



Summary of Dual Program Conference Calls – May 2013

The Partnership held two conference calls with dual (DV/SA) programs on May 22nd and 23rd to address questions about our coalition's policy process and create a space for those programs to let us know what their specific needs are as members of two coalitions and providers of dual services. The calls had a combined attendance of 21 participants, and we thank them all for spending time with us on this call. The following is a summary of the points covered on both calls.

Introduction

Each call opened with Tara Shabazz, executive director of the Partnership, explaining that the Partnership recognizes that certain policy issues can have a specific impact on our dual members, particularly when the Partnership's position is in conflict with other stakeholders, notably the sexual assault coalition. In recognition of this tension, and the concerns from some dual programs that their voices may not be heard through the Partnership's policy process, we made the decision to host these calls to explain our process and hear from dual programs about any recommendations they may have for how to address these issues.

Each of the Partnership's seven regions has a Public Policy and Research Committee (PPRC). The regional co-chairs and committee members volunteer a significant number of hours to review and guide our policy work, and we are extremely thankful for all of their hard work. The committees vary in size and levels of experience in policy work, but the feedback and positions of all regions is valued and given equal consideration. The Partnership is committed to this collaborative leadership process. It is key to advancing our mission. The Partnership's decision-making process is driven by 12 primary criteria, which includes considering the concerns of dual DV/SA agencies.

Another essential element of our advocacy is our collaboration with other stakeholders and advocacy groups. The Partnership always considers ways that we can work in collaboration with the other groups, but sometimes we are faced with situations where the positions of the PPRCs, and therefore the Partnership's consensus position, does not align with that of other strategic partners. Recognizing that conflict can arise, we have always taken the very grassroots approach of working through our PPRCs to hear from members throughout the state; this approach has historically guided our policy work.

Every year at our Statewide PPRC meeting we evaluate this approach to see what is and isn't working, and what we can do to improve. That is one of the questions we would like to hear from all participants on: what can we do to improve this process to make sure that the voices of dual programs are heard, especially on bills that will directly impact them as dual agencies? What can we do to better engage more members on critical issues, recognizing that not all members have the capacity to participate in the PPRCs?

PPRC Overview

The Partnership's public policy specialist, Krista Niemczyk, gave a brief overview of the PPRC process. As was already mentioned in the introduction, each of the seven regions has a PPRC. These PPRCs meet monthly, and during the legislative session use these calls to review all of the DV-related legislation. Each region has the opportunity to discuss the various bills and take a regional position to either support, oppose or monitor. Regions can also suggest amendments or ask for more information and further discussion. Krista, or another Partnership staff member, participates in all of the regional calls to hear the discussions and feedback, and record the region's votes. All of the regional co-chairs also participate in a monthly co-chair call for further discussion about the bills and other policy issues. The majority vote of all seven regions ultimately decides the Partnership's formal position. All of the feedback from the PPRC calls is extremely helpful in shaping how we talk about bills with legislators and stakeholders.

Review of Decision-Making Criteria

Tara took some time to go through all of the Partnership's decision-making criteria.

Feedback from Participants

We then opened up the call to all participants for their questions, feedback, suggestions, and any other thoughts.

- Several participants expressed appreciation for the decision to support the SAVE Act and for the letter sent out to the membership
- Some callers expressed feeling that they did not have a voice in the process with the SAVE Act – either because they are not a PPRC member or because they missed the PPRC call when the bill was discussed.
- One participant raised a concern that the PPRCs are speaking for the entire region when they may not have heard from all the programs, especially the dual programs on this issue.
- A suggestion was made that when a bill will have a specific impact for dual programs that we have a statewide call for dual programs to weigh in and vote on the bill.
- A participant spoke to recognize all of the work done by the PPRC in her region to review all of the bills and solicit feedback.
- A suggestion was made that bills like the SAVE Act need more attention than the others, and it would be helpful to pull them out for a broader discussion and call with a broader group.
- A suggestion was raised that we keep in mind working “for the greater good” rather than necessarily “creating a perfect bill,” specifically with issues like the SAVE Act when we are trying to work collaboratively with CALCASA.

Next Steps

The Partnership's Statewide PPRC meeting will be Tuesday September 24th. This topic and the suggestions will be included for discussion, and everyone is encouraged to consider attending. More information and an agenda will be sent out as the date gets closer. The Partnership will also be doing a survey to gather feedback from the membership in advance of the meeting. This will include questions about bill ideas for the next legislative session and questions about other policy issues, and will provide space for general feedback.

Everyone is encouraged to reach out to either Tara or Krista directly with any questions or suggestions about the Partnership's policy work. Email: tara@cpedv.org; krista@cpedv.org. Phone: 916-444-7163.