



CITY OF MISSOULA

Police Department

"Honor, Valor, Pride"

USDOJ Press Conference May 11, 2015

The Missoula Police Department has been working to improve its response to sexual assault for nearly three years, entering into an agreement with the USDOJ in May of 2013. During that time we have developed Policies and Protocols modeled after policies recommended by the International Association of Chiefs of Police. These guidelines provide direction for first responders and detectives handling of these cases.

Sex Assault Response Training has been instrumental in guiding our officers in a consistent professional manner. MPD has completed over 3800 hours of training in sexual assault response, investigation, supervision and documentation in the last two years. Initial first responder training was provided in 2013 followed by investigations classes. In addition two advanced trainings were offered, DNA in Sexual Assault Investigations and Forensic Experiential Trauma Interviewing. We have also implemented on line trainings through Ending Violence Against Women International which will continue with ongoing sections for several years.

All newly hired officers will receive specific training in sexual response and investigation, policy and SOP.

Supervisors have received additional training specific to close supervision during the response to a sexual assault, report review and management.

The analysis of MPD data shows over 80% of the victims were assaulted by a non stranger. The training and development of skills related to non stranger and alcohol or drug- facilitated sexual assault investigations was also a critical area of the progress made.

Through enhanced policy, SOP, training and oversight the MPD is able to ensure victim centered investigations.

MPD now has investigators assigned to these cases specifically through the development of a sex and violent crimes unit. This unit also has an in-house advocate which allows for seamless access to victim services and a coordinated response between law enforcement, prosecution and advocacy. The MPD has stressed the importance of providing access to and encouraging use of medical services in coordination with St Patricks Hospital First Step facilities.

Victims suffering from traumatic events are now able to be interviewed in more accommodating soft rooms at the police department or the crime victim advocates office.

In conjunction with the University Of Montana Department Of Sociology two surveys have been developed. One to advocates and one to victims which were

developed to meet UM institutional review board standards. These surveys are administered by advocates in an attempt to not interfere with victim recovery. MPD has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Missoula County Attorney's Office to enhance collaboration and communication in the investigation and prosecution of sex offenses. Weekly meetings with staff are occurring; Missoula County Attorney staff is available every day in the morning for investigators to meet as needed. An SOP has been established to ensure after hours contact with the county attorney's office to better facilitate coordination in felony persons crime cases, including sexual assault. Referral of cases to the county attorney now include timelines, written explanation of charging decisions and routine discussions with all involved.

We also have improved collaboration and communication with UMPD. I meet weekly with the University Police Chief to discuss all issues related to these cases. Included in these meetings are other staff members supervising our response to sexual assault ensuring that we have a collaborative effort to create a safe student community. We share daily briefing information and communicate immediately in cases relevant to our organizations. We share training opportunities and collaborated with each other on our departments policies related to cases which we share for further investigation. The University Police and MPD have received the same trainings for first responders, advanced interviewing and additional trainings

from advocacy, through SARC, YWCA, City/County Crime Victims advocates office and St Patricks First Step program.

In March of 2014 MPD began evaluating data and Captain Colyer has created two reports to highlight goals from our agreement. The reports include data on rates of sexual victimization in Missoula and then tracking reports through their outcomes in the court system. MPD also tracks the numbers of cases referred to us by other jurisdictions and the number of times MPD transports victims for a forensic exam.

- MPD has had an increase of over 50% in reporting of sexual assaults from 2012-2014.
- MPD has had a reduction of 16% in cases ending with the victim discontinuing the investigation

MPD has developed a panel of four professionals from outside our agency to make up the External review panel. This panel has reviewed every adult felony sexual assault case during this Agreement, including the cases generated by UMPD and later transferred to the MPD. The panel received training from a nationally recognized trainer and facilitator. They review MPD/UMPD cases for comprehensiveness and possible indicators of bias. The ERP uses a color coding system to evaluate the cases, of which a “green” rating is the highest. Between 2013-2015 the MPD has had an increase of 26% in “green” cases.

The Safety and Accountability Audit was released on May 1st, 2015. The audit team recognized ways to continue our community's response as well as our community's strengths in responding to sexual assault. The Just Response Advisory Board has reviewed the audit report and strongly supports the implementation of audit recommendations.

The Safety and Accountability Audit Report can be found on our website and that report includes the above mentioned data analysis.

The MPD will continue with its efforts to work with all our community partners in the response to sexual assault. The agreement with USDOJ has been a tool in which to build from and we will continue to do just that as we respond.

Mike Brady

Chief