff is able to do or not do as far as catching errors in reports. I also took a course on public administration, we talked about strategic planning and how organizational leaders have to be involved in the two planning. Otherwise the best laid plans

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will gather dust. I did feel like I had support for my command staff as far as getting the go-ahead in these assessment projects, it has since come to light the commanders who were not involved don't have a stake in the process, my reports are definitely gathering dust which is disappointing. As I said, as a patrol officer I don't have the authority to make the changes happen that need to happen. The assessments lose momentum. I would encourage other agencies, get verbal support and have an understanding with leadership, the leadership needs to be responsible if change needs to be initiated.

>> Don't feel too bad, you have a lot of experience under your belt. If you had to replicate the process you can do with that -- that with such efficiency with the key people and those who have the authority to make the changes. We suggest that with domestic violence community-based advocacy programs, if they are nervous, get some experience with the process internally and practice it. Sometimes, having those conversations can be challenging if you are concerned a process is not having the intended outcome. Courtney, how about you? What did you find out?

>> We learned all three police departments had similar policies and procedures, they were all similar in the way they completed their investigations and wrote the reports. The policies and procedures review there was no mention of conducting integrated risk assessment, there were no policies in dealing with children at a domestic scene, no monitoring system to ensure follow-through, no time training on reports and no policy on multi agency response. If the state was -- police responded to a domestic and the only other officer was from the Sheriff's office, there was no procedure dealing with who was required to collect reports and evidence. This led to missing reports and proper evidence not being collected. Reviewing the police reports, we learned that police departments were not conducting risk assessments are asking questions about stocking or strangulation's. Officers were not asking follow-up questions after victim statements, the officer right up did not match the victim statement and all crimes were not properly charged. Pictures of injuries and pictures of the scene were missing, reports to not have phone numbers for victims, that made it difficult for prosecution to locate victims for trial or follow. When officers conducted Amanda Terry follow-up -- mandatory follow-up, they were not asking follow-up questions, we were unsure if these mandatory follow-ups were taking place because officers were not writing reports or completing them and turning them in. We learned the domestic violence supplement form the officer were completing was not helpful for

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prosecution. Things that we changed in the process, after the report was written with the findings and recommendations, I met with the chiefs of all the departments in the deputy chiefs Dist. Atty. and went over the findings. It was decided the domestic violence supplement form that was being used needed to be updated and that it would be helpful to add in directives prompting officers to obtain the information that was missing. We added in risk assessment questions, questions relating to stocking indicators and strangulation, we added a section about the defendant's criminal history, witnesses, whether a statement was received by the witness and information relating to the victim if they decided to leave the home. After updating the form, it was reviewed and the district attorney sent the new form to all police departments in our County, telling them they needed to use this form. It did not just affect the three departments that did the best practice assessment, it ended up being something all departments in the county were forced to use. The report made recommendations on trainings that would benefit the police departments in the district attorney's office. Our local task force has implemented the recommended training into their budget. The task force has put together a team of educators and conduct a roadshow and go directly to police departments to provide them with necessary training. The project was able to apply and receive a stop grant. The team members turned out to be the same who participated in the assessment. One thing we are still working on is changing the way officers conduct their mandatory 48 hour follow-up. Also, in doing the assessment there were non-tangible outcomes that helped to build a strong relationship between our domestic violence project in the three police departments. Since doing the assessment a couple of years ago, we have collected -- collaborated and all three police departments on other projects that have led to more victims seeking help and it opened the door for us to conduct another assessment it's also helped the bullet -- police get a better understanding of a complete and thorough report. I've been told by the prosecutor, they have gotten better reports.

>> That's an amazing amount of work that you discovered. The benefit of the process being interdisciplinary is that the people saw the missing pieces it was very concrete and documented. We hear and think and see these gaps in responses, particularly by patrol officers. If we are not organized and have a systematic way to track those things, it's easy for it to be dismissed as and a total versus concrete proof there are missing pieces. In doing that with an

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intern disciplinary team, having patrol officers and dispatchers take a look at their own work helped create natural buying in to adopt changes on the other side.

