



CKW Inquest Recommendations

Priority Analysis & Action Plan

Introduction to the Report

On June 28, 2022, the CKW inquest jury released 86 thoughtful, specific, and clear recommendations to change the landscape that led to the deaths of three women, whose lives were ended at the hands of violence in a rural eastern Ontario community. Carol Culleton, Anastasia Kuzyk, and Nathalie Warmerdam were victims of femicide on September 22, 2015. The abuser was known to several systems, and the inquest demonstrated how improvements can be made to honour the victims and change the landscape to reduce the rates of IPV and femicide. The five jurors, who listened to three weeks of testimony, had a challenging job. They listened and learned, and the result was an outcome that provides a road map to responding to and moving towards eradicating intimate partner violence, including femicide. While the recommendations have a focus on rural realities, they apply to all communities regardless of their geographic location or size.

In the first year following the inquest, government's responses were disheartening, but communities across the province began to meet, solidify alliances, and mobilize. Recommendation number 1 was embraced, and close to 100 municipalities made the decision to declare IPV an epidemic even though the Ontario Government declined to do so. These acts of solidarity spoke volumes to local advocates, survivors, and families across the province. As the momentum was building and pressure on the Ontario Government mounted, it became clear that folks needed more information, guidance and understanding on the recommendations in order to begin to act on other recommendations.

As a result, Happy Roots Foundation granted Lanark County Interval House & Community Support (LCIHCS) funding to collaborate with advocates, activists, lawyers, and survivors in an effort to create a document to serve as a guide to those wanting to know which recommendations to focus on and why, as well as to offer some suggestions for how to move implementation of these recommendations forward.

Efforts were made to attend meetings across the province in order to determine common goals and recommendations that supported community-based needs. Through dialogue and some community engagement, Kirsten Mercer, Pamela Cross, and Erin Lee embarked on the process to choose recommendations that rose to the top as priorities for the anti-violence sector, and the work

commenced. For each recommendation studied, the guide analyzes the government's response, provides commentary from the perspective of the GBV sector as to why the response is insufficient and then speaks to the rationale for further change. The guide concludes with some next steps that can be taken by advocates to move the particular recommendation forward.

As we have passed the second year anniversary of the CKW Inquest, it is important to recognize the strong community-driven responses to implementation, municipal leadership with the declaration and other recommendations and the ever-present need to continue momentum and work alongside all levels of government toward implementation and change.

Recommendation 2: IPV Commission

ESTABLISH AN INDEPENDENT INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE COMMISSION DEDICATED TO ERADICATING INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE (IPV) AND ACTING AS A VOICE THAT SPEAKS ON BEHALF OF SURVIVORS AND VICTIMS' FAMILIES, RAISING PUBLIC AWARENESS, AND ENSURING THE TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF GOVERNMENT AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS IN ADDRESSING IPV IN ALL ITS FORMS. THE COMMISSIONER SHOULD HAVE SUFFICIENT AUTHORITY TO ENSURE MEANINGFUL ACCESS TO ANY PERSON, DOCUMENT OR INFORMATION REQUIRED TO ACCOMPLISH THE COMMISSION'S MANDATE. THE COMMISSION SHOULD BE PROVIDED WITH ADEQUATE AND STABLE FUNDING TO ENSURE EFFECTIVENESS.

Government Response

Rejected: Ontario Government supports underlying intent to advance accountability, but takes the position that an IPV Commission would duplicate existing offices, programs and services.

Analysis

Sector Perspectives

Presently, there are no formal lines of accountability or collaboration with respect to government action to eradicate IPV, engage in effective public education or ensure the voices of survivors and victims' families are heard. And contrary with the position taken in the government's response, no similar independent body or office exists in Ontario.

The Violence Against Women (VAW) Roundtable was an important first step in creating this accountability, structured communication and collaboration. The VAW Roundtable had a number of significant successes, but was disbanded in 2018.

In the future, such a body needs to be more diverse in terms of scope and representation and have a broader mandate, the authority to speak publicly, a requirement to report annually to the legislature, sustainable funding and staff resources.

Rationale

Ontario needs an independent accountability mechanism with a mandate and the authority to hold all system participants to account for making meaningful change to end IPV.

The issues surrounding intimate partner violence are non-partisan, pernicious, and multi-sectoral, spanning many aspects of government and society.

There is a real need for leadership with expertise, advocacy capacity, access to policy and program data at a system level and a mandate to ensure accountability for meaningful results. This role is best filled by a body or office directly engaged with, but independent from, government, provided that there is a body of experts to support the role.

o Independent Officer of the Legislature

We need an entity with resources and a mandate to track recommendations, engage with experts, survivors, community and government, and ensure meaningful consideration and appropriate implementation of recommended policy and legislative changes.

The Final Report of the Mass Casualty Commission recommended the creation of independent and non-partisan accountability mechanisms, including an IPV Commissioner (Recommendation V17: <https://masscasualtycommission.ca/files/documents/Turning-the-Tide-Together-List-of-Recommendations.pdf>) and the National Action Plan (NAP) Roadmap also contemplated this kind of leadership.

This concept is consistent with international best practices:

o UK: Domestic Abuse Commissioner in the UK (2019)

<https://domesticabusecommissioner.uk/>

o Australia: Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commission (2022)

<https://dfsvc.gov.au/about/meet-commissioner>

o New Zealand: Te Puna Aonui (2018)

<https://tepunaaonui.govt.nz/about-us/>

In the past, some of this kind of accountability and knowledge sharing was performed by the Independent Roundtable on GBV which was disbanded in 2018.

Action

In order to move towards implementation of this recommendation, the following next steps could be undertaken by individuals or organizations:

Develop an advocacy campaign to call for the re-establishment of a more diverse VAW Roundtable as described above:

- Approach local MPPs and political parties for support;

- Develop a media strategy, including op-eds;
- Build on municipal interest in recommendation one by asking municipalities to call for this;
- Approach ROMA and AMO to support this call;
- Seek support from CFUW/OAITH/PCRCC/ONSADVTC; and
- Local network building to unite on common ground.

Recommendation 5: Implementation Committee

IMMEDIATELY INSTITUTE A PROVINCIAL IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE DEDICATED TO ENSURING THAT THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THIS INQUEST ARE COMPREHENSIVELY CONSIDERED, AND ANY RESPONSES ARE FULLY REPORTED AND PUBLISHED. THE COMMITTEE SHOULD INCLUDE SENIOR MEMBERS OF RELEVANT MINISTRIES CENTRAL TO IPV AND AN EQUAL NUMBER OF COMMUNITY IPV EXPERTS. IT SHOULD BE CHAIRED BY AN INDEPENDENT IPV EXPERT WHO COULD SPEAK FREELY ON PROGRESS MADE ON IMPLEMENTATION.

