



Gay Men's Domestic Violence Project

Strategic Plan

For Fiscal Years 2012 to 2017

Approved by the GMDVP Board of Trustees September 26, 2011

Dedication

This Strategic Plan is dedicated to GLBTQ victims of domestic violence-related homicide.

In the five months from March through August of 2011, there have been at least four known confirmed/suspected gay male domestic violence-related homicides in Massachusetts. As of September 1, 2011, gay men constitute over 20% of all known confirmed/suspected domestic violence homicides in Massachusetts in 2011.

In March, 41 year-old Malden resident Michael Losee turned himself over to authorities in the wake of the stabbing death of his husband, 55 year-old Brian Bergeron. Also in March, 65-year old Malden resident Burton Berenson allegedly shot 65-year old Irving Burton in their apartment and then shot himself. In April, James Costello was arraigned on charges of assault and battery with a deadly weapon for the murder of David Walton; both lived in the same building in the Taunton area while the murder was committed at a campground in Provincetown. In August, 47 year-old Winthrop resident, John Lacoy, stands accused of killing 36 year-old Casey Taylor in his bedroom and then hiding the body beneath his porch for weeks – the Assistant District Attorney described their relationship as both "intimate and volatile."

Domestic violence advocates have identified at least 3 additional confirmed/suspected GLBTQ domestic violence-related homicides in Massachusetts in the past 17 months. Still under investigation is the death of Annamarie Rintala of Granby, whose body was found in March 2010 in the basement of the home she shared with her wife Cara Rintala and their child. She had been strangled and suffered blunt trauma to the head. Cara Rintala had been arrested in 2008 for punching Annamarie Rintala in the back of the head. In May, 2010, 33 year-old Miguel Oquendo was allegedly stabbed in the back by 23-year old Jeran Cortez in the apartment that they shared. In August 2010, Eunice Field of Brockton confessed to killing Lorraine Wachsman, who she blamed for breaking up Field's relationship with her (Field's) former girlfriend.

Advocates agree that these numbers are likely to be lower than the actual number of GLBTQ domestic violence-related homicides. "Because so many LGBTQ individuals feel compelled to hide their sexual orientation and/or gender identity just to get by, homicides that were actually domestic violence related may have been erroneously reported as being committed by a roommate or friend," said Toni Troop, Director of Communications at Jane Doe Inc.

GLBTQ people experience partner abuse in their lifetime at the same alarming rates as heterosexual women. Unfortunately, the potential support for GLBTQ survivors can be greatly hindered by the lack of seriousness attributed to the issue. A 2010 survey conducted by the Gay Men's Domestic Violence Project (GMDVP) found that 82% of the GLBTQ community felt domestic violence was a priority for the community, yet only 24% could name a resource to help them if they were a victim.

GMDVP Strategic Plan for FY12 to FY17

I. Overview of GMDVP

GMDVP was founded in 1994 by a gay male who was denied services by multiple mainstream domestic violence shelters. Initially, the organization had a distinct focus on creating services for gay male victims of domestic violence, specifically emergency shelter and safe home services. GMDVP quickly realized, however, that it was also critical to address education, awareness and advocacy within the GLBTQ community, the domestic violence community, the funding community and society-at-large.

Over the past 17 years, the organization has grown to provide direct services throughout Massachusetts (consisting of emergency safe home, 24-hour hotline, legal services and a range of community-based services), education and outreach for the GLBTQ community and for domestic violence and law enforcement professionals, and policy advocacy within organizations, state agencies and the Massachusetts State Legislature. In 2007, GMDVP expanded its scope of services to provide supportive 24-hour hotline services to Rhode Island and Connecticut. GMDVP has always provided services to any survivor, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, but until now has focused its outreach, education and advocacy on gay and bisexual men and transgender individuals. GMDVP is proud to affirm its support for all GLBTQ survivors of Domestic violence.

Currently, GMDVP has a Board of Trustees consisting of nine active members and employs 12 staff in five facilities across Massachusetts. GMDVP utilizes approximately 100 volunteers in departments throughout the organization. The annual operating budget for the organization is approximately \$750,000.

The strategic planning process was undertaken at a pivotal point in the organizational evolution of GMDVP, as well as at a momentous time for GLBTQ rights. Since the founding of GMDVP, much has changed, yet much more work needs to be done to realize our vision for a future where less intimate partner violence occurs and where culturally competent domestic violence services are fully accessible to the GLBTQ community. Our vision and mission statements are presented below, followed by a summary of our strategic goals through fiscal year 2017.

II. Vision Statement

We envision a future where individuals, communities, institutions and policy makers are all working together to increase awareness and reduce the incidence of domestic violence experienced by GLBTQ individuals and where all victims and survivors of domestic violence have equal access to quality services.