>> Those are two different examples. We have the strength of the approach in Maine, the work was being led by an advocacy program whose job it was to move this work I had. It was clearly articulated. You could maintain that vigilance and oversight to ensure people were following through with what you found. Katie, as you engaged, you found interesting things and reflect it on your own role as the domestic violence investigator making good connections and bridges. You were challenged, to make the changes on the other side given the limitations of your job and your reflection on having the right people at the table and in the know. Are there any other thoughts? Is it a good process to engage in, given the investment of time and focus by her teams, considering the changes. Courtney, your statement at the end about the prosecutors saying they got better reports and more victims come forward. Just a snapshot of the benefit of the process.

>> I think the process, opened up the ice to the officers. I had heard, over the years officers were blaming the prosecution for not following through and letting defendants off easy, when they were being charged with domestic crimes. We would then hear from prosecutors, I cannot prosecute unless I have a good report and good evidence. I think, this process and the team consisting of a prosecutor and law enforcement opened up everyone sized to the importance of good writing and working together.

>> Katie, how about you?

>> I think it's worth it. The changes in my agency have not happened as quickly as I would've liked. We are moving forward, we have updated our forms and at this stage, when I speak to command staff about changes, I feel the assessment process has given me a strong foundation and specifics as to why it needs to happen.

>> The guides in terms of the product and practices you can download for free from our website is the suggested process. We give recommendations based on our experience and expertise in the experiences of other communities. We still know the guides need to be adopted to fit the local jurisdiction. It's helpful for other communities listening in to hear about how you too adapted the process so they can adapt in their own community. Courtney,

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because you are working with three separate departments, how did you tailor that process to that context or was it just one jurisdiction? Where there any things you had to adapt for you were?

>> Yes. We have our patrol officers complete the investigation at the scene. We don't have two separate officers doing that. For our assessment, I had to reorganize the questions to combine both patrol and investigations assessment questions together. This allowed the team to work from one set of questions instead of two, it allowed us to complete both patrol and investigation assessment at the same time. When we started the assessment, we worked on the questions as a team. When we went over the questions, the district attorney pointed out things that did not apply to our area, so when we did our first questionnaire we were able to check off the questions we did not need to review later on. I also had three Willing departments, I wanted to take advantage of the opportunity. Instead of conducting three separate assessments I did one large assessment, we did them all at the same time. I had each department assess another departments reports. Instead of blacking out the victims and offenders names, I blacked out the officers names. I did this because the departments are so small officers would pick up quickly on whose reports they were reading and the community being so small, they would know who the victim or offenders were. I figured it was safer to blackout the officers names, so no one would pick on an officer about a report they had read that they had written. Our team met three times, once to discuss the best practice assessment and do a mapping exercise in the next time to read the reports and fill out the guides, the last time was to read the policies and procedures and fill out recommendations and findings together. This was nice, to see all three police departments and prosecution working together to brainstorm on conducting and completing efficient reports. I still have all three departments present in one is proposing changes in that went out to all departments because it was not a suggestion from one department, it was the suggestion from all the three departments in the county.

>> I just realized I was on mute. Thank you Courtney, those are important adaptations. Recognizing the realities of the rural community, but each individual officer might not know the writing style. That was a good strategy and approach. Katie, what did you adapt or how did you adapt?

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>> During our first assessment we did not have to adapt anything. We chose to have all of the team members review each case completely on individual time and we met to discuss our findings. One area I relied on technical assistant had to do with my own interpretations of our policy and the policy analysis guidelines. I was reading them black and white. The analysis guidelines would ask, does the policy build in the practice helped me that phrase is included does not mean it's implied. Our policy references the domestic assaults have different context and dynamic and simple assaults and it references charging the appropriate offense for each case, from a felony aggravated assault to a misdemeanor and documenting a case where probable cause does not exist. That is in our policy and that does build attention to the context and severity of abuse which is best practice. When we did our second best practice assessment and we looked at specifically the patrol response, we adapted a guideline. For that, we used to patrol response guideline written by praxis and me included the community based, the advocate took surveys from in shelter victims who dealt with the Billings Police Department and be adapted the surveys to be similar in format to the patrol response guidelines. What they ended up looking like, was a format that was similar to the 911 call taking guide that was published as far as, concerns to in shelter victims. The questions were similar to the 911 call taking guide. Those surveys, the few we were able to get brought to light the issue, the victims were in shelter in the victims who call 911 are two separate groups. We found very few who had dealt with both agencies. That led us to getting technical assistance to work through the issue and plans for building an advocate initiated response program locally.

