Examining the Effectiveness of the Marty Smith Safety Trainings using 'Train-the Trainer'

Washington State Division of Behavioral Health & Recovery (DBHR/DSHS)
In partnership with
The Washington Institute for Mental Health Research &Training-West (WIMHRT-West)
University of Washington, Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences

INTRODUCTION

In 2011, DBHR contracted with WIMHRT to evaluate the efficacy of the Marty Smith Safety Trainings held from 2009 through 2011 (six 2-day trainings and two 1-day refresher trainings, held throughout WA State).

In collaboration with DBHR, WIMHRT developed an online survey that was administered to mental health providers and staff who attended a two-day training. **Of 215** participants, 98 responded (45%). (Note: 27% of participants had moved from their agency. Of the 156 participants who could be contacted, 63% responded).

The survey was conducted online from October 7-31, 2011, using the University of Washington's Catalyst survey system.

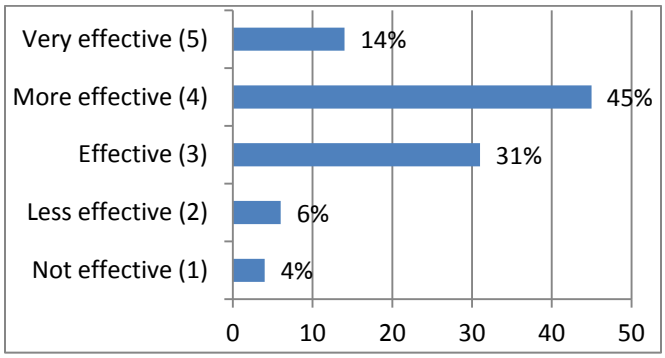
Topics surveyed included:

- Training effectiveness—using de-escalation and personal safety techniques
- Levels of violence and change in perceived ability to handle potentially violent situations
- Training Value and Training materials
- Perceptions of Agency Changes as a result of training & potential barriers to implementation. Comfort level and perceived ability to train others at own agency, in-house trainings: number of staff trained and number of trainings conducted by participants
- Demographic information (gender, age, length of time in field and agency, agency service characteristics)

FINDINGS

Training Effectiveness: 90% of the respondents reported that the training they received was '*effective-to-very effective*' in increasing feelings of safety in work-related situations and increasing confidence in dealing with violence.

Table A. "How effective has the Marty Smith Safety Training you received been in increasing your feelings of safety in work-related situations?"



***Other findings*:**

- 90% felt they could effectively use the de-escalation techniques they had learned in the training
- 85% said they were comfortable training others about the de-escalation techniques
- 85% percent felt they could effectively use the personal safety skills they had learned
- 72% reported feeling comfortable enough to train others about the personal safety skills
- 69% said they were *somewhat-to-very certain* that the Train-the-Trainer approach is an effective way to educate staff.

THE WASHINGTON INSTITUTE
FOR MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH & TRAINING

<u>Levels of Violence</u>: 62% reported experiencing a work-related violent episode.

- 69% of those who reported violent episodes have experienced both physical and verbal assaults.
- Of those who experienced a violent episode, 39% were physically assaulted themselves (83% of those assaults occurred in the agency).
- **When the incident occurred after the Marty Smith Safety training, 58% felt *very confident* in handling the situation** (as compared to 18% who had felt very confident in handling the situation when the incident occurred before the training).
- **90% thought they had *sufficient skills to handle the situation* when the incident occurred after the Marty Smith Safety training** (as compared to 54% who thought they had sufficient training to handle the incident when it occurred before the training).

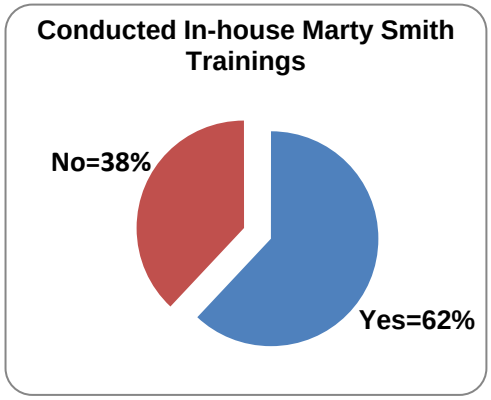
<u>Agency Trainings and Changes & Materials:</u>

- 62% of respondents had conducted in-house trainings. 85% of those had held their first training within six months of Marty Smith Safety Training.
- On average, respondents have provided five trainings. Most indicated that agency staff tended to be supportive of trainings.
- 44% were aware of changes toward improving a culture of safety at their agencies.
- 67% of respondents rated the supplementary Safety Training Curriculum CDs as *Good* or *Excellent.*
- The top three barriers to training implementation at the agency level are perceived to be:
  - 1) Scheduling/staff availability conflicts (32%)
  - 2) Financial issues (17%)
  - 3) Shortage of trained staff (17%)

Conclusions & Recommendations

This evaluation confirms that the 'Train-the-Trainer' method offered to public mental health agency clinicians and staff *is perceived by these participants* as a successful method for disseminating this information. However, only 62% of those trained have returned to their agencies and trained their co-workers. Options for future trainings include increasing levels of support to ensure trainings are conducted at agencies by participants:

- Continuing to educate and train providers on safety training using the 'Train-the Trainer' methodology
- Assisting providers by providing ongoing technical assistance and physical/personal safety skills.
- Providing additional funding to agencies specifically directed toward the implementation of safety training
- Providing Refresher course trainings at least once a year.



For more information on this Fact Sheet or the Marty Smith Safety Training Evaluation, please contact:

Roxane Waldron, Project Mgr (rwaldron@uw.edu)
Research at WIMHRT: Heather Mertz, Researcher (mertzh@uw.edu) or Dennis McBride, Research Director (dmcb@uw.edu).

For information on the Marty Smith Safety Training Program, please contact David Kludt, Program Administrator, Division of Behavioral Health & Recovery/DSHS (kludtdj@uw.edu)

This information has been summarized from the 2011 Marty Smith Safety Training Tool Kit. For more information about the 2011 Marty Safety Training Survey Tool Kit, please contact Heather Mertz at mertzh@uw.edu.