

Year-End Report Violence Prevention Initiative Action Plan 2001-2002

Introduction

The 2001-2002 Action Plan for the VPI was based on the recommendations coming from the *Final Implementation and Evaluation Report of the Provincial Strategy Against Violence*. The evaluation highlighted the need for improved coordination of services, and collaboration between government and community agencies on policy development for victims of violence. The objectives in the Action Plan were designed to be implemented in conjunction with departments' on-going efforts to address the legislative, policy and service issues identified during the Provincial Strategy Against Violence.

Status Report - Key Objectives of Action Plan

Coordination and Leadership

Promotion of VPI

All objectives completed. All departments engaged in promotion of the VPI, both internally and externally through memorandums, newsletters, circulation of VPI posters, and various status reports. Health and Community Services and Education worked closely with Regional Health Boards and School Boards, respectively. Awareness of the VPI was notably higher at central offices. All departments identified a need to improve communications on the VPI goals at the regional level.

Coordination of Services to Victims of Violence

All departments have taken some action towards completing this objective. New positions were created, e.g. Director of Policy and Strategic Planning, Justice; Intern position with Health and Community Services devoted primarily to VPI activities. New committees were established, e.g. Human Resources and Employment's Victims of Violence Working Group, Justice's committee to review restorative justice/alterative dispute resolution processes. Justice has also improved information-sharing through the Provincial Corrections Offender Management System involving institutional and community corrections. Notwithstanding these and other efforts, there is an overriding need for more human resources at the departmental level for coordination and implementation of policy, especially in those departments with several divisions and regional offices.

Community participation

All objectives completed. Six Regional Coordinating Committees (RCCs) and the Provincial Association Against Family Violence (PAAFV) received funding from the VPI. This enabled RCCs to

hire staff to augment their otherwise volunteer lead committees. Health and Community Services also provided funds for a provincial meeting of board members and administrators of the PAAFV. All RCCS continue to be involved in advocacy and public awareness on violence prevention. Committees report that they have not had as much success with objectives connected with regional service coordination. This has been linked to lack of communications between regional and provincial government representatives and lack of clarity on the role of RCCs and on the expectations of government representatives on the committees.

Strategic Social Plan - Regional Planners have been working with RCCs in some regions. They have acted as a liaison between RCCs and their respective SSP regional committees. There is a need for more “agency to agency” liaison between RCCs and regional committees of the SSP in the upcoming year.

Provincial Coordination

The PCC expanded its membership to include four pan-provincial organizations, as well as Newfoundland & Labrador Housing Corporation and Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs. The Committee held a planning retreat in March to clarify roles and strengthen partnerships. The PCC will take time in the new year to define the roles of new members.

Research

One of four objectives on research and evaluation was completed by Women’s Policy Office - the provincial survey of attitudes towards violence was completed in March 2002. The Women’s Policy Office has initiated work on the remaining objectives. They include: developing data base and reports on work of regional committees, working with departments on improving data collection on services to victims, and conducting a survey of regional services. In addition, the mid-term evaluation of the VPI will be conducted in 2003.

Departments engaged in various research projects related to violence prevention over and above those referenced in the Action Plan. Health and Community Services supported research into Alternate Models for Northern and Aboriginal Shelters. It also surveyed regional health boards on their violence prevention activities. Education, in collaboration with the Regional Coordinating Coalition Against Violence - Eastern Avalon, completed a survey on school anti-violence programming. Justice began a review of family violence legislation and completed its strategic planning process.

Policy Development

All objectives completed. The *Inter-departmental Anti-Violence Policy Framework* was completed and circulated widely to department personnel and community partners. One example of the framework in action was Human Resources and Employment’s *Moving Forward: Responding to the*

Needs of Victims of Violence. In December 2001, Education announced the establishment of a Safe and Caring Schools Initiative. This included the establishment of a Safe and Caring Schools Provincial Advisory Group, responsible for identifying violence-prevention needs, assessing initiatives undertaken by schools, and proposing solutions when needed. Health and Community Services included violence prevention as a prevention activity in the province's Strategic Health Plan. Increased community collaboration of this nature should continue with all departments.

Training

All objectives completed. The Violence Awareness and Action Training Program (VAAT) was developed and delivered in seven pilots, training 128 trainees with an average of 25 from each VPI partner. This process included the production and printing of facilitator and trainee manuals and visual resources. A final report with recommendations was completed in May 2002. The primary focus for 2002-2003 should be the creation of mechanisms to offer on-going training at a regional level.

There were other training initiatives at the department level. Education funded training for 15 provincial program specialists in the Cooperative Discipline Program. The Department will continue supporting these individuals to train other educators over the next two to three years. Health and Community Services and Justice continued to offer the inter-departmental training "Collaborative Approach to the Investigation of Child Sexual Abuse". Human Resources and Employment developed a training plan which combined the VAAT program with orientation training to its new policies for victims of violence.