>> For those of you who are not familiar with an advocacy initiated response. Law enforcement and the community-based program have a working agreement, when officers responded to a domestic call they automatically inform the community-based advocacy program, either through fax or email or phone call to the advocacy program, who then initiates contact with the victim. There are resources on advocacy initiated response that we can send out. I want to note, I have posted links to the reports for both of these processes. We have had permission from Billings and Ning to post those and I included them in the chat. I like that you are compelled to get this direct consultation with victims experiences and I want to note, the best practice assessment guides as outlined relies on community-based advocates representing the voice of the lived experience of victims in the community. The safety and accountability audit would have teams engaging with survivors in a broader way, conducting focus groups are

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constant us to -- consultations to get a sense of working and what's not in terms of the system's response. The best practice assessment guide is referred to as a shortcut or an abbreviated process and does not include that. It doesn't mean that you can't seek that input in different, creative ways. Thank you Katie. You have Artie shared advice, obviously. Specifically, Courtney what advice do you have for other communities considering this are currently engaging in this process?

>> The process might seem intimidating, once the team gets going and completes an assessment it will help everyone gain the knowledge of where things are working well and where things are not in order to make change. And assessment can open many doors for people, assisting in applying for grant funding in the assessment helps systems recognize they are not the only system involved in a victim's life. Most victims have a lot going on, thing that made the biggest impact when I was trying to get by in, was doing the mapping exercise with all practitioners. They never thought outside of there box about what victims go through, it was visually impacting for them to see it laid out on a board of all the steps and processes and people involved in of the Thames life once 911 gets called.

>> That's great. Katie, what is your advice?

>> I would echo Courtney, even though it looks intimidating, I would definitely recommend it. As long as it's not done to fault specific agencies are community based agencies, as long as its collaborative with the mind toward victims safety and offender accountability, there is no downside. If it gets frustrating as far as implementation, there is no downside to doing it. I'm happy to have done it. I would not go back and undo it, in any way. I'm excited to do them in the future.

>> That's great. We will pause for questions. Now is the time to chat those in or let Patricia know. I know one person is working on a question and I'm trying to understand it. While we are pausing for clarification, in the realm of advice, what is your elevator speech about the process. Courtney, I know your training across the state. When peace -- when you are asked in the elevator what you are doing, what do you say?

>> I usually encourage them to do the assessment and talk about how important it is and how much it has made an impact on our community and how it's made a difference. The domestic

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violence supplement form that we updated and changed, not only went out to the Police Department's but it has gone statewide. It is something that a lot of the other police departments throughout the state are now looking at. It's something that's made a huge impact for the County and the state.

>> How about you, Katie? What is your elevator speech?

>> I've never heard it phrased like that. I would say to keep it simple. We as the police are trying to analyze what we are doing, how we can improve and the things that we are doing well to keep them going forward so we can learn how to respond effectively, to keep our victims safe and hold offenders accountable so our community is safe.

>> That's great. That's perfect. People can copy that" to, that is just the pitch that advocates need to bring to the Police Department. All departments are interested as being seen as proactive in domestic violence issues. That's perfect.

>> Yes, quote away.

>> We will give you the source for that quote. Myrna has a question about the advocacy initiated response, she is wondering if the advocacy from the Sheriff's office in domestic violence Center work as a team. I should clarify the advocacy initiated response is not an advocate that goes out to the scene, many communities do have that piece, they refer to them as system based advocates and that's different from the victim witness advocate and different from the community-based advocate. What I'm describing in terms of advocacy initiated response is, not that co-location where the advocate goes with the law enforcement officer but the law enforcement agency proactively gives the information about an arrest or a response to it, to alert the community-based advocacy program there's a victim in need of contact. Victims can't say no. What research has shown is that a lot of times advocates are willing to talk, if even for a few moments to find out what will happen the next day in court, what they should expect and to assess with them there wishes in relation to contacts. I will send a link or lose will find a link and we will included in the follow-up resources email, after the webinar Myrna, C can get a better sense of the process.

