

PAH! : *Partners Advocating for Healing*

A collaborative, community-wide effort to increase accessibility and responsiveness of the service delivery system to Deaf and Hard of Hearing survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

INTRODUCTION

PAH!: *Partners Advocating for Healing* is a community collaborative effort to increase responsiveness and accessibility of the service delivery system to Deaf and Hard of Hearing survivors of domestic and sexual violence. Our collaboration is a joint effort among three community programs located in Oakland County, Michigan: HAVEN, a nationally recognized Domestic and Sexual Violence Agency; Deaf Community Advocacy Network (DEAF C.A.N.!), a Deaf community resource providing a wide range of services to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community; and Deaf Women’s Advocacy Services (DWAS), a volunteer agency whose focus is to advocate for Deaf, Deaf-Blind and Hard of Hearing women who have experienced Domestic and/or Sexual Violence.

PAH! is the first and only partnership in Southeast Michigan that brings together the skills, leadership and experiences of both the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and hearing advocates. All members of the collaborative are committed to create sustained systems change within their organizations that will extend well beyond the parameters of this three year, federally funded grant. Each agency and individual member is committed to learning from one another and their agencies collective experiences in order to plan, evaluate, develop, and eventually implement culturally sensitive services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing victims of domestic and sexual violence. ALL PAH! members are grounded in the belief that ALL women and girls have the right to live violence free lives and in instances of domestic/sexual violence, the victim does nothing to provoke or invite the abuse. With this guiding belief, PAH! seeks to integrate the voices of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing community with their hearing allies to expel myths and stigmas regarding needs and concerns of domestic and sexual violence victims.

PAH! is a multi-cultural collaborative, whose members all have high level decision making power in their respective roles at their agencies. Emily Matuszczak, the Senior Director of Programs at HAVEN; Marcy Colton, the Executive Director of DEAF C.A.N.!!; and Kate Slosar and Marika Blumerick, the President and Vice President of the Board at DWAS are the sustaining members of PAH!.

Our name comes from the American Sign Language sign of "PAH", which represents the attainment of a desired result or outcome. For the Deaf community, "PAH" represents success or achievement. We thought it was only appropriate to name our collaboration PAH! , thus incorporating both the hearing community (Partners Advocating for Healing) and the Deaf community in our name.

Our name symbolizes the bridge we are building between the Deaf and hearing communities to combat domestic and sexual violence, and the successes we will reach in this endeavor. HAVEN, DEAF C.A.N.! and DWAS are striving to become a sustainable, collaborative, and look forward to establishing and building a strong relationship between our hearing and Deaf agencies. PAH! is eager to set an example to the hearing and Deaf community at large, to overcome the negative attitudes, oppression, and communication barriers experienced by Deaf and Hard of Hearing victims of domestic and sexual violence.

This collaborative is made possible by a three year federally funded planning grant from the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW). HAVEN, who is the recipient of the grant and the fiscal agent, employs Christine Giresi who serves as the Project Director. This collaborative was created to improve access to domestic and sexual violence services within the Deaf and Hard of Hearing communities in Oakland County, Michigan.

This collaboration charter provides direction and structure for PAH! as we move through our needs assessment and implementation phases. This collaboration charter includes:

1. Vision Statement
2. Mission Statement
3. Values
4. Member Contributions and Commitments
5. Communication Plan (Internal and External)
6. Decision Making Strategy
7. Conflict Resolution Strategy
8. Terms of Confidentiality
9. Key Terms
10. Work Plan
11. Talking Points
12. Appendix I, II & III.

1. PAH! VISION STATEMENT

Deaf and Hard of Hearing victims of domestic and sexual violence will receive immediate services from PAH! agencies that are fully responsive, accessible and free from communication and cultural barriers. They will feel supported and empowered to move forward in their lives. Our services will support Deaf and Hard of Hearing victims in their journeys from crisis to healing in a competent and trusting environment.

2. PAH! MISSION STATEMENT

PAH! will ensure the delivery of fully accessible and responsive services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing victims of domestic and sexual violence, which will include crisis intervention, counseling, advocacy and shelter. PAH! will accomplish this mission through the following actions:

- Sharing our individual experience and expertise in our respective fields, to build a strong and trusting relationship with one another.
- Sharing experiences in our agencies and our communities
- Increasing knowledge and awareness within our agencies regarding the differences between Deaf and hearing cultures.
- Increasing awareness and knowledge of domestic and sexual violence within DEAF C.A.N.! and DWAS.
- Increasing our communication capacity to appropriately and effectively communicate with Deaf and Hard of Hearing survivors utilizing certified Sign Language interpreters and the latest communication technologies.
- Changing our existing policies, procedures, job descriptions, practices and budgets within our agencies to reflect our learned best practices in providing services to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing victims of domestic and sexual violence.
- Advocating for external systems change in areas such as criminal justice, health care, education and the legal arena, to make services accessible and responsive to Deaf and Hard of Hearing victims of domestic and sexual violence.

3. PAH! VALUES

The following values will aid us in developing our relationships with one another, thus providing our collaboration with a nurturing, supportive environment for free thinking and exchange of ideas. PAH!'s goal is that these values will contribute to comprehensive, sustainable change that will unite the Deaf and hearing cultures in the fight to end domestic and sexual violence. We believe if we do not employ these values, our collaboration will be unable to support our mission and vision.

Trust

Trust is the most important value in our collaboration. The hearing members of our collaborative must earn the trust of the Deaf community, who have been labeled and oppressed by the hearing. Concurrently, our Deaf members need to put aside their learned distrust of the hearing world and be open to trusting the hearing members of our group. This trust will be established and will grow as we spend more and more time together, and become more familiar with our multi cultural, bi-lingual status. We are a team of allies.

Hearing Allies

We believe in the concept of Hearing Allies, and consider our collaboration a *hearing ally* relationship. At the inception of PAH!, both HAVEN and DEAF C.A.N.! members of PAH! are hearing individuals. Although our DEAF C.A.N.! representative is fluent in ASL, she is still *hearing*. As hearing allies, we work with, not for the Deaf community to improve services. We believe in taking direction from the Deaf community and providing culturally and linguistically accessible services.

Respect

We have a great deal of respect for one another's agencies and the expertise each of one of us brings to our collaborative. We encourage, support and celebrate cultural differences, and we treat one another as we would treat ourselves.

Communication

We are a bi-lingual collaboration; therefore our ability to communicate clearly with one another is paramount to our success. Challenges arise within our collaboration because in reality, we speak two different languages: American Sign Language and Spoken English. Our hearing members must understand the additional time it may take our Deaf members to process information and make decisions, whether it be face to face with the help of an ASL interpreter, or through email or text. Our Deaf members must understand that some of our hearing members do not fully understand the intricacies of the American Sign Language and must be prepared to explain it to them. As collaboration, we must

ensure that all members understand what is being said – we must ensure that perception is accurate with meaning.

In Deaf culture, if one is hearing and does not speak American Sign Language (ASL), a certified interpreter is recommended for communication. As a result, we will always employ an ASL interpreter for all our face to face meetings, and use relay services when needed.

Perpetrator Accountability

We believe in holding those who use abusive tactics accountable for their behavior. Perpetrators need to identify their patterns of abusive behavior and the impact their abuse has on their partners and children, as well as the losses they experience as a result of utilizing these tactics. We believe perpetrators of violence can identify and change their beliefs associated with abuse and develop non-abusive ways of coping as well as plans to remain violence free.

Victim Rights

We believe all people have a right to violence-free lives. Domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse should never be tolerated or condoned. These acts have devastating effects on victims, their families and society as a whole. The civil and legal rights of an individual should not be violated. It is our responsibility to educate Deaf clients about their legal and civil rights.

Victim Safety

We respect the individual emotional and physical needs of each victim. The victim's environment must be supportive, nurturing and free of judgment. We believe each victim's safety is self-determined, and only the victim can truly determine his/her own level of safety based on personal experience. We can only offer safety options, and these options must be explained clearly to enable Deaf and Hard of Hearing clients to make person-centered decisions. Victim Safety will always be a guiding principle for PAH! as it crafts any procedures, policies, events, or services. Safety will be considered in all contexts; the Deaf Community; cultural issues; victims of domestic/sexual violence; and safety for victim advocates.

Equality

As a collaborative, no PAH! member will exhibit power over another member. PAH!'s collaborative will not be formatted on a traditional hierarchal corporate format. Each member is responsible to ensuring their ideas, thoughts and feelings are heard and integrated by the group.

