

Recommendations from the Domestic Violence Death Review Committee

2018

Office of the Chief Coroner
December 2019

BACKGROUND

Domestic Violence Death Review Committee

In December 2009, the Department of Public Safety, Chief Coroner's Office, established the Domestic Violence Death Review Committee. The purpose of the Committee is to assist the Office of the Chief Coroner in the review of deaths of persons that occur as a result of domestic violence, and to make recommendations to help prevent such deaths in similar circumstances. The Chair of the Committee is the Deputy Chief Coroner with members from law enforcement, Public Prosecutions, health, academia, research, service provision, interested citizens and government.

A domestic violence death is defined as a homicide or suicide that results from violence between intimate partners or ex-partners and may include the death of a child or other familial members.

The committee provides a confidential multi-disciplinary review of domestic violence deaths. It creates and maintains a comprehensive database about the victims and perpetrators of domestic violence fatalities and their circumstances. It helps identify systemic issues, problems, gaps, or shortcomings in each case and may make appropriate recommendations concerning prevention. It helps identify trends, risk factors, and patterns from the cases reviewed to make recommendations for effective intervention and prevention strategies.

For the period 2010 – 2018, the Committee has reviewed and submitted reports on 16 cases to the Chief Coroner. In turn the Chief Coroner has forwarded the reports to government departments and agencies involved in the cases for response. Departments and agencies involved have responded to the Chief Coroner on the actions they intend to take to implement the recommendations. The recommendations and responses for the 16 cases reviewed to date are available on the Public Safety [website](#). The recommendations and departmental responses to the latest cases are reported on the following pages.

Improving our understanding of why perpetrators of abuse kill their intimate partners and why victims of abuse are vulnerable and using this information to take action to prevent future deaths is essential to reveal systemic gaps and to reduce and eliminate domestic violence in New Brunswick. The Domestic Violence Death Review Committee has an opportunity to educate government and community agencies in New Brunswick with the goal of preventing future domestic homicides and assaults.

The committee continues to meet and review cases.

Recommendations and Responses

Recommendation #1

That the Minister of Health in collaboration with Women's Equality Branch, and the Department of Justice and Public Safety, in recognizing the importance of the concurrence of mental illness and domestic/intimate partner violence (D/IPV), explore better ways to identify and address escalating D/IPV and risk of lethality, to ensure spousal and family safety in situations where a perpetrator has an unstable mental illness and/or addiction.

Include but not limited to:

1. Deliver additional education to full time and casual Mental Health and Addictions employees, and Primary Care health providers concerning better evidence-based practice regarding lethality D/IPV assessment and coordinated response;
2. When assessing people for suicide risk, routinely incorporate D/IPV lethality risk assessment, and follow up to better ensure the safety of the patient, his spouse, family, co-workers and friends. Victim Services or D/IPV Outreach services could be useful in situations where Mental Health Act police calls are made and the patient has threatened violence against a significant other.
3. Consider anyone presenting with unstable mental health or an addiction with recent or pending separation to be at increased risk for D/IPV lethality.

The DVD Review committee has considered the Department of Health's 2015 response to our 2014 recommendations. We acknowledge the important work has taken place and recognize that significant additional work is needed in NB to address D/IPV lethality.

Health

There are currently no assessment and screening tools specific to assessing risk of D/IPV in use within the Regional Health Authorities (RHAs). However, the addictions and mental health screening process currently includes a section entitled "risk behaviours" where risk to others is considered, on a scale of intensity. Even with the section, the tool primarily focuses on self-harm. However, the screening tool could be adapted to assess the risk of violence to others, specific to partners and family living in the household.

Moncton addictions and mental health services have a social worker that focuses exclusively on assessment and brief interventions of individuals who have committed or are at risk of committing D/IPV. That position works very closely with the domestic violence courts in Moncton and probation services in the region. This could serve as a template for further expansion to the rest of the province.

The Department of Health will continue to collaborate with the appropriate government departments and share, with the RHAs and other relevant organizations such as EM/ANB Inc., an inventory of training initiatives, when provided by Women's Equality Branch or another lead.

In addition, the Department of Health has offered to act as a liaison with any professional associations such as the New Brunswick Medical Society, Nurses Association of New Brunswick, Paramedic Association of New Brunswick, etc., to provide information and training materials that may be relevant to primary health care providers.