Government Response

Rejected: Existing stakeholder/engagement committees across government will be leveraged, augmented by targeted consultation with stakeholders/sectors not represented on current tables, to provide input and advice on implementation of recommendations.

Analysis

Sector Perspectives

Despite the response advanced by the government, there is no transparency about existing committees, tables or processes through which stakeholders/sectors are being consulted. Nor is there any accountability on the part of those being selected to participate in these processes to engage or represent the needs of the movement more broadly.

There is a risk that the “targeted consultations” described by the government, mean that government speaks to those with access, or who they are hopeful will support its approach.

With respect to the CKW Inquest in particular, the government responses to the inquest recommendations were not publicly released and are not readily accessible to members of the public. There have been no commitments by the government to provide regular updates on ongoing implementation efforts or to continue to engage in dialogue about implementation.

In fact, the government appears to believe it has fulfilled its responsibility to the public with the two responses it has provided to the recommendations, despite the fact that many are rejected,

unaddressed or addressed only in small part. And there is no process for engagement about the effectiveness of the implementation of recommendations that have been accepted.

With no oversight or requirement that inquest recommendations be comprehensively considered, recommendations will continue to pile up, un-implemented. A similar problem exists with respect to implementation of recommendations made by the Domestic Violence Death Review Committee; a independent expert process led by the Office of the Chief Coroner.

Rationale

Success in ending IPV requires a partnership relationship between government and sector/stakeholders, where all are engaged in the shared goal of supporting survivors and stopping violence.

Serious IPV is predictable and preventable. We have learned a lot about what needs to be done to intervene with perpetrators and to support survivors to keep people safe. And yet, the recommendations by experts (inquest, DVDRC, Inquiries, Commissions) about how to move ahead often go un-implemented.

Policymakers have very significant data- and informational-gaps, and in many cases, frontline advocates and sector experts have important knowledge and insights into what is happening (and not happening) on the ground, where we are getting it right as well as where we are going wrong, and what is needed.

Government must create structural feedback mechanisms to listen to those closest to the issues we are confronting together in order to maximize the effectiveness of our efforts to end IPV/GBV.

Whether it is called a Roundtable, an Implementation Table, an Advisory Circle or something else is not important. What matters is that a structure for meaningful engagement and constructive collaboration is created, and that it provides a space that is independent, permanent, diverse, and adequately-resourced. Optimally, this structure is a place where policymakers/government can speak and listen openly with leaders who have direct knowledge of what is happening on the ground across the Province.

Action

In order to move towards implementation of this recommendation, the following next steps could be undertaken by individuals or organizations:

Develop an advocacy campaign to call for the creation of an implementation committee:

- Mandate should include implementation of all recommendations from GBV-related inquests, inquiries, commissions and public or parliamentary consultations;
- Appropriate staffing and resources to be provided by government; and
- Membership should be selected through an open call and a transparent process with co-leadership from the sector in partnership with government.

Convene a forum with GBV leadership (OAITH, Building a Bigger Wave, Action Ontarienne, ONWA, ASOO, Luke's Place, Barbra Schlifer Clinic, etc...) to confirm support for this project.

Recommendation 9: Incorporate Restorative Justice Approaches



EXPLORE INCORPORATING RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AND COMMUNITY-BASED APPROACHES IN DEALING WITH APPROPRIATE IPV CASES TO ENSURE SAFETY AND BEST OUTCOMES FOR SURVIVORS.

Government Response

Accepted: · Ministries offer a variety of restorative justice programs, including: Youth-specific (Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services), Indigenous-specific (Ministry of the Attorney General), which now include some IPV-related offences. Further expansion to be explored in April 2023.

Ministry of the Attorney General has begun research on other restorative approaches in IPV cases that are not Indigenous-specific.

Analysis

Sector Perspectives

To the best of our knowledge, there are no government-run IPV-specific restorative justice initiatives at this time, and there has been no communication about whether the April 2023 “exploration of further expansion” happened and, if so, what the outcomes were.

There has been no community involvement in Ministry of the Attorney General’s research into other restorative justice approaches in IPV cases.

Recent changes to bail conditions, possible criminalization of coercive control, interest in Clare’s Law and lack of implementation of recommendation 58 – review of mandatory charging – indicates the government is primarily interested in (and is focusing its efforts and resources on) a law and order response to IPV/GBV.

Rationale

We know that many survivors do not choose to seek justice in the criminal system because it does not meet their needs, it is likely to retraumatize them and often does not enhance their overall safety (or that of their families). Often, survivors are not looking for carceral outcomes for the person they love/loved and with whom they may have ongoing shared parenting responsibilities.

Too often, the criminal system does not treat survivors as agents in their own lives and circumstances.

Contrary to the criminal system, which is neither for nor about survivors, restorative justice models are often centred around their needs and experiences. In appropriate circumstances, restorative justice approaches have been shown to be effective at decreasing violence and changing attitudes about IPV to meaningful and sustained effect.

Action

In order to move towards implementation of this recommendation, the following next steps could be undertaken by individuals or organizations:

Through the VAW Roundtable, establish a research working group of stakeholders to prepare a report on the appropriate use of restorative justice and community-based approaches in responding to IPV:

- This research will include an international literature review as well as consultations with community-based RJ initiatives in place in Canada, survivors, women's advocates, community-based cultural organizations, criminal system stakeholders and others; and
- The report, including recommendations, should be undertaken by committee, table or forum led by the sector, and could be completed as a priority task, to be made available to the public and to the VAW/GBV sector for public dissemination and further action.

Build on the work done by WomenatthecentrE, LEAF, CAEFS and other advocacy organizations to further discussions within the VAW/GBV sector about the use of restorative justice and other community-based approaches in responding to IPV.

- Build an anti-carceral analysis into all law and policy reform advocacy (eg. criminalization of coercive control); and
- Approach local MPPs and political parties for support.

Recommendation 10: Community Safety & Wellbeing Plans



ENCOURAGE THAT IPV BE INTEGRATED INTO EVERY MUNICIPALITY'S COMMUNITY SAFETY AND WELL-BEING PLAN.

Government Response

Rejected: Ontario does not prescribe any specific priority risk to municipalities as the planning process is entirely local and should reflect the needs of each community.