Diversity

People are unique in race and ethnicity, spiritual beliefs and values, sexual orientations, educational backgrounds, interests and personalities. We are a multi-cultural collaborative, and as such, we value our cultural differences; we understand and appreciate our similarities and differences, and believe our diverse backgrounds and beliefs make us a stronger collaboration.

4. COLLABORATION MEMBERS: CONTRIBUTIONS AND COMMITMENTS

The three community resources representing PAH! are committed to increasing the responsiveness and accessibility of the service delivery system for Deaf and Hard of Hearing survivors of domestic and sexual violence. Members of PAH! are also committed to making the changes necessary to improve services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing survivors of domestic and sexual violence. As the project advances from the planning to the implementation phases, the contributions and commitments of each entity may change, but for the planning stage, the partners have agreed to commit time and staff to the following:

- Ensure consistent representation at collaboration meetings
- Communicate PAH! activities and create interest in PAH! within their respective agencies.
- Communicate agency activities and updates back to PAH!
- Work on homework deliverables between meetings
- Participate in activities aimed at strengthening PAH!
- Identify the focus of PAH!
- Actively participate and communicate ideas to develop the PAH! Collaborative Charter, Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan.
- Commit staff and time to attend the meetings sponsored by the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) and the Vera Institute of Justice (Vera).
- Bring agency and system specific expertise and knowledge and share these strengths within PAH!
- Become change agents within their respective agencies, to amend policies and procedures as a result of our work on this project.
- Embrace a bi-lingual/bi-cultural approach to our collaboration, and to the services provided by our organizations.

In addition to the responsibilities stated above, HAVEN and the Project Director will:

- Serve as the fiscal agents
- Maintain compliance with grant requirements
- Serve as the liaison between PAH! partners, OVW and Vera
 - o Coordinate PAH! meetings and activities
 - o Complete and submit grant deliverables
 - o Complete grant reporting to OVW
 - o Communicate between PAH! agencies
 - o Provide meeting space and other accommodations for meetings and grant activities
- Share HAVEN expertise of domestic and sexual violence with DEAF C.A.N.! and DWAS including:
 - o Emotional and Physical effects
 - o Crisis and support services
 - o Social Action Program
 - o Counseling
 - o Legal Process
 - o Supervised Parenting
 - o Prevention Education
 - o Shelter Program
- Conduct research for the Needs Assessment portion of the grant with HAVEN's Board of Directors, employees, volunteers, and past clients.
 - o Host PAH! focus groups at HAVEN.
 - o Create survey for HAVEN employee feedback.
 - o Recruit volunteer members for PAH! focus groups.
 - o Conduct one on one interviews with past clients.
 - o Develop culturally understandable questions for the focus groups and surveys.
 - o Identify community based organizations to host focus groups.
 - o Compile all information received from the focus groups and present to the collaborative.
 - o Help to interpret the information gleaned from the focus group.
 - o Assist in the development of the Strategic Plan.

DEAF C.A.N.! will:

- Make awareness of and identification of Domestic and Sexual Violence more at the forefront of service delivery to Deaf and Hard of Hearing people.
- Schedule and provide all interpreters for PAH! meetings and grant activities
- Share resources in terms of space, staff time, and volunteer pool
- Share DEAF C.A.N.! knowledge and expertise of the Deaf and

Hard of Hearing community

- Deaf history and culture
- Barriers to communication
- Promote the work of the collaboration within the Deaf community and within the DEAF C.A.N.! monthly newsletter.
- Board training to ensure education, information and knowledge of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
- Staff Training to ensure education, information and knowledge of Domestic and Sexual Violence.
- Ensure that part of the goals and objectives of the agency include identification of and services for victims of Domestic and Sexual Violence.
- On-going staff training on issues of Domestic and Sexual Violence.
- Conduct research within the Deaf community for the Needs Assessment portion of the grant.
 - Host PAH! focus groups at DEAF C.A.N.!
 - Conduct interviews with Deaf clients who have used HAVEN services in the past.
 - Recruit volunteer Deaf community members for PAH! survey's and focus groups
 - Develop culturally understandable questions for the focus group/needs assessment
 - Identify Deaf and Hard of Hearing community based organizations to host focus groups
 - Set up focus groups with Deaf and Hard of Hearing community based groups
 - Conduct all interviews and focus groups with members of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Communities.
 - Compile all information received from interviews and focus groups and present to the collaborative.
 - Help to interpret the information gleaned from the focus group.
 - Assist in the development of the Strategic Plan.

DWAS will:

- Share Deaf culture and history and ensure the collaborative has a good understanding of the specific needs of this community.
- Bring expertise on the needs of Deaf survivors as they relate to Deaf culture
- Provide the collaboration with a comprehensive view of the Deaf community in Oakland County (i.e. demographics etc.).
- Provide linkages to the Deaf community through grassroots networking, and promote the collaboration as a *hearing ally* to the Deaf community.
- Raise awareness, educate and explain to the Deaf community about domestic and sexual violence

- Provide contacts for nationwide Deaf resources for domestic and sexual violence victims.
- Keep an ongoing list of agreed upon, conceptually correct representations of signs that symbolize the true ASL meaning and spoken English meaning for common words used when discussing domestic and sexual violence. Words on this list so far are vulnerable, victim, risk, exploit, abuse and confidentiality. DWAS will be pioneers of new sign words and concepts for this grant project.
- Review written documents to ensure they are accurate in terms of Deaf culture.
- Conduct focus groups within the Deaf community for the Needs Assessment portion of the grant.
 - o Host PAH! focus groups at DEAF C.A.N.!
 - o Recruit volunteer Deaf community members for PAH! focus groups.
 - o Develop culturally understandable questions for the focus group/needs assessment.
 - o Identify Deaf and Hard of Hearing community based organizations to host focus groups.
 - o Set up focus groups with Deaf and Hard of Hearing community based groups.
 - o Conduct all focus groups/needs assessment with members of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Communities.
 - o Compile all information received from the focus groups and present to the collaborative.
 - o Help to interpret the information gleaned from the focus group.
 - o Assist in the development of the Strategic Plan.

LEAD AGENCY:

HAVEN

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 Website: www.haven-oakland.org

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Project Manager
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Senior Director
Direct Service Programs
Phone: 248-334-1284 x380

Emily Matuszczak

Ms. Matuszczak is currently the Senior Director of Programs for HAVEN, is second in command to HAVEN CEO, and has spent the last 17 years in the field of domestic and sexual violence.. Ms Matuszczak received both her Bachelors

Degree in Human Resources and her Masters Degree in Counseling from Oakland University. She is a licensed counselor within the state of Michigan. As the Senior Director of Programs, Ms. Matuszczak oversees the following: HAVEN's quality assurance process; direct service programs; grant writing and funding requirements; Program Directors; the development and implementation of HAVEN's systems change plan; and leadership to special projects. Ms Matuszczak is passionate about impacting crimes that affect women and operates on the belief that in time, we can create a culture where domestic violence and sexual assault are no longer tolerated.

Christine Giresi

Ms. Giresi is currently the Project Director at HAVEN, working specifically with the PAH! collaboration. Ms. Giresi received her Bachelor's Degree in Economics from Rutgers University, and her Masters in Social Work from Wayne State University. She has over ten years experience in project management, as well as marketing and product development. Prior to coming to HAVEN, she was the patient services manager for the Michigan chapter of the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Ms. Giresi continues to be involved in oncology social work, serving as a support group facilitator for Gilda's Club Metro Detroit.

HAVEN believes that all people have a right to violence –free lives. Domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse should not be tolerated or condoned. HAVEN believes these acts have a devastating effect on victims, their families and the entire society. HAVEN believes abusive acts are acts of power and control that the victim does not provoke, enjoy or deserve. Moreover, HAVEN believes victims can regain control of their lives through appropriate support services.

HAVEN recognizes that women, children and men have a right to their own identities and need not define themselves according to cultural traditions, some of which tolerate abuse. The aim of HAVEN is to eliminate root causes of abuse and to believe education is a vital component in working toward the prevention of physical and sexual violence.

Partner Agencies

Deaf Community Advocacy Network (DEAF C.A.N.!)