III. Mission Statement

To assist and support victims and survivors of domestic violence, focusing on the GLBTQ community, to bring about responsive public policy, and to increase access to culturally competent services.

IV. Strategic Goals for GMDVP

1. Build Services for Victims and Survivors

GMDVP will build upon and strengthen its solid foundation of community-based and residential services currently provided to victims and survivors, including the 24-hour hotline. GMDVP will specifically focus on the following three goals:

- **Expand and improve safe home services** Our three-bed safe home is the only GLBTQ culturally specific, residential domestic violence facility in New England. However, there are now some mainstream shelters in Massachusetts that will house GLBTQ survivors, including RESPOND in Somerville, which made its shelter fully inclusive of male survivors in 2010 with technical assistance from GMDVP. In addition, there are two other GLBTQ “beds” in Massachusetts, which are provided through 2-5 day hotel vouchers with no residential staff supervision.

While mainstream domestic violence shelters can provide 24/7 staffing and have the capacity to allow guests to remain housed until a more stable, permanent placement can be found, GMDVP is funded for safe home services only. As such, GMDVP currently only provides 62 hours of safe home staffing weekly and guests are generally limited to a 90-day stay. Subject to availability, we never turn away any survivor who seeks community-based services or a safe home bed regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation.

On any given night, there is a wait list for domestic violence shelter placement in Massachusetts. With only five GLBTQ-specific beds in the entire state, emergency shelter for the GLBTQ population is woefully inadequate. Furthermore, because the GMDVP safe home is not staffed 24/7, the level of service available to the GLBTQ community is not equal to that provided to the mainstream population.

Additionally, while there are numerous studies documenting successful clinical approaches for working with female heterosexual survivors, there is no evidence-based clinical approach for working with GLBTQ victims and survivors of domestic violence. To-date, GMDVP has used an informal variation of the empowerment model with our clients.

Our goals are to (1) increase the number of beds in our safe home, (2) increase our safe home staffing, (3) identify and implement a new clinical model for GLBTQ survivors, and (4) study and report on the effectiveness of such model.

- **Expand legal services for GLBTQ domestic violence survivors** In order to maintain their safety and rebuild their lives, GLBTQ victims and survivors must often address a host of civil legal issues, such as protection orders, family law issues, employment, housing, access to benefits, and other legal concerns. GMDVP legal services provide free assistance for safety planning, referrals, and legal representation.

Our goal is to increase the capacity of our legal program by hiring an additional attorney.

- **Explore incorporation of sexual assault services** Sexual assault and domestic violence can be separate experiences with a survivor of one not experiencing the other. However, many people who experience domestic violence also experience sexual assault at the hands of their abusive partner. The underlying motivation for power and control and the resulting level of trauma for the survivor is similar in many ways. As a result, many domestic violence programs are “dual” programs specifically serving survivors of sexual assault and/or domestic violence. Massachusetts’ statewide coalition of domestic violence service providers is itself a coalition of domestic violence and sexual assault service providers. Most policy work views these issues as linked, and the most influential policy entity in Massachusetts is the Governors’ Council to address Sexual and Domestic Violence. Within GMDVP, we have long worked with domestic violence survivors who have either experienced sexual assault within the abusive relationship or who are still overcoming a sexual assault from earlier in their life.

Our goal is to explore the feasibility of incorporating sexual assault services into our range of services.

2. Build Community Engagement

GMDVP will build and strengthen its current connections with the GLBTQ community, the domestic violence and social service provider community, and the communities of funders, policymakers and media relevant to our mission. GMDVP will specifically focus on the following three goals:

- **Increase awareness of domestic violence among minority groups and marginalized subpopulations within the GLBTQ community** There are many underserved subpopulations within the larger GLBTQ population, and these groups face numerous additional barriers to accessing services. Compounding this issue, there remains a lack of awareness of domestic violence within the GLBTQ community and a limited understanding of the power and control issues that are the underlying cause of all intimate partner abuse. This lack of awareness can prevent victims from self-identifying. Their fear that others will not believe them, support them, treat them appropriately due to their GLBTQ status, or because they feel ashamed or do not understand what is happening in their relationship, may cause victims and survivors to be reluctant to reach out for help.

Over the past year, GMDVP has played a key role as a convener of nonprofit organizations, health care providers, affinity groups, faith-based organizations, and other organizations that serve the Black GLBTQ community. Through a series of discussions, GMDVP was able to bring together a number of organizations to increase awareness of issues related to domestic violence in the Black GLBTQ community and to start a conversation about how best to reach out and provide services to this community.

Our goals are to continue our activities as a convener of organizations that serve the Black GLBTQ community and to expand our role as a convener of organizations that serve other GLBTQ subpopulations, including GLBTQ individuals with disabilities.