Women's Equality Branch

The Women's Equality Branch, the Department of Health and Department of Public Safety have begun identifying areas for future collaboration to address the concurrence of mental illness with domestic and intimate partner violence. Specifically, the Women's Equality Branch and the Departments of Health and of Public Safety have committed to future discussions to coordinate training for primary health care providers as well as mental health and addictions employees. In addition, the Women's Equality Branch will offer to facilitate a joint orientation regarding domestic and intimate partner violence between mental health and addictions personnel and the domestic violence sector.

Further, the Women's Equality Branch will support the Department of Health and the Department of Public Safety to improve spousal and family safety in situations which a spouse or family member is living with a mental health challenge or addiction. The Women's Equality Branch also has the capacity to deliver training regarding Danger Assessment and Intimate Partner Violence Intervention 101 for any interested government department and will accommodate requests for training.

Recommendation #2

Recognizing that support groups such as AA, NA, and Al-Anon play a key role assisting individuals who may have risk factors for D/IPV and lethality, the Ministers of Health and Justice & Public Safety in collaboration with Women's Equality Branch (WEB) explore ways to strengthen the D/IPV response of these groups. Opportunities to engage these groups in education and awareness about D/IPV and lethality risk should be explored.

Public Safety

The Department of Public Safety's Crime Prevention Branch will work with the Department of Health and the Women's Equality Branch to explore ways to strengthen the D/IPV response of support groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Narcotics Anonymous (NA), and Al-Anon Family Groups.

Health

The self-help organizations and groups, such as those mentioned, continue to offer support throughout the province. Other organizations have received funding from the Department of Health to offer support to specific groups, including the Sophia Recovery Centre that offers support to women in recovery in the Saint John area. As of yet, no specific work by the Department of Health has been done to explore ways to strengthen the D/IPV response with these support groups. The recommendation will be taken under consideration as we move forward in improving access and delivery of mental health service in New Brunswick.

Women's Equality Branch

A preliminary meeting was held to begin identifying areas for future collaboration between government departments. The Women's Equality Branch will assist with the development of targeted resources to be shared via various online platforms with the aim of:

- i. increasing public awareness of intimate partner violence;
- ii. increasing the capacity of persons living with or recovering from an addiction and who participate in a confidential addictions accountability and recovery group to offer support and to intervene when individuals within their group report that they have been subjected to violence within a domestic or intimate partnership;

Recommendation #3

That the Ministers of Justice and Public Safety and Health with the New Brunswick Association of Chiefs of Police, review policies and procedures in relation to the police response to D/IPV in the context of concurrence of mental illness, including situations that fall under the Mental Health Act.

Public Safety

The Department of Public Safety's Policing Standards and Contract Management Branch works in close collaboration with the New Brunswick Association of Chiefs of Police (NBACP) in policy development. When provincial policies and procedures are developed and/or updated (as they often are), all Municipal/Regional Police Forces and RCMP 'J' Division are consulted for input and feedback. Policies are then submitted to the NBACP Ad-Hoc Policy Committee for review and subsequent approval before dissemination to police officers in New Brunswick.

The Department of Public Safety will share this recommendation with the NBACP Ad-Hoc Policy Committee and suggest that the Department of Health be consulted in the review of policies and procedures regarding police response to D/IPV in the context of concurrence of mental illness.

New Brunswick Association of Chiefs of Police

We agree and will provide guidance to our member agencies to conduct such a review of their respective policies and procedures.

Recommendation #4

That the Minister of Justice and Public Safety and the Minister of Health:

- a) Evaluate the current public awareness campaign, Love Shouldn't Hurt to ensure that it:
 - i. highlights opportunities for families, friends, co-workers and the wider community to offer help and support;
 - ii. recognizes concurrence issues;
 - iii. focuses attention on those experiencing separation, employment difficulties, mental illness, addiction, feelings of shame, guilt and self-loathing;
 - iv. help individuals get the assistance that they need and potentially prevent situations of the D/IPV from escalating; and
 - v. focuses on people of various ages and demographics.