2111 Orchard Lake Road Suite 101

Sylvan Lake, MI 48320

Phone: 248-332-3331

TTY: 248-332-3323

Website: www.deafcan.org

Marcy Warheit Colton, MA, LPC
Executive Director

Ms. Colton is the Executive Director of DEAF C.A.N.! and reports to the Board of Directors of DEAF C.A.N.! Ms. Colton received her Master's degree in Deafness Rehabilitation from New York University and her Bachelor's degree in Sociology from the University of California, Berkeley. She has been the Executive Director of Deaf Community Advocacy Network since 1983 and has implemented a multitude of programs and services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing communities in southeastern Michigan. Ms. Colton was also a gubernatorial appointee to the Division on Deaf and Hard of Hearing's advisory council and has held countless board positions in organizations of and for Deaf people

DEAF C.A.N.! offers a wide range of services that focus on narrowing health, economic, legal, and educational disparities that occur due to the communication barriers that Deaf people face. The majority of DEAF C.A.N.! clients are chronically underserved and face discrimination based on their deafness. Services do not center on "fixing" the individual's deafness. The agency board and staff believe Deaf people are members of a linguistic minority, and as such services are provided from a cultural perspective utilizing American Sign Language. Wherever possible, staff works to create systematic, institutional change to better serve the community.

Deaf Women's Advocacy Service (DWAS)

PO Box 721084
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Kate Slosar, MA
President, DWAS

Kate Slosar is currently the President of the Deaf Women's Advocacy Service (DWAS), and also serves as a pastoral worker with the Archdiocese of Detroit, serving two Deaf Churches in Southeast Michigan. Ms. Slosar received her Masters of Arts in Pastoral Studies in the Deaf Field from St. Thomas University, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, and her Bachelors in History from Madonna University. Ms. Slosar has been a pastoral worker for the Deaf community for over 15 years, and is the past chairperson of the National Catholic Office for the Deaf.

Marika Vorosmarty Blumerick, LPC
Vice President, DWAS

Marika Vorosmarty Blumerick is the Vice President of DWAS, and is currently an instructor at Macomb Community College where she has taught advanced American Sign Language classes for over 20 years. She became the first

certified Deaf substance abuse counselor in the State of Michigan, where she has practiced for over two decades.

Ms Blumerick was a gubernatorial appointee to both the Michigan Board of Mental Health and the Division on Deafness where she served for eight years. In addition, she has held many board positions in organizations of and for Deaf people. Besides being the Vice President of the DWAS Board, she is also a current board member of Deaf Community Advocacy Network (DEAF C.A.N.!), an active volunteer and Committee Chair for "Relay for Life" and an advisor for the American Sign Language Club at Macomb Community College. She is the proud mother of three children, the grandmother of three, and a sports-enthusiast with the Michigan Senior Olympics and the National Senior Olympics with over 100 medals to her name. In her spare time, she travels abroad and has visited over 20 foreign countries.

DWAS is an all Deaf, all volunteer agency which provides services to Deaf and Deaf-Blind victims of domestic and sexual violence. Their mission is to provide empowerment to victims through a 24 hour crisis network, counseling, and medical, legal and systems advocacy. DWAS is also committed to changing attitudes which foster and perpetuate violence.

5. COMMUNICATION PLAN (INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL)

The key to the success of PAH! will be our ability to communicate effectively with one another, within our respective agencies, with Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals, with the media and other external entities. As mentioned in our values, we are a bi-lingual, multi-cultural collaboration, without absolute multi-cultural, bi-lingual fluency.

We know we will have challenges communicating due to our multi cultural, bilingual foundation. Not so much in conversing, but in the duality of perception and meaning. The meaning of a concept can be interpreted differently, for both hearing and Deaf people. In addition, interpretation of a concept can be influenced by many aspects, such as race and ethnicity, spiritual beliefs and values, sexual orientations, educational backgrounds, interests and personalities. Therefore, we are conscious of how Deaf people's lives are shaped by their identities and experiences as members of a cultural and linguistic minority group.

Our internal communication process consists of the transfer of information between members of PAH!, and with PAH! members and their respective agencies, either through email, phone, text messaging or face to face meetings; whether they be group meetings or one on one meetings.

Our external communication will take place with the Vera Institute, OVW, various media and community stakeholders. The following section describes how PAH! intends to communicate both internally and externally.

ALL PAH! members will be proactive in seeking clarity of communications to reduce misunderstanding related to language differences. Members will use in person, professionally translated communication when discussing critical issues or items that must be agree upon. When secondary lines of communication are utilized, such as email, text, relay, etc. these items and focus of conversation will be reviewed at meetings for further clarification. The project director will assure on-going clarifying questions throughout the meetings to ensure the reduction of "assumptions of understanding", and how words, ideas and concepts are interpreted by difference languages as well as individuals.

Internal Communication

PAH! Meeting Guidelines

When communicating, PAH! members listen carefully and respect one another's opinions and suggestions. The preferred mode of communication for PAH! is to have face to face meetings whenever possible. Face to face meetings decrease the probability of misinterpretation of information, and since we know interpretation is a challenge for all of us, we would like to limit other modes of communication when possible (email/texting). ASL certified interpreters will be present at all PAH! collaboration face to face meetings to ensure an accurate and precise language exchange between Deaf and hearing members of PAH!. The meeting environment is open and neutral to afford an easy exchange of ideas. During the meeting, the Project Director will frequently ask if everyone has a clear understanding of the each concept. If a member does not understand a concept, that member is responsible for raising a question, so the group can then discuss and explain the concept until a mutual understanding is reached.

Due to the bi-lingual make-up of this collaboration, all members are responsible for asking clarifying questions such as: "What does this mean to you?", "What impact might this have on victims?", "What might that mean to a hearing ally working with a Deaf victim?", "Is this an idea that is sustainable?", "How does this concept relate to all PAH! agencies?", "Do we need to bring in other people for a different perspective?".

During the planning phase, the four-person core of PAH! will meet once per week for two hours with the project director. These meetings will be held at HAVEN administrative offices and facilitated by the project director. This schedule is subject to change as we move into the implementation phase of the grant. Collaboration members may increase duration and frequency of meetings as necessary during the implementation phase. At any point, other members of our agencies besides PAH! members may attend meetings as necessary. At each meeting, minutes will be recorded and distributed to the collaboration.

The project director is responsible for scheduling PAH! meetings, distributing minutes and ensuring all members understand all the concepts of discussion regardless of whether the information is signed, written or orally transferred.

Between PAH! Members

When not meeting as a group, PAH! members will engage in direct communication on an as needed basis through email, phone and one on one, face-to-face meetings. Subjects discussed will be distributed by email on an as needed basis by the participating PAH! members. If a hearing member is speaking with a Deaf member face to face, an ASL certified interpreter must be present.

Modes of Communication

As mentioned earlier, a face to face meeting in the presence of ASL certified interpreters is our primary choice for communicating. If we cannot meet face to face, we have determined that email is the most efficient communication tool for our collaboration. Email will be employed for the dissemination of information and documents, as well as questions and responses, meeting agendas, minutes, and any other information related to the collaboration. The Project Director is the primary contact for all information regarding the collaboration and is responsible for distributing relevant information to the group. As part of our communication access outside of meetings, we will use email as our first line of communication. From time to time, we will also employ text messaging and the videophone as a mode of communication.

Collaborative Partner Agencies

PAH! members serve as liaisons to staff, senior management and board members in our respective organizations. PAH! members will be responsible for regularly updating their respective agencies on our progress at staff and management meetings, and in any other arena that is deemed appropriate. PAH! members will also be responsible for sharing any feedback, suggestions, or other pertinent information from their agencies with the PAH! collaborative. During the Needs Assessment phase of this grant, PAH! members will also be surveying, interviewing and holding focus groups with their agencies and board

members. Details of those interactions will be included in the PAH! Needs Assessment Plan.

PAH! Members and their Agencies

HAVEN: **Emily Matuszczak** is responsible for updating the CEO, Beth Morrison on the status of PAH!.and relaying PAH! status to HAVEN Board of Directors. Emily is also responsible for bringing any information and feedback to the group from the HAVEN CEO and its Board of Directors. **Christine Giresi**, is responsible for relaying PAH! status to the HAVEN staff at monthly all staff meetings; Direct Service meetings; and Director’s meetings. She is also responsible for bringing information back to PAH! from these sources.

DEAF C.A.N.!: **Marcy Colton** is responsible for relaying PAH! information to and from her staff and Board of Directors. Marcy updates her staff at monthly staff meetings, and her Board of Directors through email and Board of Directors meetings.

DWAS: **Kate Slosar** will be updating her Board of Directors and volunteers in regards to PAH! activities. She is responsible for bringing back information and feedback from her Board of Directors and staff to the PAH! collaborative. This information exchange will happen at monthly volunteer meetings and Board of Directors meetings.