- **Increase awareness of GLBTQ domestic violence among policymakers, legislators and funders** Since the founding of GMDVP, one of its most significant achievements has been to effect changes in policy, legislation and funding that have resulted in increased awareness and access to domestic violence services for the GLBTQ community across southern New England. In fact, GMDVP is widely recognized and admired for its leadership role on policy and advocacy issues and is seen as a trailblazer in this area.

Our goal is to continue to advocate for equal access to services, and expanded services, for all victims and survivors of domestic violence, with a priority of securing funding to expand the access of GLBTQ victims and survivors to both culturally specific and culturally competent residential services.

- **Increase awareness of GLBTQ domestic violence among mainstream domestic violence organizations and help build their capacity to serve the GLBTQ community** Many mainstream domestic violence organizations in Massachusetts have transitioned to accepting GLBTQ victims and survivors for community-based services. Fewer, albeit a slowly growing number, have transitioned to accepting GLBTQ individuals into their residential facilities, some with technical assistance from GMDVP. There is a clear need for significant technical assistance for mainstream programs across southern New England to assist them in transitioning to GLBTQ inclusiveness and cultural competency. This is true for programs that are just deciding to make the transition to inclusiveness as well as for many mainstream programs that have already adopted an inclusive acceptance policy, but have not engaged in the work necessary to make their environment culturally competent and welcoming for GLBTQ individuals.

Our goal is to provide training and technical assistance to a minimum of four domestic violence organizations, with at least two located west of Interstate 495, to help them provide culturally competent and welcoming services to GLBTQ victims and survivors.

3. Build Organizational Capacity

In order to accomplish our goals and to achieve our desired impact from our programs, we recognize that GMDVP will have to significantly increase its organizational capacity and move beyond the “founder stage” to become a more robust and sustainable organization. GMDVP will develop and implement a more proactive and strategic approach to program development and will formulate internal policies and procedures that ensure more consistent service delivery. We will also clarify goals for all programs and develop outcome measurement tools and data tracking systems to demonstrate program results and show accountability to funders and the communities we serve. In addition, we will develop strategic alliances with other domestic violence service providers to enable us to more fully leverage our core competencies and achieve our mission. GMDVP will specifically focus on the following three goals:

- **Develop a stronger governance function** As a small organization with ambitious strategic goals, GMDVP will need strong leadership at the board level to help the organization continue its transition from a founder-led organization to one that is more institutionalized and financially sustainable over the long term. The Board of Trustees will recruit new members with skills and backgrounds to round out the current membership composition and will review and restructure board committees as needed to align with the strategic goals of GMDVP.

Our goals are to expand the maximum size of the Board of Trustees from 12 to 18 members and to maintain a minimum of 12 active members at all times.

- **Serve the entire GLBTQ population** As a result of this strategic planning process, GMDVP has decided to expand its mission to serve the entire GLBTQ community. GMDVP has played a critical role in educating the GBT community about domestic violence and has been the leading voice in New England for male-identifying victims and survivors of domestic violence since our inception. At the same time, we have been advocating on the policy level on behalf of the entire GLBTQ community for over ten years, and have been serving the entire GLBTQ community in our safe home, with our community-based services, and with the legal services program. GMDVP feels that it can position itself to be the most effective advocate for the entire community by formally changing our focus population to the entire GLBTQ community.

To reflect our expanded focus, our goals are to (1) change the name of the organization, (2) recruit new board members, and (3) revise our website, advertising, education and other materials accordingly.

- **Increase Financial Stability** GMDVP relies on a mix of public and private support to fund its programs and services. To achieve its strategic goals and improve its financial stability, it is imperative that GMDVP increase both its overall annual operating budget, as well as its annual unrestricted funds.

Our goals are to (1) increase our annual operating budget to a minimum of \$1,000,000, and (2) increase our unrestricted funds revenue—whether from public or private sources—annually by 17%, from \$165,000 annually to \$350,000 annually, in five years.

V. The Planning Process

Nanette Robicheau of TDC, a Boston-based nonprofit consulting group, facilitated the overwhelming majority of the planning process for this strategic plan. Activities began in late 2010 and went through September 2011. The process included the following elements:

- The Strategic Planning Committee, consisting of four Board members and four senior staff or managers, oversaw all planning activities and drafted the final recommendations based on input and discussions with the Board, staff and external stakeholders.
- Staff input included confidential interviews with eight staff members and an electronic survey completed by seven staff members. Additionally, directors and senior managers from each program contributed to a Steady State Analysis Report at the beginning of the planning process and each crafted and presented a program goals and outcomes document for discussion with the Strategic Planning Committee.
- Board input included confidential interviews with three current Board members, Board participation on the Strategic Planning Committee and Board review and guidance at regular Board meetings.
- External stakeholder input included confidential phone interviews with 16 external stakeholders including public, private and individual funders, policymakers, GLBTQ community leaders, directors of domestic violence service programs, a director of a sexual assault service program, a director of GLBTQ HIV prevention program and directors of other GLBTQ domestic violence service programs.