Public Safety

The Love Shouldn't Hurt Advisory Committee, which oversees the Love Shouldn't Hurt Campaign, recognizes that the Campaign could be doing more to better achieve these goals. Where federal funding for the Love Shouldn't Hurt campaign came to an end in March 2019, the Advisory Committee is working with the Roundtable on Crime and Public Safety to identify Campaign next steps, including potential to expand the focus and reach, as well as assessment and identification of required resources. In the interim, the Department of Public Safety continues to coordinate the Love Shouldn't Hurt campaign with a focus on supporting Champion initiatives in communities across New Brunswick.

Love Shouldn't Hurt Champions continue to be recruited across the province and are expected to host at least one event per calendar year that engages the public and spreads Campaign messages and information on available resources in their community. Champions are provided with a toolkit including presentation materials, speaking notes, videos and other resources; training; a swag package to be used for their activity; up to \$500 to support their activity from the Crime Prevention Association of New Brunswick; access to the Speaker's Bureau of subject matter experts who could speak about D/IPV at their event; and recognition of efforts on social media, the Love Shouldn't Hurt website and in newsletters. To date, there are 22 active Love Shouldn't Hurt Champions and 24 active volunteers who have hosted 21 events since 2018 across the province, with more events being planned. Since its launch in November 2015, the Campaign has documented contact with more than 50,000 New Brunswickers through in-person events, the Love Shouldn't Hurt website and social media accounts.

The Department of Public Safety will share this recommendation with the Love Shouldn't Hurt Advisory Committee as well as the 22 active Love Shouldn't Hurt Champions to look at addressing the identified areas of concern.

Health

The Department of Public Safety is currently the owner of the campaign. As such, the Department of Health has limited influence over the content of the ads and promotional material. However, the Department of Health's databases could be accessed to inform on service utilization to enhance the analysis of the campaign's success.

Recommendation #5

That the Minister of Post -Secondary Education Training and Labour and Treasury Board explore, with employee assistance programs, ways to strengthen those programs' response to workplace harassment situations. This should include programs that assist employees on extended stress or medical leave, in particular when an employee reports mental health issues and is experiencing an actual or pending separation. D/IPV should be considered and appropriately screened for, and an assessment for lethality be used and acted on as appropriate.

Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour

While Treasury Board is responsible for the Government of New Brunswick's administrative policies and the Employee Family Assistance Program (EFAP), the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour, in collaboration with WorkSafeNB and other partners, has undertaken significant work with respect to harassment and violence within the employment context, including:

1. The introduction of regulatory amendments under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* addressing violence and harassment as workplace hazards. These amendments came into force on April 1, 2019.
2. The regulation requires employers to conduct a risk assessment and establish code of practice for violence and harassment. Furthermore, the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* also requires employers that identify or are made aware by an employee of a hazard, such as a D/IPV situation, take reasonable measures to ensure the safety of the workplace. These measures may include necessary safety procedures, staff education and/or awareness, specific emergency response plans or other measures depending on the situation or hazard.
3. The introduction of Domestic, Intimate Partner or Sexual Violence Leave under the *Employment Standards Act*. This leave came into force on September 1, 2018 and provides employees with leave of up to 10 days (continuous or intermittent) or up to 16 weeks (one continuous period), of which the first five days are paid.

Finance and Treasury Board

The Department of Finance and Treasury Board (FTB) is responsible for the Government of New Brunswick (GNB) administrative policies and the Employee Family Assistance Program (EFAP) and supports the recommendations of the Review Committee. The services offered under GNB's EFAP remain accessible to employees while on extended leave (paid or unpaid) 24 hours a day, seven days a week for 365 days a year.

An employee can contact EFAP for help with family and relationship issues, harassment situations, mental health, financial, legal advice and other topics. The EFAP provides counselling services, self-help resources, community chats, comprehensive toolkits, relationship tests, podcasts, webinars and access to a depression centre. The depression centre includes depression screening and anxiety tests to determine a personalized program that is best suited to the employee needs.

Access to EFAP and the services provided is completely voluntary and self-driven by the employee. For privacy reasons, GNB as an employer does not know if a specific employee accesses EFAP and the reasons for doing so, or if they are experiencing mental health issues and/or facing a separation unless the employee divulges that information. The employer has aggregate information about the use of EFAP. FTB supports employers with the coordination of face-to-face training sessions delivered by the EFAP provider to strengthen the employer response when faced with mental health and D/IPV issues within the workplace.