Analysis

Sector Perspectives

There is a very clear message coming from municipalities across Ontario that IPV is a community safety and wellbeing priority.

Local IPV experts (including frontline service providers, advocates and survivors) do not have reliable and consistent access to the CSWBP process at the municipal level and a very inconsistent pattern of engagement exists between the IPV sector and the CSWB planning agencies across the province.

Sector leaders have been directly engaged with CSWB planning in many municipalities, and have produced strong models that could be shared with counterparts in other communities.

Rationale

While the Province should not dictate local priorities, it is well-situated to provide support to municipal planning processes to ensure that relevant issues and stakeholders are considered and engaged in the CSWB planning process.

Engagement with the spirit of this recommendation could have included providing support (both financial and policy) for municipalities that have already identified IPV as a priority (i.e., epidemic declarations, existing CSWB plans). This was an opportunity to show provincial leadership and support, while still maintaining the legislated local leadership for these plans.

MCSCS has undertaken a similar exercise in the past. An resource was created to support the development of these local planning tools. The existing resource, called *Community safety and well-being in Ontario: Booklet 2 - A snapshot of local voices*, identifies some local challenges as well as some promising practices for communities working to develop their CSWB Plans. Although

IPV is not included in this resource, it shows a precedent for the kind of leadership role the Province could play in supporting the inclusion of IPV in CSWB Plans.

Action

In order to move towards implementation of this recommendation, the following next steps could be undertaken by individuals or organizations:

Support local communities that are working to incorporate IPV into their CSWB Plans:

- Sector leaders continue to share promising practices through existing channels in order to encourage others in their efforts;
- Host a booth or session at ROMA/AMO 2025 offering supports for municipalities seeking to deepen their existing commitment to address IPV in their communities, including tools to integrate IPV into local CSWB plans;
- Reference existing resources found in the Luke's Place Toolkit by Lanark County and others;
- Develop a crowd-sourced resource so that local sector leaders can share some of the promising practices, strategies and learnings that they have collected through their community's experience with their counterparts across Ontario. Consider linking to the Declarations maps hosted by Building a Bigger Wave; and
- Seek Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services funds to develop an IPV-specific resource to support municipalities engaged in integrating IPV/GBV analysis into their community safety and wellbeing plans;
 - Consideration is given to the needs of the diverse municipal structures and contexts;
- Advocate to ensure that alternative approaches to the present criminal system responses to community safety are considered, developed and funded through this process (such as the SAFE TO Community Crisis Response Model (Toronto)); and
- Call for meaningful resources to be allocated for evaluation and learning about what has worked well (and what hasn't) in municipalities that have already integrated IPV/GBV into their CSWB plans.

Recommendation 12: Timely Communication with Probation & Parole

ENSURE THAT SURVIVORS AND THOSE ASSISTING SURVIVORS HAVE DIRECT AND TIMELY COMMUNICATION WITH PROBATION OFFICERS TO ASSIST IN SAFETY PLANNING.

Government Response

Completed: Probation and Parole Officers (PPOs) are required to establish and maintain contact with survivors throughout supervision, including advising re risk of harm to them: (i) PPOs encourage survivors to register with the Victim Support Line to receive alerts; and (ii) survivors are encouraged to work with Victims' Services to support safety planning and facilitate referrals where needed/desired.

A Special Protocol exists where cases are related to youths.

Analysis

Sector Perspectives

There is no consistent experience of PPOs being in regular and sustained contact with survivors throughout the term of supervision. Frontline advocates report cases of survivors never hearing from PPOs, or a failure to notify survivors of significant, risk-escalating conduct.

Initial, anecdotal reports suggest that the Province's service standard is not being met on a regular basis in the community.

In some cases, it appears that these contacts are not being performed by PPOs, but rather (where they are happening) they are being led by service providers delivering the Partner Assault Response (PAR) program, who report having insufficient resources to regularly meet with and keep track of the perpetrators for whom they are already responsible.

Rationale

There is no dispute about the importance of both timely and effective engagement of PPOs with survivors. All stakeholders acknowledge that survivors and frontline service providers have an important role in creating safety and often know the history of the violence. In fact, often survivors have been forced to become experts in their own safety and have deep knowledge of the pathology of the perpetrator's conduct, triggers and red flags.

Survivors should be engaged in safety planning for their own safety and also to ensure that PPOs have all relevant information.

Action

In order to move towards implementation of this recommendation, the following next steps could be undertaken by individuals or organizations:

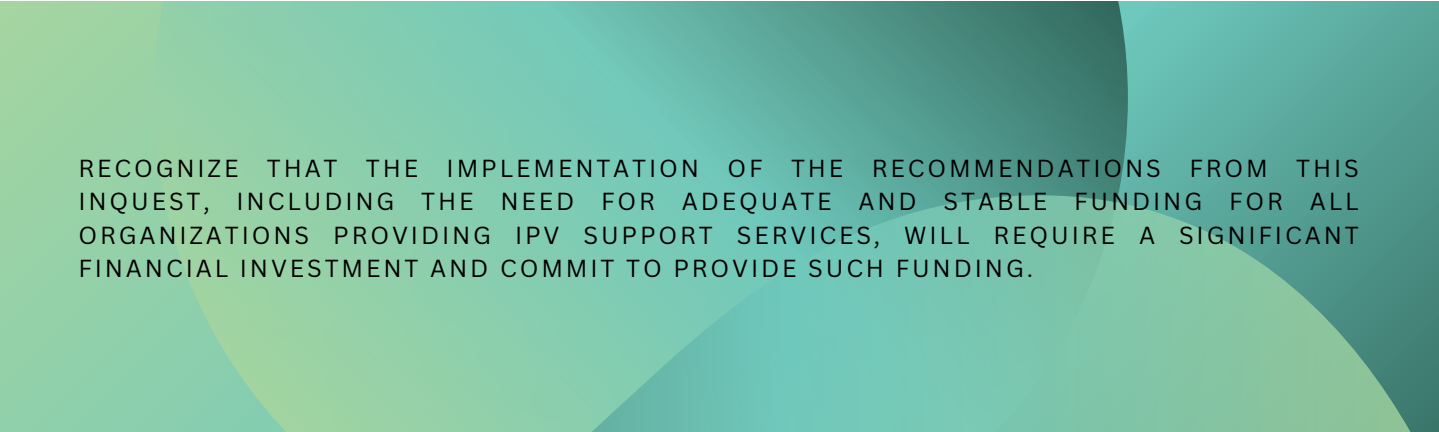
Push for accountability around the provincial response with a multi-layered approach:

- FOI request for disclosure of policy and any associated reporting/accountability on whether this supposed service standard is being met;
- Gather specific data about PPO contacts with survivors throughout the term of supervision- choose a small number of shelters and engage a researcher to make best efforts to follow the cases (on a voluntary basis; and obviously only possible with clients who are already known to the agency); and
- Request meeting with MCSCS to discuss this response and share outcomes of research.

