

**National Coordination Committee on the American Indian/Alaska Native
(AI/AN) Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner – Sexual Assault Response Team
(SANE-SART) Initiative**

Federal Advisory Committee Meeting

December 4–5, 2012

Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians Reservation, California

Meeting Summary



Federal Advisory Committee
National Coordination Committee on the American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN)
Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner – Sexual Assault Response Team (SANE-SART) Initiative

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Meeting Summary

Background

The U.S. Department of Justice’s Office for Victims of Crime (OVC)—in collaboration with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI); the Indian Health Service (IHS); and other federal partners, tribal governments and organizations, and training and technical assistance (TTA) providers—established the AI/AN SANE-SART Initiative (Initiative) in 2010. The overall goal of the Initiative is to enhance AI/AN communities’ capacity to provide high-quality, multidisciplinary services and support for adult and child victims of sexual violence. In addition to funding three demonstration sites and a tribal TTA provider, OVC and its federal partners developed a Federal Advisory Committee (FAC), the National Coordination Committee on the AI/AN SANE-SART Initiative (Committee), to ensure that this Initiative is responsive to victims and survivors, families, and individuals in tribal communities. The goal of the National Coordination Committee on the AI/AN SANE-SART Initiative is to develop recommendations for OVC and federal partners on how to increase the commitment of all key stakeholders to end sexual violence in AI/AN communities through collaboration.

The Committee convened its first meeting December 4–5, 2012, with the goal of developing a set of draft recommendations (see agenda, Attachment 1). Sarah Deer, Committee Chair, opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. A total of 32 individuals were in attendance, including 10 FAC members, 4 FAC designees, 11 federal observers, and 7 members of the public. One Committee member was absent. (See Committee Member Biographies, Attachment 2.)

Federal Advisory Committee Members Present*

Judge Peggy Bird
Hallie Bongar-White
Sarah Collins
Kim Day
Sarah Deer, Committee Chair
Beverly Fletcher (Designee of Bea Hanson)
Karen Joyce-McMahon (Designee of Kathryn Turman)
Donna Keeler
Linda Logan

Juana Majel-Dixon
Shirley Moses
Jason O’Neal (Designee of Darren Cruzan)
Dr. Rose Weahkee (Designee of Dr. Susan Karol)
Geri Wisner-Foley

*FAC member Paul Allis was not present for this meeting.

Federal Observers

Beverly Cotton, National SANE-SART Coordinator, Indian Health Service Headquarters
Lisa DeCora, Tribal Victim Specialist, Department of Justice Office for Victims of Crime
Joye Frost, Acting Director, Department of Justice Office for Victims of Crime
Kathleen Gless, Designated Federal Official, SANE-SART Initiative Lead, Department of Justice
Office for Victims of Crime
Chris Holloway, Team Leader, Department of Justice Office for Victims of Crime
Shannon May, AI/AN SANE-SART Coordinator, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Office for Victim
Assistance
Lanisha Bell, National Coordinator for Victim Assistance, Bureau of Indian Affairs Office of
Justice Services’ Victim Assistance Program
Charlotte Clarke, Victim Assistance Program Manager, Department of the Interior
Linda Bearcrane Couture, Supervisory Victim Specialist, Bureau of Indian Affairs Office of Justice
Services’ Victim Assistance Program
Kathy Hoffman, Victim Supervisor, Office of Justice Services Bureau of Indian Affairs
Christine Crossland, National Institute of Justice

Additional Observers

Lisa Lampman, Meeting Facilitator
Jennifer Shewmake, Office for Victims of Crime Training and Technical Assistance Center
Bethany Case, Visiting Fellow, Department of Justice Office for Victims of Crime
Bonnie Clairmont, Program Specialist, Tribal Law and Policy Institute
Leila Goldsmith, Chair, AI/AN SANE-SART Child Sexual Abuse Working Group
Diane Benson, Teacher, Alaska
Tia Holley, SART Trainer

Day 1 - December 4, 2012

Welcome and Introductions

Jim Clairmont, Spiritual Leader of the Sincagu Lakota Oyate Tribe, conducted a traditional opening.