VI. External Scan Research Findings

Agency-wide – Stakeholders feel GMDVP accomplishes a lot with a small amount of resources, pointing to both its significant breadth of services/programs and its three-state geographic service area. Most stakeholders expressed a desire to see GMDVP expand its focus population to the full GLBTQ community and many identified transgender victims and survivors as specifically being at higher risk. External stakeholders see a continued need for services for male victims of domestic violence and feel that existing services for men are inadequate to fully address the need. Funders speak highly of GMDVP and feel that GMDVP has a strong ability to engage diverse sectors of the community through exceptional marketing.

Policy advocacy – GMDVP is seen as excelling at policy/funding advocacy, having a high impact at the statehouse, with state agencies and with changing how mainstream providers respond to GLBTQ victims and survivors. Some external stakeholders pointed to GMDVP' strength as a collaborator, its willingness to be part of a team responding to community needs and its ability to bring about social change.

Education and Public Awareness - GMDVP's education work is seen as strong, groundbreaking, critical and effective. Its high-profile advertising campaigns are viewed as pioneering and its Popular Opinion Leader prevention work is thought to work particularly well in the community. GMDVP is recognized as a strong provider of professional education, especially due to its role in developing and disseminating the GLBT Domestic Violence Coalition's Intimate Partner Screening Tool which is considered a tremendous asset to the field, worthy of the national recognition it has received.

Direct Client Services - GMDVP's safe home is seen as vitally important, recognized as a service that saves lives and there was a strong desire to see more beds for GLBTQ and male victims and survivors. GMDVP's legal services, hotline and community based services were all seen as critical services for the community, with some stakeholders suggesting GMDVP consider expanding the hotline nationally.

VII. Acknowledgements

GMDVP would like to thank all of the individuals involved in the process of developing this Strategic Plan, with special appreciation for the external stakeholders who generously gave of their time to ensure the final plan was well informed.

External Stakeholders

Ron Ansin <i>Individual Donor</i>	Sheridan Haines <i>MA Governor's Council to Address Sexual & Domestic Violence</i>
Jessica Brayden <i>RESPOND, Inc</i>	Brian King <i>Gay & Bi Men's Health Program</i>
Karen Cavanaugh <i>Womanshelter/Compañeras</i>	Stephanie Lee <i>Verizon Foundation</i>
Kelcie Cooke <i>Fenway Health Violence Recovery Program</i>	Beth Leventhal <i>The Network/La Red</i>
Quynh Dang <i>MA Department of Public Health</i>	Tammy Mello <i>MA Department of Children and Families</i>
Dee Dee Edmondson <i>GLBTQ Legislative Policy Expert</i>	Maryse Mitchell-Brody <i>National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs</i>
Janet Fine and Allison Srinivasan <i>MA Office of Victim Assistance</i>	Gina Scaramella <i>Boston Area Rape Crisis Center</i>
Gunner Scott <i>MA Transgender Political Coalition</i>	

Strategic Planning Committee

Committee Chair: Scott Jones, *Board of Trustees Vice-Chair (May 2011 – present)*

Kevin Kealing <i>Board of Trustees Chair (May 2011 – present) Secretary (April 2009 – May 2011)</i>	Curt Rogers Executive Director
Christopher Hartley <i>Board of Trustees Chair (April 2009 – May 2011)</i>	Adrian Budhu Director of Development and Communication
Christopher Schiavone <i>Board of Trustees Vice-Chair (April 2009 – May 2011)</i>	Wayne Thomas Managing Attorney
	Robert Craig Managing Advocate Community-Based Services

GMDVP Board Members

September 2011

Kevin Kealing, *Chair*
V.P. HIV/AIDS and Community Services
Northeast Behavioral Health

Scott Jones, *Vice Chair*
Partner, Proskauer Rose LLP

Mike Roberts, *Treasurer*
Freelance Accounting Consultant

James Singleton, *Secretary*
Community Manager, Communispace

Dennis Berounsky, *Board Member Emeritus*
Senior Accountant
The Home for Little Wanderers

John Basile
Vice President of Human Resources/Diversity
Fidelity Investments

Greg DeCenzo
Senior Human Resources Manager
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Wayne Thomas
Managing Attorney

Brandon Tunney
Office/Admin Manager

Blake Johnson
Regional Hotline Advocate

Jeff Suiter
Safe Home Advocate

For confidentiality and safety reasons, three additional staff members have not been listed above due to the internet accessibility of this document.

GMDVP would like to extend a special thank you to Nanette Robicheau of TDC for her guidance and consultation on the development of this strategic plan.



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