Enhance and strengthen collaboration at the local level:

- Create a toolkit to support local cross sectoral relationship building and collaboration; and
- Local communities engage, explore and nurture a relationship with local PPOs and IPV agencies to focus on collaborative approach to safety and prevention.

Recommendation 18/20: Adequate & Stable Funding



RECOGNIZE THAT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THIS INQUEST, INCLUDING THE NEED FOR ADEQUATE AND STABLE FUNDING FOR ALL ORGANIZATIONS PROVIDING IPV SUPPORT SERVICES, WILL REQUIRE A SIGNIFICANT FINANCIAL INVESTMENT AND COMMIT TO PROVIDE SUCH FUNDING.

Government Response

Accepted in Part (in progress):

Recommendation 18

The government has articulated a commitment to working together to strengthen strategic approach to funding IPV services and supports. Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services

is using data and evidence to identify gaps and needs, strengthen system capacity, establish evidence-based business case to stabilize sector funding and strengthen funding of IPV services.

Examples provided of funding streams or initiatives available, including one-time PAR funding (Dec 2022), community safety grant funding provided to police services, competitive project funding for IPV and human trafficking survivors (policing and community partners); MMIWG funding for investigative supports (policing).

The province also notes the opportunity to apply for Mobile Crisis Response Team Enhancement Grants to expand use of social workers in future proposals (policing).

Recommendation 20

The government cites existing support for IPV survivors and perpetrator intervention programs and affirms that it continues to “scope opportunities” to use evidence and data to identify needs; establish an evidence-informed business case to stabilize sector funding.

Government supports the need to incorporate a broad range of equity considerations in program design and delivery, and Ontario promises to “leverage” the National Action Plan on GBV (NAP) to collaborate across governments and community partners about strategic recommendations.

Analysis

Sector Perspectives

Ontario’s response suggests that it does not understand the nature of the problem or the meaning of the Jury’s recommendation for a foundational overhaul to the way the work of IPV services are provided.

The response cites a Dec 2022 (one-time) Ministry of the Attorney General funding announcement of \$2 million for the PAR program as an example of an opportunity to “stabilize funding across sectors”.

This is not an example of the approach to funding that the Inquest Jury recommended. Rather, this kind of one-time, unpredictable, unreliable and unsustainable funding is precisely the approach that the jury is reacting to in its recommendation.

We note that, as part of the work it does with provincial support on behalf of its members, OAITH has engaged with the Province on the work to collect and analyze data about the work of its members. However, very few of the organizations consulted in preparing this report have been consulted or involved in an Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services review.

The sector continues to call for a more transformational approach to funding in the sector.

We note that, following OAITH advocacy for funding towards NAP implementation, shelters got a 5% operating increase. Shelters should be told this is in place for the duration of the NAP, in order to enable longer term planning.

While further commentary on the adequacy of the government's response in relation to the needs of Indigenous people should be provided by Indigenous women's organizations, we acknowledge that dedicated resources being directed to Indigenous-led initiatives is an important component of the Ontario response. However, we stress that any such initiatives should be informed by the Calls to Justice of the MMIWG Inquiry, consistent with the needs identified by Indigenous-led organizations, and (where possible) should prioritize survivor-centred approaches, rather than police-led initiatives.

Furthermore, Ontario's response fails to engage with the fundamental nature of this recommendation, which is to treat IPV services and supports as core public services rather than "annual projects". "Reducing the Administrative Burden" on transfer payment agencies is helpful, but not responsive to the core of this recommendation.

Rationale

The current funding approach is inefficient and frustrating for service delivery partners. Short-term project grants reflect a misunderstanding about the nature of the problems faced by the sector and the sustained effort required to change behaviour rooted in generational attitudes about power and misogyny.

Even where funded projects are renewed, the instability created by the lack of stable core funding means that partner agencies are stuck in a cycle of precarious work, attrition, re-training and a lack of decent work. This has a direct deleterious effect on the services that can be delivered to survivors and to these organizations' ability to function efficiently.

In addition, annual cycles of grant writing and reporting are time consuming and inefficient in light of the core mandate of these agencies.

The 80/20 historical ratio of core funding to resources raised through fundraising is not accurate today, and actual costs for service delivery must be understood. Current ratio is likely 60/40 in many cases.

We are increasingly seeing the connections between IPV and public violence. This work is at the heart of creating security and wellbeing in our communities, for women and for our communities more broadly. It is not "charity;" it is community-based public safety, which should be funded as a public service.

For many years, funders have provided an "allocation," leaving service providers to stretch those funds to cover their community's needs (or often not!). Although the annual funding discussions are called "budget negotiations," they are not meaningfully informed by local community need, actual agency capacity or financial reality.

It has been a long time since frontline service providers were engaged in a true, needs-based budget development process. This is long overdue.

Frontline services should be local, diverse and collaborative. Efficiency comes from the ability to genuinely meet community needs, engage in prevention work (to stem the rise in IPV), and to have

the security to innovate and to share knowledge about what works and how we can improve together to make our communities safer.

Action

In order to move towards implementation of this recommendation, the following next steps could be undertaken by individuals or organizations:

Engage in advocacy to support the call for foundational reforms to the way the work of frontline agencies is funded:

- Convene a coalition of frontline agencies and advocates to request a meeting with Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services officials to discuss the proposed work to use evidence and data to identify needs; establish an evidence-informed business case to stabilize sector funding;
- Prepare a public engagement/media strategy for NAP +1 (i.e., one year after, and following) to report on implementation, and work with a particular outlet to follow this story in future years;
- Consider legal action to address inequity in funding in this sector (*Association of Ontario Midwives*-style pay equity or HRTO case) challenging the insufficiency of funding in this sector, particularly around issues of pay equity and discriminatory funding;
- Engage with Aboriginal Shelters of Ontario to consider the adequacy of this response in terms of the MMIWG funding mentioned;
- Meet with WAGE to understand what steps are being taken to measure and account for NAP funding delivered through the provinces; and
- Partner with provincial organizations to develop a budget proposal for future Ontario/Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services budget.