Joye Frost provided the following opening remarks:

It is a privilege to welcome each of you to the first meeting of the Attorney General's Federal Advisory Committee. We've asked each of you to participate in this important Initiative because of your expertise and your work with victims of sexual violence in tribal communities. This Committee will advise the Office for Victims of Crime in a national initiative: the American Indian and Alaska Native Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner – Sexual Assault Response Team Initiative.

Our ultimate goal in this effort is to improve services and support to victims of sexual violence in American Indian and Alaska Native communities by systematically linking and leveraging the efforts of all key stakeholders, especially those in tribal communities and in federal agencies. We developed the agenda for this meeting with the intent to make the discussion broad-ranging and relevant to the needs of American Indian and Alaska Native victims of sexual violence. We want this to be an opportunity for you to share your knowledge, experiences, and ideas with us.

It has been through the hard work of many that we are finally here today. When OVC first began its tribal SANE/SART initiative, we went beyond funding just a SANE program to including a SART response. We did so because we knew that collaboration and inclusiveness would be the most difficult but also the most important factors that would drive the success of the overall response to victims. We have learned from past efforts. Several years ago, OVC provided the Indian Health Service with funding to establish two SANE programs in IHS facilities. IHS did a great job in getting the SANE programs up and running. And although victims received excellent forensic-medical care, that initiative didn't address collaboration. As a result, the linkages with law enforcement and prosecution largely did not happen.

Need for Collaboration

We learned that no single discipline—not advocacy, not medical, not law enforcement, not prosecution—can provide the comprehensive, victim-centered approach that every child and adult victim of sexual violence deserves. But together we can drive phenomenal progress, and I know you believe that as well. Your presence here today demonstrates your belief in working together.

So OVC's first step in this new initiative was to model the collaboration that is so desperately needed to serve these victims. We know that system linkages (between disciplines and jurisdictions) are incredibly important to a victim-centered approach to victims of sexual violence in Indian Country and that this committee will play an important role in forging those connections, working together to find solutions to those tough questions that will arise, and ultimately institutionalizing partnerships at all levels.

OVC has already established partnerships across federal agencies. Five of those agencies are here with us today: the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Indian Health Service (IHS), the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW), the Executive Office for United States Attorneys (EOUSA), and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA).

Learning From Demonstration Sites in Tribal Communities

Another piece of this initiative was to fund three demonstration sites—in three diverse tribal communities. You’ll hear some more about these sites tomorrow morning from Bonnie Clairmont. Through these demonstration sites we are working with these communities to ensure that they have the tools to develop, strengthen, and sustain a victim-centered response. In turn, we anticipate that these sites will provide OVC and other tribal communities “lessons learned”—what works and what doesn’t work—to respond to the sexual assault of both adults and children in ways that ensure sensitive, appropriate support for victims and their access to the justice that every victim deserves.

So we are gathered here today in this important work—to join our efforts across systems and jurisdictions, across disciplines and perspectives—to find a better way for every victim of sexual violence.

Vision 21 Findings

I’d like to share an update with you on Vision 21. Vision 21—Transforming Victim Services—is a strategic planning initiative that OVC undertook more than 2 years ago because we recognized the need to change how we serve crime victims and how we hold offenders accountable for their crimes. Several representatives from American Indian and Alaska Native communities were involved with Vision 21.

A major finding from Vision 21 was the recognition that collaboration and community coordinated responses are integral components of assisting crime victims everywhere. Collaboration remains a centerpiece of the victim response, but the field still struggles to implement it effectively—and not just in Indian Country.

We also recognized that we must target resources for tribes, tribal organizations, and the federal agencies responsible for victim assistance in Indian Country so that we ensure that victims in Indian Country are no longer a footnote to this country’s response to crime victims. Together we can start to make that happen for victims of sexual violence in Indian Country. We anticipate releasing the Vision 21 Report later this month. I welcome your feedback and suggestions for implementing all of the recommendations in that Report.

