

## Does batterer intervention work?

September 9 2014, by Julie Philipp

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One in five women in the U.S. will fall victim to intimate partner violence. While successful programs exist to identify and treat victims, there is a void in proven interventions for perpetrators of domestic violence. Finding effective ways to stop known abusers before they act again, however, could dramatically reduce harm to potential victims, their families, and society. To that end, researchers from the University of Rochester are collaborating with the Delphi Drug and Alcohol Council in Rochester to evaluate Delphi's batterer intervention program. Participants in this program undergo 26 weeks of group therapy designed to increase their sense of accountability and responsibility.

"Many people believe that programs like this are effective, but treating this population is very complicated. Many batterers have witnessed

[family violence](#) or were victims of abuse as children. Many have personality and substance abuse problems that complicate treatment," says Marc T. Swogger, Ph.D., UR Medicine psychologist and assistant professor at the School of Medicine and Dentistry (SMD). "We plan to generate data regarding the effectiveness of Delphi's program, as well as begin to find evidence indicating for whom the program works best."

"Having this data will allow us to better inform judges and other referral sources, so they can appropriately make use of the program to help prevent recidivism," says Carl Hatch-Feir, president and CEO of Delphi.

In addition, the findings will be presented to the Rochester/Monroe County Domestic Violence Consortium, a group of more than 50 local organizations working to protect victims and hold offenders accountable. The study will include forms for clients to give feedback on their experiences in the program, client focus groups, and a review of data from the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services on participants' behavior following their treatment.

Provided by University of Rochester Medical Center

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