Recommendations 23/25: Public Education

DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A NEW APPROACH TO PUBLIC EDUCATION CAMPAIGNS TO PROMOTE AWARENESS ABOUT IPV, INCLUDING FINDING OPPORTUNITIES TO REACH A WIDER AUDIENCE IN RURAL COMMUNITIES. THESE MESSAGES SHOULD PROMOTE BROAD RECOGNITION OF HOW TO SEEK SUPPORT, RISK FACTORS, AND WARNING SIGNS OF IPV, COMMUNITY AND BYSTANDER ENGAGEMENT, BE ACCESSIBLE IN MULTIPLE LANGUAGES AND IN MULTIPLE FORMATS, AND ENSURE THAT RURAL RESIDENTS CAN IDENTIFY THEMSELVES IN THE MESSAGING AND MATERIALS.

USE AND BUILD ON AGE-APPROPRIATE EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES.

Government Response

Accepted/Accepted In Part:

Recommendation 23

Ongoing investments are being made to strengthen community-based education and awareness initiatives across the province, with a focus on underserved communities. The NAP will be leveraged to strengthen violence prevention education and awareness initiatives, and funding is currently being provided to 22 community organizations to implement GBV community-focused education.

Recommendation 25

The government affirmed its commitment to work with Council of Ontario Universities and Colleges Ontario and is exploring how this recommendation may inform future revisions to health and physical education curriculum, but is not involved in post-secondary curriculum development.

Analysis

Sector Perspectives

Expertise to develop and deliver both public and school-based education already exists in the community; particularly in the VAW/GBV sector where advocacy and frontline organizations are keen to continue and expand their work in these areas, but require adequate and secure funding to do so.

Excellent public education models exist and can be built on, some of which were government-community collaborations. (see *Neighbours, Friends & Families*, White Ribbon, Draw the Line, MooseHide Campaign, *Who Will You Help?*)

Prevention needs to be a high priority in both school-based and public/community education initiatives. This is long term work to shift societal norms and attitudes, and core funding support must be provided accordingly.

Rationale

We know that the Provincial and Federal Governments agree that more resources must go towards prevention, and there are resources in the NAP to support that work. Let's make sure those resources are allocated in the right way to the right partners.

New investments in prevention have to include explicit investments in diversity to ensure smaller and marginalized organizations and groups have the opportunity to contribute and lead in community solution-making.

Many of the agencies that hold the expertise about how to end GBV do not receive any funding for prevention education and community engagement. These agencies are already seen as leaders in their communities on this work, and are often doing education and prevention work unfunded, or "off the side of the desk".

The criminal system/law enforcement should be a solution of last resort, because it comes too late (harm has already occurred) and many survivors will never turn to that system for support. Yet this

system readily attracts government funding. It is much more efficient and harm-reducing to eliminate violence than deal with the after-effects.

Action

In order to move towards implementation of this recommendation, the following next steps could be undertaken by individuals or organizations:

Advocate for adequate and stable (annualized) funding to flow to community-based VAW/GBV organizations to continue and expand both school-based and public IPV/GBV education programs that contain the elements listed in the inquest recommendation with a focus on prevention

- Track NAP Canada/Ontario bilateral agreement funding to see how education-related initiatives are being supported;
- Develop business case for investments in prevention, including social impact bonds; and
- Explore government allocation of funding for 48 positions, connected to local coordinating committees at a rate of \$80,000 per year. Each coordinating committee would then create a plan rooted in what each local community identifies as priority education, engagement, and prevention initiatives/action.
 - Including a possible pilot with 3-4 communities.

Recommendations 33/35/36: Prevention Supports for Perpetrators

PROVIDE SERVICES AIMED AT ADDRESSING PERPETRATORS OF IPV THAT SHOULD INCLUDE:

- A. AN APPROACH THAT IS NOT ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL,
- B. A VARIETY OF GROUP-BASED AND INDIVIDUAL INTERVENTIONS & INDIVIDUAL RISK MANAGEMENT
- C. PEER SUPPORT AND APPROPRIATE CIRCLES OF SUPPORT,
- D. DEVELOP CROSS-AGENCY AND CROSS-SYSTEM COLLABORATIVE SERVICES,
- E. SUBSTANCE USE , CRIMINALITY, MENTAL HEALTH, FATHERING, & CULTURALLY SPECIFIC SERVICES,
- F. RAPID RESPONSE RISK MANAGEMENT SERVICES IN COLLABORATION WITH IPV SERVICE PROVIDERS,
- G. BEING ACCESSIBLE VIA REFERRAL, AND NOT JUST THROUGH THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM,
- H. ADEQUATE AND INCREASING FUNDING,
- I. MAKE IN-CUSTODY IPV PROGRAMS AVAILABLE IN THE COMMUNITY
- J. CONDUCTING AUDITS OF PARS AND OTHER PERPETRATOR INTERVENTION PROGRAMS FOR EFFICACY, CONSISTENCY, AND CURRENCY,
- K. INCREASE PROGRAM AVAILABILITY PERPETRATORS ON REMAND, SENTENCED & IN THE COMMUNITY.

Government Response

Accepted/ in progress: SOLGEN offers evidence-based correctional programs designed to provide support and rehabilitate offenders along continuum of interventions.

Recommendation 33

Indirect support also provided in community through application based community safety grants that can be used to support locally designed initiatives, including:

- Community Safety and Policing Grant (examples provided re Safe Centre Response Team, including mobile support worker with GBV experience and IPV- trained police officer);
- Victim Support Grant to provide funding to police services to develop new or enhanced victim support programming (often in collaboration with local partners);
- Mobile Crisis Response Team Enhancement Grant to support police services to develop or implement emergency response models that partner social or crisis workers with police in responding to certain emergency calls;
- Specialized Investigator and Survivor Supports for FN Police Services to build capacity within FN police services to respond to GBV calls, including culturally responsive programming and trauma-informed approaches; and
- Social Navigators for FN Police Services to support the use of civilian coordinators to support and assist victims in certain priority areas, which include GBV/IPV cases. These navigators support early preventative access to community services to divert “at risk individuals” from cycles of incarceration and/or victimization by working closely with Elders, police partners and community agencies to identify risk and appropriate resources, and to develop effective referral pathways.

In Dec 2022, Ministry of the Attorney General announced a one-time funding support of \$2 million dollars to support PAR services. And a PAR Service Delivery Table (PARSDT) was established to provide feedback on PAR service delivery matters. This PARSDT first met in April 2023.