Additional welcome remarks came from Dr. Rose Weahake (Navajo), Director, Division of Behavioral Health, Indian Health Service; Karen Joyce-McMahon, Deputy Program Director, Office for Victim Assistance, Federal Bureau of Investigation; and Sarah Deer (Mvskoke), Federal Advisory Committee Chair and Assistant Professor, William Mitchell School of Law. Lisa Lampman, Meeting Facilitator, invited the Federal Advisory Committee members to introduce themselves.

Video Presentation: *To the Indigenous Woman*

Sarah Deer introduced a short documentary: *To the Indigenous Woman*. Viewing of the documentary elicited the following remarks from Committee members about the difficulties of measuring the number of sexual assaults in Indian Country:

- Kim Day noted that there are more than 300 per 1,000 sexual assault victims in Indian Country, but it is difficult to know the real statistics due to a high level of underreporting.
- Hallie Bongar-White asked whether the recent National Institute of Justice study may have more real numbers, and Christine Crossland responded that the Office on Violence Against Women Section 904 Task Force has data.
- Shirley Moses pointed out that a lot of the statistics are collected in urban communities and that collecting data from rural areas is different. For instance, phone surveys do not work everywhere. She suggested that the Committee could look at this.
- Sarah Deer added that interracial statistics can be misleading and inaccurate, and identifying the race of the perpetrator is an issue.
- Judge Peggy Bird further noted that the numbers used in the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act were inaccurate. A lot of tribes were not providing numbers, and others such as law enforcement, detention, prosecutors, courts, social services, and behavioral health centers have some information but it needs to be shared throughout the community. Training and education are needed. A lot of women do not come forward because it is painful to talk about and reveal.
- Geri Wisner-Foley concluded that promoting collaboration is essential in order to get the real picture to better help the communities.

The Collaborative Challenge

Kathleen Gless, Designated Federal Official, AI/AN SANE-SART Initiative Lead, Office for Victims of Crime

Kathleen Gless presented an overview of the AI/AN SANE-SART Initiative (for the full PowerPoint presentation, see Attachment 3). The overall goal is to enhance AI/AN communities' capacity to provide high-quality, multidisciplinary services and support for adult and child victims of sexual violence.

OVC launched the Initiative in 2010 as a partnership with the FBI, and IHS, including collaboration with tribal governments and organizations, TTA providers, and other federal agencies. The broader team includes experts on sexual violence, medical forensic exams, forensic interviewing, healthcare providers, law enforcement, prosecution, victim services, and victim advocacy; judges; researchers; and academicians.

To ensure the voices of victims, survivors, and subject matter experts inform the Committee and Initiative, OVC—

- Secured input from a broad range of practitioners, experts, allied professionals, and other stakeholders at the federal, state, tribal, and local levels.
- Sought feedback from federal and tribal partners through forums and consultations.
- Gathered input from three demonstration sites.
- Gathered input from three federal working groups.

The central issue that emerged was the need for increased collaboration among key stakeholders—federal, state, tribal, and local agencies. Kathleen Gless charged the Committee with using this meeting as an opportunity to figure out how to make collaboration more a part of everyone’s work in addressing the issue of sexual violence.

Kathleen Gless made two additional announcements related to this work:

- OVC, in partnership with the Office on Violence Against Women and the National Indian Country Training Initiative within the Office of Legal Education has initiated a training project to address issues connected to alcohol facilitated sexual assault occurring in Indian Country.
- OVC, in partnership with NIJ and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, will be creating the first ever National Sexual Assault Forensic Exam Telemedicine Center. The purpose of this project is to provide live, 24/7, access to SANEs, or other expert medical forensic examiners, for four pilot sites. One of three pilot sites will be a tribal site. In addition to NIJ, OVC is also partnering with the Navy and Indian Health Service, who will work with us on planning and site selection. This model has previously been used and evaluated successfully for children, but has never been evaluated for adults. The OVC Telemedicine Project—one of the three pilot sites will be a tribal site.