Public Awareness

All objectives completed. All departments and RCCs engaged in public awareness activities throughout the year. Noteworthy were planned programs and events on December 6th (Montreal Massacre) and during Violence Prevention Month in February. Government lead activities tended to be focused in the St. John's region. Next year's goal might be to encourage more public awareness within regional government offices.

The Women's Policy Office coordinated the production of VPI PR materials including a poster, press kit, pamphlet, facts sheets and newsletter. All materials should be completed by July 2002. A number of anti-violence information pamphlets were reprinted by the Women's Policy Office. One such pamphlet, *Surviving Sexual Assault: A Woman's Guide* was revised with the assistance of the Crown Prosecutor's Office, Justice, and the Newfoundland and Labrador Sexual Assault Crisis and Prevention Center.

Advocacy

The first objective was to ensure participation in the VPI by all stakeholder groups (women, children,

elders, and those who experience violence because of sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, ability or economic status).

Some efforts were made to achieve this objective. Contact was made with the Seniors Resource Center. The Center requested that a specific objective on elder abuse be put in the next action plan. They have also expressed concern over the slow down of revisions to the *Neglected Adults Act*. Issues related to child abuse were the focus of the Justice Issues Committee for the year and a report with recommendations will be completed by June, 2002. In the next year the Provincial Coordinating Committee should explore ways to incorporate the needs of all groups into the goals and objectives of the VPI.

The second objective was to address the special needs of Aboriginal and Northern Communities. In addition to the previously mentioned research project, Health and Community Services worked closely with the PAAFV to develop solutions to a variety of issues associated with shelters in Labrador. These initiatives are reflected in the Department's 2002-2003 budget. The recent addition of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs to the Committee of Ministers should result in more focus being placed on the needs of Aboriginals.

Highlights - Regional Coordinating Committees

Labradorians for Peaceful Communities

- Established contacts in the communities of Rigolet, Makkovik, Postville and Hopedale
- Used the **Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope (Path)** strategic planning tool to create a plan for regional priorities
- Carried out regional teleconference to discuss regional issues with focus on improving policing for Postville and Black Tickle
- Held successful meeting with Social Policy Committee of Cabinet

Grenfell Regional Anti-Violence Team

- Outreach visits were made in all areas of region: Flowers Cove, Roddickton, Forteau, Mary's Harbour, Port Hope Simpson, and Charlottetown
- There were a number of public awareness and education activities including full day Teen and Mental Health Workshops in two high schools
- Members of the RCC and Coordinator participated in the VAAT session in St. Anthony

Western Regional Coalition to End Violence

- Successful efforts in mobilizing communities around anti-violence work in six areas, Stephenville/Bay St. George/Port-au-Port, Burgeo, Port aux Basques/Codroy Valley, Corner Brook/Bay of Islands, Port Saunders. Funding grants provided to five of the six groups
- Public awareness activities included 96 presentations to schools, colleges, and community groups

- Representatives from Burgeo, Rocky Hr., Bay St. George and Corner Brook participated in the VAAT session in Corner Brook.

Committee Against Violence Inc. (Central)

- Committee now has representatives from the full region: Conne River, Hr. Breton, Gander, Grand Falls-Windsor, Charlottetown and Springdale
- In process of producing a children's book, "Trevor and the Bully", with financial support from Victim Services, Justice
- Celebrated 10th Anniversary of Committee on November 31, 2002 with opening of new office donated by NLHC
- Engaged in networking sessions with various local groups such as the SPCA, Exploits Valley Crime Prevention Committee, Family Resource Centres, Futures in Newfoundland & Labrador Youth, and the Strategic Social Plan

Eastern Regional Coordinating Committee

- Co-hosted two day regional conference "Celebrating Accomplishments, Recognizing Opportunities" on enhancing services for victims of violence with Women's Discovery Network, Clarenville, Feb. 2002
- Conducted a series of community forums on how violence affects the community

Regional Coordinating Coalition Against Violence - Eastern Avalon

- Developed facilitator's guide to accompany research project on *Bars, Booze, and Sexual Violence*
- Developed proposal for second stage of project, *Moving Masculinities*
- Participated in public forum on proposed changes to social assistance legislation, and workshop on participatory action research for social change
- Co-facilitated workshops on Gender and School Violence Prevention at Roncalli High School in Avondale, and a VAAT session in Clarenville

Additional Information

Detailed reports are available on regional coordinating committees and the partner departments of the VPI by contacting the Women's Policy Office or by contacting organizations directly.

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