Ministry of the Attorney General is working to support existing Indigenous IPV Prevention Program providers to increase capacity, including exploring service gaps in Indigenous communities.

Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services is funding three GBV prevention-intervention programs for male youth at risk of committing GBV to address underlying factors of GBV and deliver culturally responsive and relevant approaches to reduce GBV among Indigenous and Black youth.

Recommendation 35

Government is “taking action via inter-ministerial collaboration to develop appropriate referral pathways and cross-sectoral service coordination to improve outcomes for perpetrators at risk of committing GBV-related offences, i.e. PAR service providers have been tasked with undertaking activities designed to improve coordination and collaboration across the sector (including culturally appropriate services)”.

Recommendation 36

Government (Solicitor General) is exploring ways to improve discharge/release planning through Community Reintegration Planning Tables to streamline referrals for complex/high risk cases.

In many cases, PPOs participate in DV high risk committee meetings and situation tables (where available) aimed to provide support to offenders and victims through coordination. “SOLGEN will

continue to develop partnerships with external stakeholders to improve outcomes for perpetrators, victims and communities.”

Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services funds a Community Capacity Building (CCB) programs (launched in 2006) to support linkages between CAS and community services, including programs to deliver IPV-focused programming to fathers of kids engaged with the CAS system.

Ministry of Health is working with Justice Ministries to support services for people living with mental health and addictions who become involved with the justice system (working in partnership with the mental health courts, community reintegration tables and community safety and wellbeing tables, including:

- Mobile Crisis Response Teams;
- Mental Health Court Support Workers;
- Justice Supportive Housing (to support people living with MHA who are being released or are participating in diversion programs; and
- Release From Custody Workers.

Analysis

Sector Perspectives

Partner Assault Response (PAR)

We do not believe that the current approach to delivery of the PAR program is consistent with the evidence of what is required to meaningfully intervene and disrupt patterns of IPV. We know that group service delivery models (on their own) are not appropriate in many cases, where perpetrators of a single incident of violence are together with serial IPV perpetrators with long histories of violence.

Many of the programs highlighted by Ontario in its response to recommendation 33 are not services to support perpetrators.

Sector experts on services to support perpetrators have had no engagement with the PAR Service Delivery Table. Who sits on this table? What is its function? How are outside experts and IPV sector leaders engaging with this table to meaningfully identify gaps and address challenges? How are survivor perspectives being integrated into this approach?

We support an approach that recognizes the distinct needs of Indigenous communities. How have Indigenous leaders been engaged in the development of these programs? Have they been shared with the Indigenous Women’s Advisory Council?

One-time funding (Dec 2022) is not a meaningful solution to the service gaps in the PAR program, or the fact that the existing model is not consistent with the evidence of what is required to meaningfully disrupt patterns of violence. Ministry of the Attorney General is well-aware of the research about what is required for this program and the fact that the current funding levels do not permit delivery of programs in a manner that is consistent with the evidence.

Indigenous Navigators:

It is unclear if this program is designed to support IPV perpetrators or victims, and while we defer to Indigenous leadership to advise on the need for this tool, the idea of engaging civilian navigators to support diversion and appropriate supports appears to be an excellent one.

Community-based services for perpetrators:

Virtually all of the services identified by Ontario's response require perpetrators to already be engaged with the criminal system. There is no way to access prevention services in the community without a referral from the courts.

Government (Solicitor General) has identified that it has "tasked" its PAR partners with "undertaking activities to improve coordination and collaboration across the sector," but there is no indication that PAR providers have been provided with any resources to support this work.

We understand that most PAR delivery partners are struggling to deliver services to the clients who they already have (including meaningful engagement with survivors, which is also included in the Inquest recommendations). Without additional resources and without any doubt that these agencies could indeed have an important role to play, we are skeptical of the current ability of the PAR delivery partners to meaningfully improve coordination and support perpetrators beyond the (insufficient) limited services they are contracted to provide.

Youth Services:

The sector is supportive of the development of culturally relevant prevention programming, but only providing programs that target Indigenous and Black youth risks perpetrating misleading and biased perceptions that IPV is an Indigenous and Black problem. This is not consistent with the evidence.

Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services has suggested in its response that it provides support for the Caring Dads program. However, it is our understanding that this is program funded by the Child Welfare Foundation.

More information is needed regarding Community Reintegration Planning Tables. Are these tables to be in addition to High Risk Committees? Who sits on these tables? Is this entirely internal to Corrections? How are IPV and Survivor support services engaged in these tables? Do Community Reintegration Planning Tables engage in risk assessment and safety planning? How are these assessments communicated to and informed by IPV service providers?

Rationale

The criminal system should be a solution of last resort, because it comes too late and many survivors do not turn to that system for support. Yet this system readily attracts government funding. It is much more efficient and harm-reducing to eliminate violence than deal with the after-effects.

The PAR system should be available to those in the community who identify that they need support. These are the individuals who are most likely to be successful candidates for intervention. Engagement to disrupt violent and controlling behaviour before it escalates to criminal harm is an

important harm reduction strategy, and is more likely to lead to positive outcomes for survivors, families and those who are using violence.

Recidivism rates of IPV are extremely high, and meaningful engagement with perpetrators is critical to prevention and escalation of future harm. The Ontario PAR model is not funded in a manner consistent with the evidence about what is needed for effective service-provision. The government knows that the model falls short of what the evidence tells us is needed.

Action

In order to move towards implementation of this recommendation, the following next steps could be undertaken by individuals or organizations:

Campaign for evidence-based support programs for perpetrators of violence:

- Media engagement on the gap between currently funded work and the evidence about what is required for an effective program;
- Research to enhance understanding of Navigators programs. Has the program been studied? Is it working? Are there lessons to learn here for the broader community?;
- Review Healthy Relationships programming provided through Health Curriculum; and
- Develop business case for investments in prevention, including possible study regarding the use of social impact bonds.

Recommendation 44: Enhance High Risk Committees

CLARIFY AND ENHANCE THE USE OF HIGH-RISK COMMITTEES BY:
A. STRENGTHENING PROVINCIAL GUIDELINES BY IDENTIFYING HIGH-RISK CASES THAT SHOULD BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEE,
B. IDENTIFYING AND INCLUDING LOCAL IPV SERVICE PROVIDERS THAT ARE IN A POSITION TO ASSIST WITH CASE IDENTIFICATION, SAFETY PLANNING, AND RISK MANAGEMENT. CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO INCLUDING IPV SERVICE PROVIDERS SUPPORTING PERPETRATORS,
C. ENSURING THAT INVOLVED IPV SERVICE PROVIDERS AT HIGH-RISK COMMITTEES ARE GIVEN THE NECESSARY INFORMATION TO FACILITATE THEIR ACTIVE PARTICIPATION, SUBJECT TO VICTIM CONSENT WHERE APPLICABLE.