Leila Goldsmith, J.D., Legacy of Healing Children’s Advocacy Center

Leila Goldsmith offered an overview of AI/AN SANE-SART Federal Working Groups. (For the full PowerPoint presentation, see Attachment 4.) Each Working Group includes experts, trainers, researchers, and first responders in the field of sexual violence. There are three groups:

- Alaska Native Issues, focusing on sexual violence response for Alaska Natives.
- Child Sexual Abuse, focusing on child sexual abuse response. Leila Goldsmith is Chair.
- First Responders, focusing on adult sexual violence response. Nicole Matthews is Chair.

The Working Groups have identified three areas to strengthen collaboration:

- Written sexual violence response protocols. Lack of written protocols leads to inconsistent responses for victims from all service providers due to staff turnover, inconsistent transportation provisions for victims, inadequate procedures for victims surrounding consent, and victim advocates left out of initial response if investigation does not happen.
- Culturally relevant responses. Lack of written protocols leads to lack of support for and availability of victim-centered cultural responses, under-utilization of existing cultural

models to provide culturally relevant responses, and lack of incorporating traditional healing with therapeutic trauma treatment.

- Prioritization of sexual violence to ensure necessary resources. Prioritizing sexual violence helps ensure that personnel resources are assigned to respond to sexual violence; funding resources are allocated for emergency housing, transportation, and subsistence needs for victims; and service agencies have adequate training, supplies, and equipment to address sexual violence.

In advance of this meeting, the Committee members received issue papers on each of these topics (see Attachment 5) as background reading for the discussions that followed.

Small Group Discussions Developing Recommendations in Three Topical Areas

Committee members participated in small group discussions for the remainder of the afternoon, deliberating and developing recommendations related to the three topic areas which the Working Groups had identified as a means for strengthening collaboration.

Joye Frost requested that the Committee also consider how the Office for Victims of Crime Training and Technical Assistance Center (OVC TTAC) can do more effective outreach and increase support of training and technical assistance in Indian country.

Linda Logan commented on the importance of considering access to resources for tribal communities since too often tribal communities must do more with less.

Joye Frost thanked everyone for their contributions to the discussions.

Jim Clairmont, Spiritual Leader of the Sincagu Lakota Oyate Tribe, conducted a traditional closing at the end of the day.

Day 2 – December 5, 2012

Jim Clairmont, Spiritual Leader of the Sincagu Lakota Oyate Tribe, conducted a traditional opening.

Overview of the Three Demonstration Sites in the AI/AN SANE-SART Initiative

Bonnie Clairmont, Victim Advocacy Program Specialist at the Tribal Law and Policy Institute, presented an overview of the three AI/AN SANE-SART Initiative demonstration sites:

- Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (MBCI).
- Tuba City Regional Health Care Corporation (TCRHC).
- Southern Indian Health Center (SIHC).

In the overview, she described how each site is meeting the challenges of strengthening collaboration, developing written protocols, providing culturally appropriate services, and prioritizing sexual violence in their own communities. She also listed the major activities and accomplishments of each site. (For the full PowerPoint presentation, see Attachment 6.) Bonnie

Clairmont closed her presentation with the following remark: “Overall, the AI/AN SANE-SART project coordinators are working to improve services to victims (children and adults).”

Discussion of Draft Recommendations

Kathleen Gless presented the list of draft recommendations (see Attachment 7) that the FAC members developed during small group discussions the previous day. She explained that other issues and ideas were captured as well and that the list will be shared with the Committee following the meeting.

Sarah Deer asked the Committee to review the list of potential recommendations and raise red flags about any of the recommendations so that they could address these concerns before moving on to discussing the recommendations. The Committee identified the following concerns that require careful consideration in drafting the final recommendations:

- Confidentiality, especially if evidence kits are covered by health insurance.
- Sovereignty issues in information sharing.
- Standardization of evidence kits.
- Appropriate use of new technologies.

The Federal Advisory Committee members formed the following subcommittees in order to address these concerns more specifically and continue to review and refine the draft recommendations.