External Communication

Vera Institute of Justice (Vera)

The Project Director will be the key contact person for the Vera Institute and will communicate on a regular basis with the assigned Vera program associate. Other project partners can also initiate communication as needed. On occasion, our Vera program associate will participate in collaborative meetings to ensure that all project partners have opportunities for contact with her.

Office on Violence Against Women (OVW)

The Project Director, the HAVEN Senior Director of Programs, and the CEO of HAVEN (the Fiscal Agent) will be the primary points of contact with OVW.

With the Deaf Community

The Southeast Michigan Deaf community is a major stakeholder in our collaborative. From what we have learned so far, this community is undereducated and apathetic, which is evidenced by it’s lack of volunteerism and support of efforts that would otherwise further enhance the lives of Deaf individuals living in Southeast Michigan. The issues in the Deaf community mirror the issues present in the hearing community here in Southeast Michigan (socioeconomic, cultural, racial, etc.), and segregation between African-American

and Caucasian Deaf is extremely evident. The dynamics of this population will be taken into serious consideration during the Needs Assessment phase, in which PAH! will be interviewing and holding focus groups with Deaf individuals.

When interacting with the Deaf community, Kate Slosar (DWAS), Marika Blumerick (DWAS) and Marcy Colton (DEAF C.A.N.!) will be the key contacts. All communication to the Deaf community pertaining to PAH! will originate from DEAF C.A.N.! and DWAS. Our HAVEN representatives are not fluent in ASL, and therefore when attending a Deaf event and representing PAH!, they will be accompanied by a representative of DEAF C.A.N.! or DWAS. All interviews and focus groups with Deaf participants will be produced and processed by DEAF C.A.N.! and DWAS. When the project director is present for the interviews or focus groups with Deaf participants, a certified ASL interpreter will also be present.

Other stakeholders

Our collaboration will communicate with additional stakeholders in the community as needed to maintain positive relationships with both the Deaf and hearing communities to support the work of the collaboration. The collaboration will potentially be communicating with the following hearing systems: the legal community; health and wellness community; criminal justice community; educational institutions and local government. Project partners will use PAH! talking points in communicating information about the project to additional stakeholders.

Media Relations

Talking Points

The collaboration has developed jointly agreed upon, uniform messaging for responding to media and information requests regarding the PAH! collaborative. These talking points are heavily influenced by Deaf culture, and encompass the mission and vision of PAH!, our respective agencies, and our collaborative goals.

Media Contact

When proactively contacting the media, we will determine the best PAH! designate depending on the media source. HAVEN media designates are Beth Morrison (CEO) and Christine Giresi (Project Director). Deaf community experts are Kate Slosar and Marcy Colton. Any comments made to the media should be based on the agreed upon Talking Points and the mission, vision, and values of the collaboration.

When responding to media requests, Beth Morrison (HAVEN CEO) will be the primary contact for media requests. If Beth is unavailable, Christine Giresi

(Project Director) or Emily Matuszczak will respond. If the request is from a Deaf publication, but pertaining to HAVEN, Beth Morrison (HAVEN CEO) will be the primary contact. If the inquiry is pertaining to the Deaf community and domestic violence, both Beth Morrison and Kate Slosar (DWAS) will be media designates. Media designates will always follow PAH! Talking Points.

If the media inquiry is pertaining to general disability, the HAVEN media plan will be in effect. The first line of contact in the HAVEN media plan is Beth Morrison, HAVEN CEO; second is Emily Matuszczak, Senior Director of Programs; third is Tracey Thomas, Director of Development.

After contact with the media, the media designate will inform collaboration members of media communication. An email will be sent by the designate to the collaboration by end of business day. As mentioned earlier, email is our chosen mode of communication and allows all members of PAH! equal access to receiving information.

Contact Documentation

When media contact is made by any PAH! media designate, information regarding the contact and any resulting articles should be sent to the Project Director. Any noted issues about the contact, such as unknown information or misquotes, should be included as well.

6. DECISION MAKING STRATEGY

Consensus Decision Making

Consensus and equal distribution of representation in the decision making process is very important to the group. PAH! will strive to achieve unanimous approval about issues affecting the group. To achieve this consensus, we will use a gradient scale to assess the degree of support or opposition.

The gradient scale will range from one through five, with one signifying full support and five signifying no support. The following is a breakdown of the gradient scale we will use:

1. Yes, I am in full support
2. Yes, I can tolerate it.
3. I'm not sure. I need more information
4. No. But I'm willing to continue discussion on the topic, and it's possible I will change my decision.
5. No Way. I will not support.

If all members register at a one or two, consensus is achieved and the group will move forward with the decision. If any members register at a three or a four, we will continue to discuss until we reach consensus. If for any reason a group member registers a five, the group will then look at recommendations and alternatives, and ensure that the idea being considered is represented clearly. A decision will not be made final until there is total consensus. The main focus of this decision-making strategy is to provide an environment where all members are satisfied and feel they are being represented equally and fairly.

Decision Making Authority

Collaboration Authority

The collaboration will have a primary role in decisions that impact the vision or mission of the collaboration. The collaboration will also be able to provide input in regards to budget revisions, technological equipment needs, travel and attendance at OVW sponsored meetings. The collaboration will also have input on the collaboration charter, needs assessment plan and report, and the strategic plan.

Fiscal Agent Authority

HAVEN, acting as fiscal agent, has the authority to employ and supervise the project director. HAVEN also manages the OVW grant budget through the OVW Grant Management System, and submits the required financial reports to OVW. HAVEN is also the authority on creating grant change requests to alter the allocation of funds within the grant. HAVEN, acting as fiscal agent, has the authority to employ and supervise the project director with feedback from the collaborative.

Project Director Authority

The project director is the point of contact for OVW and the primary contact for the Vera Institute. The project director has the authority to drive the daily functional decisions of the grant such as setting agendas and logistics for meetings, summarizing meeting outcomes and circulating information to partners.

7. CONFLICT RESOLUTION STRATEGY

If the collaboration reaches an impasse or is unable to reach a consensus, PAH! will follow the following formal conflict resolution strategy:

1. Discuss the disagreement, being guided by our vision, mission and values.
2. Discuss aspects of the conflict upon which we agree.
3. Review our opinions, then five business days we will revisit our positions.
If we still disagree;
4. Move to mediation

The mediator for this grant period will be our Vera associate. If an agreement cannot be reached through mediation, our Vera associate will decide if the Office on Violence Against Women will need to be contacted.

8. CONFIDENTIALITY

Client

PAH! believes in the survivor's right to confidentiality – it is an individual's choice who knows his/her story of domestic and/or sexual violence. Any personal information about individuals beings served by any of the agencies in the collaboration will remain confidential and will be exchanged within the collaboration only as necessary and as allowed by any policies governing the way in which the information was procured (under Michigan Law, communications between a victim and a domestic violence or sexual assault counselor are protected under MCL600.2157(a) . Records containing the identity, case notes, treatment plan, historical or situational status of any client, past or present, of HAVEN, DEAF C.A.N, or DWAS shall be confidential and shall be disclosed only for the purposes of advancing the work of the collaboration in creating systems' change. None of the aforementioned, private information will be shared beyond the boundaries of the collaboration without the full and formal, written consent of the client.

To further ensure confidentiality, the group will never use 'name signs' when discussing a client. Initials or a code name will be developed for text email, and demographics will not be communicated in writing. All serious issues will need to be discussed face to face. Furthermore, if a videophone is utilized with a client, all numbers will be erased and deleted.

The needs assessment survey and report will contain only measurable data and information necessary to meeting the needs of the participant. Any information from which a client could be potentially identified will be kept within the collaboration and not shared beyond its boundaries. Further, participants will be made aware of all procedure and confidentiality guidelines, and their

participation will in no way affect access to services from partner agencies at any time.

If a participant discloses in an interview or group setting, ALL survivor information collected and recorded will be protected to the fullest extent, as all survivor/client information is kept confidential at HAVEN, DWAS and DEAF C.A.N.!. All confidential data collected during our needs assessment phase will be kept at HAVEN. HAVEN's confidentiality clause is as follows:

Communications between a victim and a domestic violence or sexual assault counselor are protected under MCL600.2157(a):

Except as provided by section 11 of the child protection law, Act No. 238 of the Public Acts of 1975, being section 722.631 of the Michigan Compiled Laws, a confidential communication, or any report, working paper, or statement contained in a report or working paper, given or made in connection with a consultation between a victims and a sexual assault or domestic violence counselor, shall not be admissible as evidence in any civil or criminal proceeding without the prior written consent of the victim.