>> Katie, you said you are working on establishing that process as part of your work?

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>> Correct. We have our community-based advocacy program on board. They have the systems in place. We are waiting for command staff buy-in from my Police Department and waiting to bring our dispatch center on board, they will be the relay between our officers on scene and the advocacy center.

>> Okay great. It looks like we lost Courtney for moment. Katie, this is another question we get a lot from communities. What's the general timeline and time commitment for team members and expenses that you in heard to engage in this process? What was the timeline? How long did it take you to work the process from beginning to end?

>> Mine may be unique, I was the coordinator and everybody worked on it in addition to our regular work duties. We chose six cases and we took a full year to do that. The first couple of months I just compiled the cases and we had an initial meeting, we then tried to me once every couple of months until we got through the six cases and we had a final meeting at the end. It was more of a time commitment for me in general I was able to fit it within a 40 hour work week, that was really squeezing. As far as a financial commitment, because they used it as part of a program, paid for by grant funding, our dispatcher was the only one to receive overtime. There wasn't too much expense he would work it couple of hours overtime when we had a meeting other than that he was willing to review the cases on the night shift. It was within the billings community and no one had travel reimbursement. Courtney's situation may be different than she has such a large area.

>> Courtney, I know you got lost. I was asking Katie about a question concerning how long it takes and what it costs. Can you respond to that too?

>> For our first assessment with the large group, I had created two separate timelines and I gave the team the option, if they wanted to meet half days or full days. I let them choose which option they thought would work best for them and I worked around there schedule. We ended up only doing three meetings to complete the assessment. For our expenses, we were able to get a rural grant that paid for part of my position as best practices assessment coordinator. Other than the other expenses, team members departments paid for there time when they participated in meetings. There was no extra expense for us.

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>> That's great. Those are good messages and consistent with how we respond. So often, there is someone within a department whose job it is to assess their own agency's work and they can incorporate it in their day to day work. It's just finding a person and leveraging the existing resources to the extent that you can support the projects. There's not a lot of expense to this. I've heard communities engage in this process, over a longer period of time. I also know of communities who are really committed and engaged and they can crank it out in three months to six months, that is more rare than the longer term project. Are there any other questions, Patricia or Liz?

>> I am not getting anything.

>> We are here for you, to help you and answer your individual questions. If you have a question that you do not feel comfortable asking during the webinar. People have written grants to support this work, in the case of Katie's situation where she was using grant funds to engage in this assessment reflection work. The office on violence against women grants are coming out semi-annually. The rural grant program in the grant award program have promoted this work. We have sample grant language to incorporate into an application, please contact us for more information if you are interested. We do offer free support to communities and a lot of resources -- resources on our website. I want to tell the folks on the phone to save the date for our four day community assessment Institute, they will learn about the Fuller set of tools in safety and accountability and we will work with checklists that are detailed in the domestic violence best practice assessment guide, to get hands-on experience to incorporate it into your CCR work. There is my contact information, please contact me at any time. We may be ending early unless people have questions before we end.

>> Non-from me.

>> Any final thoughts, Courtney Arkady cracks -- or KT --

>> We did really well. We were very time efficient today. Courtney, any final thoughts?

>> No. I think we covered everything.

>> This webinar was recorded and will be posted on our website shortly as an ongoing resource, if you want to share this with your partners. We have a shorter, 15 minute overview

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on our website, that may be easier for project partners to listen to for introduction and in case you are looking for tools to promote this in your community we have a lot of resources on our website. With that, I will say it is a beautiful fall day in Minnesota and I'm looking forward to getting fresh air. I hope you all have the opportunity to get out and take a big deep breath and appreciate the work that you do. I greatly appreciate the work that you are doing and so do the survivors in your community. Thank you, so much to KT and Courtney and listen Patricia for your support. Have a great day everyone, we will talk to you soon.

>> [Event Concluded]