- Subcommittee A: Beverly Fletcher, Sarah Collins, Peggy Bird, Donna Keeler, Hallie Bongar-White. This subcommittee will address recommendations 5/6, 7, 8, 28, 32, and 36.
- Subcommittee B: Karen Joyce-McMahon, Jason O’Neal, Juana Majel-Dixon, Geri Wisner-Foley, and Kim Day. This subcommittee will address recommendations 8, 33, 38, 43, and 44.
- Subcommittee C: Rose Weahake, Shirley Moses, Linda Logan, Sarah Deer, and Paul Allis. This subcommittee will address recommendations 21, 30, 31, 40, and 44.

Kathleen Gless noted that the initial work of the subcommittees is to refine the list of potential recommendations. Once the Committee has developed a final list of recommendations, they will need to determine who the recommendations should be directed to—for example, to the Department of Justice and/or other federal agencies.

Public Comments

Two members of the public added comments about the barriers that prevent Native women from seeking services and about the need for tribal participation in SARTs.

- One public observer, who teaches in Alaska on Native women surviving violence, requested that more research be done on the barriers that prevent victims from seeking services. The barriers seen in Alaska included reluctance to prosecute especially if the perpetrator is non-

Native; general lack of services, lack of a clear process to address sexual assault within the institutions, and denial among Native organizations that sexual assault happens.

- A SART trainer and sexual assault/domestic violence advocate, who has worked with the STOP Violence Against Native Women grant, commented that there is a need for more tribal participation in SARTs. Tribes need funding resources to be able to attend planning meetings and add the voices of tribal community members to the discussions on these issues.

Next Steps and Wrap-Up

Kathleen Gless summarized the next steps to follow after the meeting:

- Send to Committee members a list of subcommittee membership and associated tasks, and an updated contact list of the Federal Advisory Committee.
- Hold subcommittee meetings via teleconference in February 2013. OVC will be contacting members to set those up.
- Hold a teleconference with the entire Federal Advisory Committee before the next in-person meeting.
- Develop a final draft of recommendations before the next Federal Advisory Committee meeting that will take place in the spring of 2013.
- Consider including a representative from the National Institute of Justice at the next Federal Advisory Committee meeting to answer some questions regarding data.
- Allot additional time for reviewing demonstration site projects.
- Give further consideration to how OVC TTAC can provide more effective outreach and increase its support of training and technical assistance in Indian Country.

Sarah Deer and Kathleen Gless agreed to follow up on each of the requests and encouraged the Committee to contact them about additional next steps to take in the coming months.

Juana Majel-Dixon thanked the designees who came and emphasized that the official Federal Advisory Committee members need to be at the table for these discussions.

Kathleen Gless expressed appreciation to the Committee members for the time they have taken to contribute to this important work and thanked them for keeping victims at the center of the meeting.

Sarah Deer provided the following closing remarks: “We have been waiting a long time for a committee like this, and here we have it. This is very exciting and we have a set of potential recommendations that can really make a difference. Survivors are depending on us.”

Jim Clairmont, Spiritual Leader of the Sincagu Lakota Oyate Tribe, conducted a traditional closing.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the foregoing minutes are accurate and complete.



Sarah Deer (Mvskoke)

Chair

National Coordination Committee on the American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN)
Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner – Sexual Assault Response Team (SANE-SART) Initiative

These minutes will be formally considered by the Committee at its next meeting and any corrections or notations will be incorporated in the minutes of that meeting.

Attachments

Attachment 1 Agenda

Attachment 2 Committee Member Biographies

Attachment 3 Overview of AI/AN SANE-SART Initiative, Kathleen Gless

Attachment 4 Overview of AI/AN SANE-SART Federal Working Groups, Leila Goldsmith

Attachment 5 Issue Papers (Written Sexual Violence Response Protocols, Commitment to Culturally Relevant Sexual Violence Responses, and Prioritization of Sexual Violence Resources)

Attachment 6 Overview of AI/AN SANE-SART Initiative Demonstration Sites, Bonnie Clairmont

Attachment 7 List of Draft Recommendations