Records containing the identity, case notes, treatment plan, historical or situational status of any client, past or present, of HAVEN shall be confidential and shall be disclosed only for the purposes so authorized by this policy statement. All materials in the case record, and knowledge of clients not held in the record, regardless of its source, are subject to this policy.

This policy shall apply to all persons who perform services for this agency: counseling, therapy, advocacy, clerical, administrative, students and volunteers. No rule or regulation can take the place of a conviction on the part of each staff person and volunteer that scrupulous protection of client information is a fundamental obligation.

If the participant utilizes HAVEN's services after disclosure, and requires HAVEN to advocate for them to acquire other services outside of HAVEN, HAVEN requires a written release of information signed by the participant. Clients should be informed at the time the release is signed that it can be revoked at anytime. Such revocation should be in writing whenever possible. When possible, a HAVEN release form should be used and witnessed by a HAVEN staff person.

Consent must be sought each time additional information is released and must state the specific information that can be released. "Blanket" consents, either expressed or implied, are not acceptable. HAVEN staff may release only the specific information, which is contained in the client's release of information form for the period of time specified. Information can only be released to the person

or position within an agency as identified in the release form. Staff may not release information which was gathered from another agency or any other information contained in the client's file except that which originated with HAVEN.

****Concerns****

During the needs assessment phase, we will encounter situations in which confidentiality will not be under our full control. For example, during a focus group, a survivor discloses an experience. PAH! advocates can assist victims that disclose within the group setting by processing in private the pros/cons of their disclosure and the need for safety planning and/or further follow up. But, the PAH! collaborative cannot guarantee another participant in the group will not share the information outside of the focus group. And due to the small size of the Deaf community in general, it is most likely the survivor's disclosure may become public knowledge among the Deaf community.

It is also possible that an interpreter may discuss their experience with another interpreter, or Deaf individual. Although PAH! only utilizes Certified Interpreters, and they are held to very high standards of professionalism and ethical conduct, we cannot 100% guarantee their confidentiality.

PAH! Member

If Collaboration members share any personal information in our meetings and request confidentiality, this information will not be shared with anyone outside of the collaboration. PAH! members are expected to respect the privacy of other members, and this information is to be kept within the group.

Participating Agencies

Potentially sensitive information (such as client information, funding, etc.) regarding our respective agencies that is discussed in PAH! meetings will not be discussed outside of the group. As a cooperative coalition, the work we do is to ensure a safe environment in which services can be provided to our clients. As we work toward this goal, we will amass and investigate information about our procedures and policies with the goal of improving delivery, accessibility, safety and efficacy. It is possible an exception will be made if Vera or OVW need to be informed of a particular situation, but otherwise all information deemed sensitive will remain within the collaboration.

Certified Interpreters

To facilitate effective communication, PAH! will only utilize certified/qualified Interpreters. Interpreters must be certified or qualified as recognized by the National Association of the Deaf (NAD), and the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc (RID) and the Division on Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Michigan

Department of Labor and Economic Growth. The National Association of the Deaf (NAD) and the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc. (RID) uphold high standards of professionalism and ethical conduct for interpreters. As certified/qualified interpreters, they must abide by the RID code of ethics. Please refer to *Appendix I* for specifics on NAD-RID code of professional conduct.

Mandatory Reporting

Child Abuse and Vulnerable Adults

In the state of Michigan, under the Social Welfare Act (Act 280 of 1939) mandatory reporters are defined as, "An employee of an agency licensed to provide health care, educational, social welfare, mental health or other human services." All five members of PAH! are licensed, social welfare professionals, and as such, we are all considered by the state of Michigan as mandated reporters. Under the Social Welfare Act and the Child Protection Law (Act 238 of 1975) we are required to report to Michigan Child Protective Services (CPS) any suspected or witnessed child abuse (under section 400.115b(2)), and the Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS) to report any abuse, neglect or exploitation of a vulnerable adult (under section 400.11a-f). A vulnerable adult is defined by Michigan legislature as "a person over the age of 18 years who is unable to protect him or herself from abuse, neglect or exploitation because of a mental or physical impairment or because of advanced age."

Our collaboration believes that Deaf, Deaf-Blind, deaf and Hard of Hearing people over the age of 18 should not be considered vulnerable adults solely on the basis of being Deaf, Deaf-Blind, deaf or Hard of Hearing. This population is not considered to have a disability, but culturally and linguistically different.

However we understand that members of this community may be determined vulnerable based upon other factors. Therefore, we will determine who is a vulnerable adult on a case by case basis in accordance with Michigan Law.

Mandated reporting will become paramount when we enter our needs assessment and implementation phase. Therefore, before any issues of domestic and/or sexual violence are disclosed by a client, he/she will be clearly and effectively informed of applicable mandatory reporting requirements and their implications so as to continue in an informed and comfortable manner.

If for any reason during our needs assessment or implementation phase, a member of our collaborative does encounter a case of child abuse or vulnerable adult abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation, local child or adult protective services will be contacted immediately if risk is current. If past incident is disclosed, a report will be made within 24 hours. A hard copy of the report will be maintained by HAVEN. Follow up referrals and services will be provided for all involved as appropriate.

This process is only utilized in the case of suspected abuse while engaged in PAH! activities. Outside of the collaborative, each member will follow their agency guidelines on mandatory reporting.

Please refer to Appendix II and III for definitions outlining the abuse and neglect of children and the abuse, neglect and exploitation of adults, as stated under Acts 238 and 280.

9. LANGUAGE / KEY TERMS

PAH! has identified the following terms that we feel are important to our work. Some definitions from the Accessing Safety Initiative website truly reflected our own definition of a term, so we chose to use the ASI definition; others we defined on our own. Any term marked with an asterisk denotes an ASI definition.

Accessibility

For Deaf victims, it is very important to consider language and Deaf culture and how these aspects affect access to services. Accessibility to services should be equal for all people, not just the hearing. Services should be easy to approach, enter, operate, participate in, and/or use safely and with dignity by a person regardless of cultural differences. Limiting the barriers to technology, language, culture and community resources for Deaf and Hard of Hearing clients is a core goal of the collaboration.

Advocacy

This is defined as any activity that a person or organization undertakes to influence policies. This includes intervening on behalf of, or representing another person or cause. We will raise awareness and we will advocate for our Deaf and Hard of Hearing survivors to remove barriers to service.

Advocate Safety

When we discuss Advocate Safety, we mean creating a secure working environment and taking measures to ensure the advocates' safety at all times.

Change Agent

A change agent is a person who indirectly or directly causes change. A change agent may initiate change, assist others in understanding the need for change and what is entailed, recruit support, manage the change process and/or assist in resolving conflict

Confidentiality*

This pertains to the ethical principles and legal rights regarding the confidentiality of all client information unless he/she permits disclosure or unless

disclosure is required by law. This pertains to the agency aiding the Deaf client, as well as interpreters, advocates, hospital staff, police and any other community professional involved in the client's case.

Collaboration*

According to the Fieldstone Alliance, collaboration is "a mutually beneficial and well-defined relationship entered into by two or more organizations to achieve results they are more likely to achieve together than alone." This relationship includes commitment to mutual relationships and goals; a jointly developed structure and shared responsibility; mutual authority and accountability for success; and sharing of resources and awards.

Deaf Culture*

Deaf and hard of hearing people do not identify as having a disability or see themselves as experiencing a limitation. Instead, they identify as a member of a cultural and linguistic group. This group of people use the term Deaf with a capital "D" to reflect their cultural identification. Their culture, known as Deaf culture, was developed based in part on a shared language, which in the United States, is American Sign Language (ASL). Like any other culture, Deaf culture has its own values, norms, community institutions, and history that are important to understand and incorporate when serving Deaf survivors. While not everyone who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing identifies with Deaf culture, many members of the Deaf community do.

Domestic Violence (IPV – Intimate Partner Violence)

Domestic violence and emotional abuse are behaviors used by one person in an intimate relationship to control the other. Partners may be married or not married; heterosexual, gay, or lesbian; living together, separated or dating. Violence can be criminal and includes physical assault (hitting, pushing, shoving, etc.), sexual abuse (unwanted or forced sexual activity), and stalking. Although emotional, psychological and financial abuse are not criminal behaviors, they are forms of abuse and can lead to criminal violence

Diversity

Diversity is defined as the inclusion of people from different races and cultures in a group or organization. For our collaboration, our diversity underscores our strength as a group.