Government Response

Accepted: Ontario is drafting new IPV High Risk Committee Standards and IPV High Risk Committee best practices guide for correctional staff, outlining the role of correctional and community safety staff and utilizing the collaborative offender case management approach.

Analysis

Sector Perspectives

In some places, sector leaders have seen an improvement in the functioning of existing IPV High Risk Committees, and in some cases in the functioning of Situation Tables. In other locations, GBV sector leadership has joined together to develop community-led Risk Assessment Tables, in addition to the existing High Risk Committees. These tables may be led by either the justice or GBV sector agencies depending on the location.

Ontario should use the existing Community Coordination network that spans 48 committees across Ontario, working with Building A Bigger Wave to develop models for effective community coordination, best practices and knowledge sharing.

To the best of our knowledge, no sector organizations were engaged in the development of the IPV High Risk Committee Standards. How will the Committee Standards be implemented? And how will their effectiveness be measured? And revised?

Situation tables exist in many communities, but few deal with IPV cases in a regular and comprehensive way. SOLGEN says that Situation Tables are not doing GBV work, although on the ground, we are aware of communities where GBV work is happening through this model. Especially noted in rural communities.

Advocates are not proposing a one-size-fits-all approach. Communities should be empowered to create/adapt a model that works well in their local circumstances, provided certain requirements are met: (1) GBV sector leaders (including shelter services) are engaged and empowered to participate fully; (2) IPV risk assessment training is provided to ensure that all participants are adequately equipped with up-to-date knowledge about IPV risk assessment (consider co-training members, consistent with best practices); and (3) participation in High Risk Committee is seen as a core responsibility of Committee Members.

Rationale

Community Coordination is absolutely crucial to effective strategies to end IPV. This can happen in different and/or multiple ways, depending on the needs of the community, but all sectors must see coordination and collaboration as part of their job.

The implementation of a more engaged and collaborative approach to participation in High Risk Committees cannot be contingent on the personal interests of the justice sector partners or individual personal relationships or goodwill that exist between GBV sector leaders and justice system leaders.

The common thread in communities that work well is a coordination strategy that is led by the GBV sector, or in which the sector leadership plays an active role, and where all sectors are engaged.

Action

In order to move towards implementation of this recommendation, the following next steps could be undertaken by individuals or organizations:

Create vehicles for sector engagement in the work to improve the effectiveness of High Risk Committees:

- Make information requests for any documents relating to the IPV High Risk Committee Standards and best practice guide;
- Develop best practice guide for justice sector participants, in consultation with sector leaders and other legal system partners;
 - To inform this process, local communities should write their model and approach as options to be considered in this process;
- Develop training module for High Risk Committees, including co-training committee members on IPV risk assessment model and IPV risk management;
- Make an information request about the consultation process undertaken in the development of High Risk Committees;
- Media strategy to tell the story of the impact of well-functioning IPV High Risk Committees; and
- Funding request for sector leaders to lead (co-lead) these IPV High Risk Committees based on local needs.

Recommendation 56: Oppose Weakened Bail Conditions re Firearms



CROWNS SHOULD ACTIVELY OPPOSE VARIATION REQUESTS TO HAVE FIREARMS RETURNED FOR ANY PURPOSE, SUCH AS HUNTING.

Government Response

Accepted in Part: Prosecutors are currently required to assess any variation request based on the circumstances of the accused. Consent to a variation of bail or probation conditions related to firearms is subject to the exercise of prosecutorial discretion which will weigh various factors including the risk of harm in IPV cases.

Analysis

Sector Perspectives

In preparing this report we have been made aware of anecdotal reports of firearms being returned to IPV offenders.

These requests should always be opposed by the Crown, and where a condition is varied over the objection of the Crown, urgent notification and safety planning must be implemented with complainant, other known survivors and current partners.

Exercise of Crown discretion to consent to the return of a firearm in an IPV case (or to a known IPV perpetrator) should be subject to review by the IPV Crown prior to consent being provided.

Rationale

There is strong evidence about the correlation between the presence of guns in the home and escalating violence/lethality in households where IPV is present. Even when the gun is never used, its mere presence increases the sense of fear for survivors and has a coercive effect.

There is no justification for the presence of a gun in the home where a perpetrator is released on bail. The risk of harm is too great.

Action

In order to move towards implementation of this recommendation, the following next steps could be undertaken by individuals or organizations:

An evidentiary basis for our concerns in this area must be developed and steps taken to engage where firearms are being returned to perpetrators:

- Develop a mechanism and methodology to document reports of these conditions being varied and ask partners to bring these issues forward if/when they occur:
 - Write to Ministry of the Attorney General with an outline of specific incidents, if any, and request that the Crown Policy Manual be updated to clarify that in IPV/DV cases, firearms should not be returned and the Crown should oppose any orders to return firearms;
 - Audit of DVDRC reports where perpetrator had recently varied bail or probation conditions involving return of firearms/variance of firearm conditions; and
 - Activate a media strategy to raise the alarm when these cases arise.
- Push for training for Crowns at annual conference around the risks associated with returning firearms in these cases;
- Following the passage of federal and provincial legislation, engage with the development of judicial education resources, including appropriate peer support strategies;
- Court watch initiative tracking any variance of firearms conditions in IPV cases; and
- If warranted by the evidence, campaign for Ministerial Direction or amendment of Crown Prosecution Manual to require that prior to consenting to a variance of condition returning firearms in an IPV case or to a known IPV offender, the Crown must have the case reviewed by the IPV Crown.

Recommendation 58: Review Mandatory Charging

COMMISSION A COMPREHENSIVE, INDEPENDENT, AND EVIDENCE-BASED REVIEW OF THE MANDATORY CHARGING FRAMEWORK EMPLOYED IN ONTARIO, WITH A VIEW TO ASSESSING ITS EFFECT ON IPV RATES AND RECIDIVISM, WITH PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO ANY UNINTENDED NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES.

Government Response

Accepted in part: · At this time the Ministry of the Solicitor General does not have plans to commission an independent review of the mandatory charging framework.

