Responding to Vicarious Trauma

Questions to Ask: Know Your Staff

☐ Have you provided training to staff to teach and discuss the differences between SA and DV work?

☐ Have you reviewed staff performance to assess their strengths?

☐ Have all staff expressed comfort with accepting SA cases and representing SA survivors?

☐ Have staff been given the opportunity to voice concerns or questions about adding SA services to their work?

Questions to Ask: Prepare Staff for Vicarious Trauma

☐ Have you educated staff about vicarious trauma?

☐ Without requiring responses, have you asked staff to:
  o Consider their triggers?
  o Identify how they know when they are experiencing vicarious trauma?
  o Think about their coping mechanisms and what self-care looks like for them?
  o Reflect on their support systems?

☐ Have you provided staff with vicarious trauma resources?

☐ Have you identified internal resources that staff can access when experiencing secondary trauma?

Questions to Ask: Manage Vicarious Trauma at an Organizational Level

☐ Have you considered office-wide policies to proactively address and mitigate the impact of vicarious trauma (e.g., minimum turn-around time between intake and case acceptance, no intakes after 3:00pm, no Friday intakes)?

☐ Are intake responsibilities divided among staff?

☐ Have you encouraged staff to schedule time to reflect/process?

☐ Do you have the ability to offer divers opportunities beyond direct services (e.g., outreach, training, development)?
Questions to Ask: Equip Staff to Manage Vicarious Trauma

□ How can you offer or foster mentoring relationships?
□ Can you partner staff on projects to foster collaboration?
□ Have you scheduled regular case review meetings for direct services staff?
□ Have you created an opportunity for the organization as a whole to meet regularly?
□ Have you encouraged any specialized staff to meet regularly to discuss their work?

Survivor Empowerment Model and a Trauma Informed Practice

Questions to Ask: Survivor Empowerment Model

□ Have you adopted a victim empowerment model?
□ Have you educated staff about the survivor empowerment model?
□ How have you integrated the victim empowerment model into your culture and daily practice?

Questions to Ask: Survivor Empowerment: Your Role

□ Have you trained staff to:
  o Validate survivor concerns and priorities?
  o Provide options without making decisions?
  o Explain possible outcomes without making decisions?
  o Decline any request by the survivor to make a decision for the survivor?

Questions to Ask: Trauma-Informed Practice & Trauma Impact

□ Has staff been trained to support survivors as they define their priorities?
□ Have you prepared staff for the oft-changing nature of client priorities?
□ Has staff been trained on the neurobiological impact of trauma?
□ Has staff been trained on how to recognize the signs of trauma and how to appropriately respond?
Chapter 4 Assessment Tool

☐ Have you considered how trauma may manifest differently within different communities (e.g., minors, LGBTQ, low-income, immigrants, etc.)? Do you have the resources to respond to these communities?

☐ Have you trained staff members, volunteers, and interns on the appropriate language to use with survivors?

☐ Have you trained staff who are answering the phone and/or greeting clients?
  ○ Do they know the appropriate language to use?
  ○ Do they know the proper tone to use with clients?
  ○ Are they aware of the heightened privacy concerns when serving this population?