Equality

As a collaborative, no PAH! member will exhibit power over another member. PAH!'s collaborative will not be formatted on a traditional hierarchal corporate format. Each member is responsible to ensuring their ideas, thoughts and feelings are heard and integrated by the group.

Hard of Hearing*

Individuals who experience hearing loss from a physical or audio-logical perspective. An individual who is hard of hearing may primarily use spoken language (their residual hearing and speech) to communicate.

Hearing Ally

Hearing allies work with, not for the Deaf community to improve services. Allies believe in taking direction from the Deaf community and providing culturally and linguistically accessible services.

Person Centered Planning

Person-centered planning is a process-oriented approach to empowering people with disability labels. It focuses on the people and their needs by putting them in charge of defining the direction of their lives, not on the systems that may or may not be available to serve them. This ultimately leads to greater inclusion as valued members of both community and society.

Self- Actualization

This refers to an individual's self-reliance in making independent choices, predicated on their strong, confident belief in themselves. We believe empowerment and increased self-esteem lead to self-actualization.

Sexual Violence / Rape

Defined as sexual contact which includes the intentional touching of the victim's or actor's intimate parts or the intentional touching of the clothing covering the immediate area of the victim's or actor's intimate parts, if that intentional touching can reasonably be construed as being for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification, done for a sexual purpose, or in a sexual manner.

Rape is considered a continuum of criminal sexual behavior, including forcible sexual penetration against (and between) females, forcible sexual penetration against (and between) males, non-forcible sexual assault against minors (and the physically helpless and the mentally incapacitated), sexual penetration of the vagina and anus with an object or body part other than the penis, marital rape, statutory rape, incest, fellatio, and anal intercourse.

Value

Values will be defined as strong beliefs one is willing to fight for or take a stand to support.

Victim/Survivor

A phrase that recognizes two perspectives on the experiences of people who have experienced domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. While some

agencies might refer to someone as a victim, others prefer to use a word that feels more empowering to them.

Vulnerable Adult

A person over the age of 18, who is unable to protect him or herself from abuse, neglect or exploitation because of a mental or physical impairment or because of advanced age. This person is truly vulnerable and is under full guardianship.

10. WORK PLAN

Date/ Time Frame	Key Activities	Deliverable
October 2008	HAVEN receives DOJ/OVW Grant	none
November 2008	New Grantee Orientation meeting in San Jose, CA.	none
December 2008	Project Manager hired 12/8/08	none
January 2009	Vera/OVW Site Visit (1/5-6/09)	none
January –August 2009	Collaboration Building: -Members and Agencies -Develop Vision, Mission and Values -Communication Strategies and Rules of engagement	Collaboration Charter Draft
May 2009	Vera Meeting in Indianapolis, IN	none
September 2009	Collaboration Charter to Vera and OVW	Collaboration Charter Final
September 2009- June 2010	Needs Assessment Phase - Develop methodology for needs assessment - Conduct needs assessment with the collaboration; our agencies; Deaf and Hard of Hearing community; and Deaf and Hard of Hearing survivors of domestic violence.	Needs Assessment Proposal and Tools
June 2010 –August 2010	Needs Assessment Report - Analyze data and write report based on findings	Needs Assessment Report
Sept. 2010-March 2011	Strategic Plan: -Review findings from needs assessment -Flag priority areas where gaps of service exist -Develop plan for systems change - Draft and finalize plan	Strategic Plan
April 2011 – October 2011	Implementation Phase	None

PAH! Talking Points

Who:

PAH! is collaboration between three community agencies in Oakland County, Michigan: HAVEN, DEAF C.A.N!, and Deaf Woman's Advocacy Services (DWAS). HAVEN is a nationally recognized non-profit leader in Oakland County, Michigan providing comprehensive solutions and innovative programs that promote violence-free homes and communities. DWAS is a Deaf organization dedicated to ending domestic violence within the Michigan Deaf community. DEAF C.A.N.! is a community agency which offers a wide range of services that focus on narrowing health, economic, legal, and educational disparities that occur due to the communication barriers experienced by the Deaf . Together, these three agencies bring the experiences and traditions of Deaf culture, as well as the expertise of domestic and sexual violence advocates to create PAH! – Partners Advocating for Healing. PAH! is funded by a three year grant from the Office on Violence Against Women with a mission of creating fully accessible and responsive services for Deaf survivors of domestic and/or sexual violence.

Why:

The obvious answer is that domestic violence and sexual assault is wrong. Research reveals that 1 in every 3 women will experience domestic violence and/or sexual assault in their lifetime and the number may actually be higher among underserved populations. The Deaf community is considered an underserved population for a plethora of reasons. First, the Deaf community is very small, and disclosing abuse is a risk to privacy. Therefore, many cases of domestic and sexual violence among Deaf victims are not reported. Secondly, budgetary constraints in domestic and sexual violence agencies do not allow for the cost of ASL interpreters to be on call for Deaf survivors. Finally, Deaf service providers may not know where proper services reside, and "hearing" service providers may not understand Deaf culture or provide adequate communication resources.

How:

The agencies that comprise PAH! are dedicated to the internal system changes deemed necessary to meet the needs of the Deaf community. These needs will be determined after a lengthy planning and research period, which will eventually lead to modifying the delivery of existing services so they are more accessible and responsive.

PAH! agencies are committed to creating policies and procedures that build trust, and increasing our capabilities to serve Deaf and Hard of Hearing survivors. Our collaboration between hearing and Deaf service providers will ultimately allow us

to better serve Deaf survivors. Through the improved service, we hope to increase trust levels required for Deaf survivors to disclose their experiences and utilize services.

When:

Currently PAH! is in the planning phase. After completing a needs assessment study, existing services of all three agencies will be evaluated. A strategic plan will be developed incorporating the findings from the needs assessment, and will include any necessary changes to enhance the service delivery system for Deaf survivors.

Appendix I

NAD-RID CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Scope

The National Association of the Deaf (NAD) and the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc. (RID) uphold high standards of professionalism and ethical conduct for interpreters. Embodied in this Code of Professional Conduct (formerly known as the Code of Ethics) are seven tenets setting forth guiding principles, followed by illustrative behaviors.

The tenets of this Code of Professional Conduct are to be viewed holistically and as a guide to professional behavior. This document provides assistance in complying with the code. The guiding principles offer the basis upon which the tenets are articulated. The illustrative behaviors are not exhaustive, but are indicative of the conduct that may either conform to or violate a specific tenet or the code as a whole.

When in doubt, the reader should refer to the explicit language of the tenet. If further clarification is needed, questions may be directed to the national office of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc. This Code of Professional Conduct is sufficient to encompass interpreter roles and responsibilities in every type of situation (e.g., educational, legal, medical). A separate code for each area of interpreting is neither necessary nor advisable.

Philosophy

The American Deaf community represents a cultural and linguistic group having the inalienable right to full and equal communication and to participation in all aspects of society. Members of the American Deaf community have the right to informed choice and the highest quality interpreting services. Recognition of the communication rights of America's women, men, and children who are deaf is the foundation of the tenets, principles, and behaviors set forth in this Code of Professional Conduct.

Voting Protocol

This Code of Professional Conduct was presented through mail referendum to certified interpreters who are members in good standing with the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc. and the National Association of the Deaf. The vote was to adopt or to reject.

Adoption of this Code of Professional Conduct

Interpreters who are members in good standing with the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc. and the National Association of the Deaf voted to adopt this Code of Professional Conduct, effective July 1, 2005. This Code of Professional Conduct is a working document that is expected to change over time. The aforementioned members may be called upon to vote, as may be needed from time to time, on the tenets of the code.

The guiding principles and the illustrative behaviors may change periodically to meet the needs and requirements of the RID Ethical Practices System. These sections of the Code of Professional Conduct will not require a vote of the members. However, members are encouraged to recommend changes for future updates.

Function of the Guiding Principles

It is the obligation of every interpreter to exercise judgment, employ critical thinking, apply the benefits of practical experience, and reflect on past actions in the practice of their profession. The guiding principles in this document represent the concepts of confidentiality, linguistic and professional competence, impartiality, professional growth and development, ethical business practices, and the rights of participants in interpreted situations to informed choice. The driving force behind the guiding principles is the notion that the interpreter will do no harm.

When applying these principles to their conduct, interpreters remember that their choices are governed by a "reasonable interpreter" standard. This standard represents the hypothetical interpreter who is appropriately educated, informed, capable, aware of professional standards, and fair-minded.