Government could consider the development of relevant, adequate and effective policing standards relating to various types of investigations, including IPV, as part of future regulatory development work, including a thorough review of the Policing Standards Manual (PSM).

Government would consider any independent external studies and reviews related to mandatory charging framework.

Analysis

Sector Perspectives

The failure of mandatory charging policies is well documented in existing research, both in academic and community-based reports. Mandatory charging has not only not made things better, but has worsened the situation for many women who have been criminalized when they were the victims of IPV. These charges have also had a negative impact on women's family law cases.

Racialized and Indigenous women as well as people from other marginalized communities have been disproportionately impacted by mandatory charging policies.

This is a policy issue, not a matter to be dealt with through a possible review of policing standards and the PSM. The repeal of this policy is long overdue.

Rationale

Despite initial support for this initiative, there is near-unanimity among advocates that these policies have proven to be punitive, and the one-size-fits-all approach has led to an unintended outcome: increased criminalization of survivors of intimate-partner violence. This has actively created additional harm, and made it more difficult for women to escape violence by saddling them with a criminal record and other social and economic ramifications that flow from criminalization.

There is absolutely no justification for continuing a policy that is creating harm in the name of protecting survivors. Currently, Crown policy is the source of this harm, therefore it is incumbent on government to undertake the research and initiatives to dismantle this policy and develop a more appropriate response.

Action

In order to move towards implementation of this recommendation, the following next steps could be undertaken by individuals or organizations:

Develop an advocacy campaign to bring an end to the mandatory charging policy:

- Conduct a literature review of existing research, including community-engaged and anecdotal research, in order to develop a short advocacy brief calling for implementation of this recommendation;
 - Include a review of DVDRC recommendations to see if any have called for a re-examination of the role of mandatory charging;
- Provide this brief to all parties in both the provincial and federal governments as well as to the media;
- Review the PSM to fully understand what role it does and could play;
- Engage with police through local connections and the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police to collaborate on advancing this recommendation.

Recommendation 66: Probation & Parole - Improved Communication

REQUIRE THAT PROBATION OFFICERS, IN A TIMELY MANNER, ENSURE:

- A. THERE IS AN UP-TO-DATE RISK ASSESSMENT IN THE FILE,
- B. PROBATION CONDITIONS ARE CLEAR, ENFORCEABLE & APPROPRIATE FOR THE LEVEL OF RISK
- C. CONTACT WITH SURVIVOR TO INFORM HER OF ANY CONDITIONS OR LIMITATIONS ON HIS MOVEMENT OR ACTIVITIES, AND WHAT SHE SHOULD DO IN THE EVENT OF A POSSIBLE BREACH BY THE OFFENDER,
- D. REGULAR CONTACT WITH SURVIVORS TO RECEIVE & PROVIDE UPDATES & INFORMATION, SEEK INPUT FROM SURVIVORS AND JUSTICE SYSTEM PERSONNEL BEFORE MAKING DECISIONS,
- E. IMPROVED SUPERVISION OF HIGH-RISK PERPETRATORS,
- F. RISK ASSESSMENTS AND RISKS OF LETHALITY ARE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT WHEN MAKING ENFORCEMENT DECISIONS.

Government Response

Accepted (completed): Policies have been developed to ensure initial and follow up risk assessments are conducted by PPOs, and contact between survivors and PPOs is maintained throughout the supervision period. Current practice includes notification of acute risk factors to survivors and current partners, consultation with courts re variation of supervision orders, strict monitoring and enforcement of high risk offenders, including contact between PPOs and Survivor at onset of supervision, throughout term of supervision and in preparation of report or discharge planning.

The government adopts “various tools” along a continuum of community correctional management activities, and considers of all factors in determining appropriate enforcement and the use of supervision tools including offender risk level, victim and public safety and offender rehabilitation.

Analysis

Sector Perspectives

Probation and Parole has been one of the most effective branches of government in terms of meaningful engagement with the Renfrew femicides, the Inquest recommendations and the need for change.

We are not aware of any consultation with IPV sector experts on the development of these standards.

Proper implementation of these policies depends on adequate resourcing and appropriate training. Who is actually doing this work, and what additional resources have been allocated to support it? We are not aware of any efforts to provide sector partners in the IPV service community with information about what their clients can expect from PPOs, or what to do if those policies are not being implemented.

How is this new approach being implemented, supervised and evaluated?

Rationale

There is no dispute about the importance of timely, comprehensive and effective engagement of PPOs with survivors. Survivors and frontline service providers have an important role in creating safety, and often know the history of the violence.

Survivors have been forced to become experts in their own safety and have deep knowledge of the pathology of the perpetrator’s conduct, triggers and red flags. They must be engaged in safety planning for their own safety and must be consulted to ensure that PPOs have all relevant information.

Action

In order to move towards implementation of this recommendation, the following next steps could be undertaken by individuals or organizations:

Engage with government to ensure the effective implementation of this recommendation:

- Information request seeking disclosure of any reporting and evaluation that has been done with respect to service standards;
- Local communities engage with support services in the community to explore the regularity of updated assessments and action how local sectors can support and inform this process;
- Seek funding to support service providers outlining policies, tools and service standards, as well as what to do if those standards are not being met;
- Research re implementation of case standards, including interviews with frontline service providers and survivors (where appropriate); and
- Write to MCSCS Probation and Parole officials and propose an implementation table with frontline experts actively engaged on the development and evaluation of these policies and providing a feedback loop on implementation gaps where they exist.

The Recommendations of the CKW Inquest can be organized by the following themes:

ACCOUNTABILITY: 1, 2, 3, 5, 15, 18, 24, 31, 51, 59, 63, 67, 75, 76, 83.

COORDINATION: 4, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 30, 34, 35, 36, 39, 42, 43, 44, 50, 54, 55, 68, 78.

FUNDING: 18, 19, 20, 21, 52, 83.

HIGH RISK: 17, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 48, 49, 51, 55, 56, 57, 60, 61, 62, 64, 65, 66, 67, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 78, 82.

LAW REFORM: 6, 11, 39, 40, 46, 47, 58, 77, 79, 80, 81, 84, 85.

PERPETRATOR INTERVENTIONS: 33, 34, 35, 36, 38, 71.

TRAINING: 1, 8, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 38, 42, 57.

This legend categorizes the recommendations for at a glance purposes.

This review and renewed approach is to make the recommendations more user friendly and to connect and establish intersections.

If you are researching recommendations, please know the numbers still correspond to the accurate recommendations in the original CKW release document.

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