Tenets

1. Interpreters adhere to standards of confidential communication.
2. Interpreters possess the professional skills and knowledge required for the specific interpreting situation.
3. Interpreters conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to the specific interpreting situation.
4. Interpreters demonstrate respect for consumers.
5. Interpreters demonstrate respect for colleagues, interns, and students of the profession.
6. Interpreters maintain ethical business practices.
7. Interpreters engage in professional development.

Applicability

- A. This Code of Professional Conduct applies to certified and associate members of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc., Certified members of the National Association of the Deaf, interns, and students of the profession.
- B. Federal, state or other statutes or regulations may supersede this Code of Professional Conduct. When there is a conflict between this code and local, state, or federal laws and regulations, the interpreter obeys the rule of law.
- C. This Code of Professional Conduct applies to interpreted situations that are performed either face to-face or remotely.

Definitions

For the purpose of this document, the following terms are used:

Colleagues: Other interpreters.

Conflict of Interest: A conflict between the private interests (personal, financial, or professional) and the official or professional responsibilities of an interpreter in a position of trust, whether actual or perceived, deriving from a specific interpreting situation.

Consumers: Individuals and entities who are part of the interpreted situation. This includes individuals who are deaf, deaf-blind, hard of hearing, and hearing.

1.0 CONFIDENTIALITY

Tenet: Interpreters adhere to standards of confidential communication.

Guiding Principle: Interpreters hold a position of trust in their role as linguistic and cultural facilitators of communication. Confidentiality is highly valued by consumers and is essential to protecting all involved. Each interpreting situation (e.g., elementary, secondary, and post-secondary education, legal, medical, mental health) has a standard of confidentiality. Under the reasonable interpreter standard, professional interpreters are expected to know the general requirements and applicability of various levels of confidentiality. Exceptions to confidentiality include, for example, federal and state laws requiring mandatory reporting of abuse or threats of suicide, or responding to subpoenas.

Illustrative Behavior - Interpreters:

- 1.1 Share assignment-related information only on a confidential and “as-needed” basis (e.g., supervisors, interpreter team members, members of the educational team, hiring entities).
- 1.2 Manage data, invoices, records, or other situational or consumer-specific information in a manner consistent with maintaining consumer confidentiality (e.g., shredding, locked files).
- 1.3 Inform consumers when federal or state mandates require disclosure of confidential information.

2.0 PROFESSIONALISM

Tenet: Interpreters possess the professional skills and knowledge required for the specific interpreting situation.

Guiding Principle: Interpreters are expected to stay abreast of evolving language use and trends in the profession of interpreting as well as in the American Deaf community. Interpreters accept assignments using discretion with regard to skill, communication mode, setting, and consumer needs. Interpreters possess knowledge of American Deaf culture and deafness-related resources.

Illustrative Behavior - Interpreters:

- 2.1 Provide service delivery regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, or any other factor.
- 2.2 Assess consumer needs and the interpreting situation before and during the assignment and make adjustments as needed.
- 2.3 Render the message faithfully by conveying the content and spirit of what is being communicated, using language most readily understood by consumers, and correcting errors discreetly and expeditiously.
- 2.4 Request support (e.g., certified deaf interpreters, team members, language facilitators) when needed to fully convey the message or to address exceptional communication challenges (e.g. cognitive disabilities, foreign sign language, emerging language ability, or lack of formal instruction or language).
- 2.5 Refrain from providing counsel, advice, or personal opinions.
- 2.6 Judiciously provide information or referral regarding available interpreting or community resources without infringing upon consumers’ rights.

3.0 CONDUCT

Tenet: Interpreters conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to the specific interpreting situation.

Guiding Principle: Interpreters are expected to present themselves appropriately in demeanor and appearance. They avoid situations that result in conflicting roles or perceived or actual conflicts of interest.

Illustrative Behavior - Interpreters:

- 3.1 Consult with appropriate persons regarding the interpreting situation to determine issues such as placement and adaptations necessary to interpret effectively.
- 3.2 Decline assignments or withdraw from the interpreting profession when not competent due to physical, mental, or emotional factors.
- 3.3 Avoid performing dual or conflicting roles in interdisciplinary (e.g. educational or mental health teams) or other settings.
- 3.4 Comply with established workplace codes of conduct, notify appropriate personnel if there is a conflict with this Code of Professional Conduct, and actively seek resolution where warranted.
- 3.5 Conduct and present themselves in an unobtrusive manner and exercise care in choice of attire.
- 3.6 Refrain from the use of mind-altering substances before or during the performance of duties.
- 3.7 Disclose to parties involved any actual or perceived conflicts of interest.
- 3.8 Avoid actual or perceived conflicts of interest that might cause harm or interfere with the effectiveness of interpreting services.
- 3.9 Refrain from using confidential interpreted information for personal, monetary, or professional gain.
- 3.10 Refrain from using confidential interpreted information for the benefit of personal or professional affiliations or entities.

4.0 RESPECT FOR CONSUMERS

Tenet: Interpreters demonstrate respect for consumers.

Guiding Principle: Interpreters are expected to honor consumer preferences in selection of interpreters and interpreting dynamics, while recognizing the realities of qualifications, availability, and situation.

Illustrative Behavior - Interpreters:

- 4.1 Consider consumer requests or needs regarding language preferences, and render the message accordingly (interpreted or transliterated).
- 4.2 Approach consumers with a professional demeanor at all times.
- 4.3 Obtain the consent of consumers before bringing an intern to an assignment.
- 4.4 Facilitate communication access and equality, and support the full interaction and independence of consumers.

5.0 RESPECT FOR COLLEAGUES

Tenet: Interpreters demonstrate respect for colleagues, interns and students of the profession.

Guiding Principle: Interpreters are expected to collaborate with colleagues to foster the delivery of effective interpreting services. They also understand that the manner in which they relate to colleagues reflects upon the profession in general.

Illustrative Behavior - Interpreters:

- 5.1 Maintain civility toward colleagues, interns, and students.
- 5.2 Work cooperatively with team members through consultation before assignments regarding logistics, providing professional and courteous assistance when asked and monitoring the accuracy of the message while functioning in the role of the support interpreter.
- 5.3 Approach colleagues privately to discuss and resolve breaches of ethical or professional conduct through standard conflict resolution methods; file a formal grievance only after such attempts have been unsuccessful or the breaches are harmful or habitual.
- 5.4 Assist and encourage colleagues by sharing information and serving as mentors when

appropriate.

5.5 Obtain the consent of colleagues before bringing an intern to an assignment.

6.0 BUSINESS PRACTICES

Tenet: Interpreters maintain ethical business practices.

Guiding Principle: Interpreters are expected to conduct their business in a professional manner whether in private practice or in the employ of an agency or other entity. Professional interpreters are entitled to a living wage based on their qualifications and expertise. Interpreters are also entitled to working conditions conducive to effective service delivery.

Illustrative Behavior - Interpreters:

6.1 Accurately represent qualifications, such as certification, educational background, and experience, and provide documentation when requested.

6.2 Honor professional commitments and terminate assignments only when fair and justifiable grounds exist.

6.3 Promote conditions that are conducive to effective communication, inform the parties involved if such conditions do not exist, and seek appropriate remedies.

6.4 Inform appropriate parties in a timely manner when delayed or unable to fulfill assignments.

6.5 Reserve the option to decline or discontinue assignments if working conditions are not safe, healthy, or conducive to interpreting.

6.6 Refrain from harassment or coercion before, during, or after the provision of interpreting services.

6.7 Render pro bono services in a fair and reasonable manner.

6.8 Charge fair and reasonable fees for the performance of interpreting services and arrange for payment in a professional and judicious manner.

7.0 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Tenet: Interpreters engage in professional development.

Guiding Principle: Interpreters are expected to foster and maintain interpreting competence and the stature of the profession through ongoing development of knowledge and skills.

Illustrative Behavior - Interpreters:

7.1 Increase knowledge and strengthen skills through activities such as:

- pursuing higher education;
- attending workshops and conferences;
- seeking mentoring and supervision opportunities;
- participating in community events; and
- engaging in independent studies.

7.2 Keep abreast of laws, policies, rules, and regulations that affect the profession.

CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Registry of Interpreters
for the Deaf

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Alexandria, VA 22314

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703/838-0459 (TTY)

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www.rid.org

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Appendix II

THE SOCIAL WELFARE ACT (EXCERPT) Act 280 of 1939

400.11 Definitions.

Sec. 11.

As used in this section and sections 11a to 11f:

(a) "Abuse" means harm or threatened harm to an adult's health or welfare caused by another person. Abuse includes, but is not limited to, nonaccidental physical or mental injury, sexual abuse, or maltreatment.

(b) "Adult in need of protective services" or "adult" means a vulnerable person not less than 18 years of age who is suspected of being or believed to be abused, neglected, or exploited.

(c) "Exploitation" means an action that involves the misuse of an adult's funds, property, or personal dignity by another person.

(d) "Neglect" means harm to an adult's health or welfare caused by the inability of the adult to respond to a harmful situation or by the conduct of a person who assumes responsibility for a significant aspect of the adult's health or welfare. Neglect includes the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, or medical care. A person shall not be considered to be abused, neglected, or in need of emergency or protective services for the sole reason that the person is receiving or relying upon treatment by spiritual means through prayer alone in accordance with the tenets and practices of a recognized church or religious denomination, and this act shall not require any medical care or treatment in contravention of the stated or implied objection of that person.

(e) "Protective services" includes, but is not limited to, remedial, social, legal, health, mental health, and referral services provided in response to a report of alleged harm or threatened harm because of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

(f) "Vulnerable" means a condition in which an adult is unable to protect himself or herself from abuse, neglect, or exploitation because of a mental or physical impairment or because of advanced age.

History: Add. 1982, Act 519, Eff. Mar. 30, 1983 ;-- Am. 1990, Act 122, Imd. Eff. June 26, 1990

Compiler's Notes: Former MCL 400.11, creating an irrevocable medical assistance account within the general fund, was repealed by Act 321 of 1966.

Popular Name: Act 280

Appendix III

CHILD PROTECTION LAW (EXCERPT) Act 238 of 1975

722.622 Definitions.

Sec. 2.

As used in this act:

(a) "Adult foster care location authorized to care for a child" means an adult foster care family home or adult foster care small group home as defined in section 3 of the adult foster care facility licensing act, 1979 PA 218, MCL 400.703, in which a child is placed in accordance with section 5 of 1973 PA 116, MCL 722.115.

(b) "Attorney" means, if appointed to represent a child under the provisions referenced in section 10, an attorney serving as the child's legal advocate in the manner defined and described in section 13a of chapter XIIA of the probate code of 1939, 1939 PA 288, MCL 712A.13a.

(c) "Central registry" means the system maintained at the department that is used to keep a record of all reports filed with the department under this act in which relevant and accurate evidence of child abuse or neglect is found to exist.

(d) "Central registry case" means a child protective services case that the department classifies under sections 8 and 8d as category I or category II. For a child protective services case that was investigated before July 1, 1999, central registry case means an allegation of child abuse or neglect that the department substantiated.

(e) "Child" means a person under 18 years of age.

(f) "Child abuse" means harm or threatened harm to a child's health or welfare that occurs through nonaccidental physical or mental injury, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or maltreatment, by a parent, a legal guardian, or any other person responsible for the child's health or welfare or by a teacher, a teacher's aide, or a member of the clergy.

(g) "Child care organization" means that term as defined in section 1 of 1973 PA 116, MCL 722.111.

(h) "Child care provider" means an owner, operator, employee, or volunteer of a child care organization or of an adult foster care location authorized to care for a child.

(i) "Child care regulatory agency" means the department of consumer and industry services or a successor state department that is responsible for the licensing or registration of child care organizations or the licensing of adult foster care locations authorized to care for a child.

(j) "Child neglect" means harm or threatened harm to a child's health or welfare by a parent, legal guardian, or any other person responsible for the child's health or welfare that occurs through either of the following:

(i) Negligent treatment, including the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, or medical care.

(ii) Placing a child at an unreasonable risk to the child's health or welfare by failure of the parent, legal guardian, or other person responsible for the child's health or welfare to intervene to eliminate that risk when that person is able to do so and has, or should have, knowledge of the risk.

(k) "Citizen review panel" means a panel established as required by section 106 of title I of the child abuse prevention and treatment act, Public Law 93-247, 42 U.S.C. 5106a.

(l) "Member of the clergy" means a priest, minister, rabbi, Christian science practitioner, or other religious practitioner, or similar functionary of a church, temple, or recognized religious body, denomination, or organization.

(m) "Controlled substance" means that term as defined in section 7104 of the public health code, 1978 PA 368, MCL 333.7104.

(n) "CPSI system" means the child protective service information system, which is an internal data system maintained within and by the department, and which is separate from the central registry and not subject to section 7.

(o) "Department" means the family independence agency.

(p) "Director" means the director of the department.

(q) "Expunge" means to physically remove or eliminate and destroy a record or report.

(r) "Lawyer-guardian ad litem" means an attorney appointed under section 10 who has the powers and duties referenced by section 10.

(s) "Local office file" means the system used to keep a record of a written report, document, or photograph filed with and maintained by a county or a regionally based office of the department.

(t) "Nonparent adult" means a person who is 18 years of age or older and who, regardless of the person's domicile, meets all of the following criteria in relation to a child:

(i) Has substantial and regular contact with the child.

(ii) Has a close personal relationship with the child's parent or with a person responsible for the child's health or welfare.

(iii) Is not the child's parent or a person otherwise related to the child by blood or affinity to the third degree.

(u) "Person responsible for the child's health or welfare" means a parent, legal guardian, person 18 years of age or older who resides for any length of time in the same home in which the child resides, or, except when used in section 7(2)(e) or 8(8), nonparent adult; or an owner, operator, volunteer, or employee of 1 or more of the following:

(i) A licensed or registered child care organization.

(ii) A licensed or unlicensed adult foster care family home or adult foster care small group home as defined in section 3 of the adult foster care facility licensing act, 1979 PA 218, MCL 400.703.

(v) "Relevant evidence" means evidence having a tendency to make the existence of a fact that is at issue more probable than it would be without the evidence.

(w) "Sexual abuse" means engaging in sexual contact or sexual penetration as those terms are defined in section 520a of the Michigan penal code, 1931 PA 328, MCL 750.520a, with a child.

(x) "Sexual exploitation" includes allowing, permitting, or encouraging a child to engage in prostitution, or allowing, permitting, encouraging, or engaging in the photographing, filming, or depicting of a child engaged in a listed sexual act as defined in section 145c of the Michigan penal code, 1931 PA 328, MCL 750.145c.

(y) "Specified information" means information in a children's protective services case record related specifically to the department's actions in responding to a complaint of child abuse or neglect. Specified information does not include any of the following:

(i) Except as provided in this subparagraph regarding a perpetrator of child abuse or neglect, personal identification information for any individual identified in a child protective services record. The exclusion of personal identification information as specified information prescribed by this subparagraph does not include personal identification information identifying an individual alleged to have perpetrated child abuse or neglect, which allegation has been classified as a central registry case.

(ii) Information in a law enforcement report as provided in section 7(8).

(iii) Any other information that is specifically designated as confidential under other law.

(iv) Any information not related to the department's actions in responding to a report of child abuse or neglect.

(z) "Structured decision-making tool" means the department document labeled "DSS-4752 (P3) (3-95)" or a revision of that document that better measures the risk of future harm to a child.

(aa) "Substantiated" means a child protective services case classified as a central registry case.

(bb) "Unsubstantiated" means a child protective services case the department classifies under sections 8 and 8d as category III, category IV, or category V.

History: 1975, Act 238, Eff. Oct. 1, 1975 ;-- Am. 1978, Act 252, Eff. Mar. 30, 1979 ;-- Am. 1980, Act 511, Imd. Eff. Jan. 26, 1981 ;-- Am. 1984, Act 418, Eff. Mar. 29, 1985 ;-- Am. 1988, Act 372, Eff. Mar. 30, 1989 ;-- Am. 1990, Act 212, Imd. Eff. Sept. 27, 1990 ;-- Am. 1993, Act 251, Imd. Eff. Nov. 24, 1993 ;-- Am. 1996, Act 581, Eff. Mar. 31, 1997 ;-- Am. 1998, Act 428, Eff. Apr. 1, 1999 ;-- Am. 1998, Act 483, Eff. Mar. 1, 1999 ;-- Am. 1998, Act 484, Eff. July 1, 1999 ;-- Am. 1998, Act 531, Eff. July 1, 1999 ;-- Am. 2000, Act 45, Imd. Eff. Mar. 27, 2000 ;-- Am. 2002, Act 661, Imd. Eff. Dec. 23, 2002 ;-- Am. 2002, Act 693, Eff. Mar. 1, 2003 ;-- Am. 2004, Act 563, Imd. Eff. Jan. 3, 2005