D/IPV screening or an assessment for lethality is currently not a part of the EFAP program. FTB will discuss the possibility of including this screen/assessment with the EFAP provider. In response to new legislated requirements under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, GNB has developed policy, training and tools to increase awareness of workplace harassment and workplace violence, including D/IPV.

Recommendation #6

That the Department of Justice and Public Safety, Crime Prevention and Reduction division explore partnering with community agencies, or other government departments to establish a 24 hour helpline that the general public of New Brunswick can access for information on domestic/intimate partner violence including education on recognizing domestic/intimate partner violence, risk factors, available support / resources and how they can provide assistance to someone experiencing domestic/intimate partner violence.

Public Safety

The Crime Prevention Branch has established a 2019-2022 Action Planning Working Group of the Roundtable on Crime and Public Safety. This group is working to identify 2019-2022 Action Plan options based on the 2016-2019 Action Plan results and recommendations, determine priorities, and develop a detailed action plan for submission to the Roundtable for approval in Fall, 2019. The Crime Prevention Branch will share the DVDRC's recommendation to explore the establishment of a 24-hour helpline for New Brunswickers to access information on domestic/intimate partner violence (D/IPV) with the 2019-2022 Action Planning Working Group for its consideration, recognizing that similar resources already exist including 24/7 crisis lines provided by Transition Houses and the pilot of NB211 which is aimed at connecting people to the right information and services.

Similarly, the Crime Prevention Branch will share the recommendation to collaborate with Canada Post to better promote education and awareness on D/IPV, risk factors, available support and resources, and how New Brunswickers can provide assistance to someone experiencing D/IPV with the Love Shouldn't Hurt Advisory Committee, keeping in mind the campaign currently has limited financial support.

Recommendation #7

That the Minister of Justice and Public Safety and the New Brunswick Association of Chiefs of Police communicate that the mandatory reporting policy is upheld in incidents regarding D/IPV, where children are present or not in the home. Police are obligated according to policy to make a referral to the Department of Social Development whether the incident is considered urgent or not.

Public Safety

The Department of Public Safety, in partnership with the NBACP, adopted a train-the-trainer model on the province-wide use of the Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment (ODARA) as part of New Brunswick's Crime Prevention and Reduction Strategy's 2014-2016 Action Plan. The D/IPV and ODARA user training reminds police officers of their duty to report child abuse to Child Protection Services. Under the *Family Services Act*, s.31(1), "the security or development of a child may be in danger when... (f) the child is living in a situation where there is domestic violence." Further, the Child Victims of Abuse and Neglect Protocols include exposure to domestic violence in its definition of Child Abuse. Exposure to domestic violence refers to when a child is living in a situation where there is domestic violence. It includes children seeing, hearing or being aware of violence perpetrated by one parent figure against another parent figure. In addition to the *Family Services Act*, these Protocols require police to report suspected cases of child abuse to Social Development. Similarly, the Woman Victims of Abuse Protocols (which police forces are required to adhere, according to the *NB Policing Standards*) describe the police officer's obligation to notify Social Development if children are present. Police officers are trained to report all D/IPV incidents where a child resides with the accused, or the victim, to Social Development for follow-up care, regardless of whether the child was present at the time of the incident or witnessed the violence, and regardless of whether the incident is deemed criminal or not.

The Department of Public Safety will communicate this recommendation with the New Brunswick policing community, highlighting that the mandatory reporting policy is upheld in incidents of D/IPV, where children are present or not in the home.

New Brunswick Association of Chiefs of Police

The practice and policy of mandatory referral to the Department of Social Development is a standard practice among New Brunswick Municipal Policing Agencies. NBACP will communicate to our member agencies to underscore that this practice must extend to incidents of D/IPV and should be audited for compliance on a regular basis.

Recommendation #8

That the Law Society of New Brunswick incorporates a course in D/IPV for articling students that are pursuing the Law Society's courses for admittance in the Law Society of New Brunswick.

Law Society of New Brunswick

The Law Society is currently engaged in a multi-year project to redevelop our Bar Admission Program. We have been mindful of critical issues, such as D/IPV, since the project's start. While the new program is still in development (and subject to change), we expect it to support Recommendation #8 in the following ways:

1. The new program will assess core legal concepts in practice areas not currently required in law school (e.g. family law, ADR, criminal procedure) and adds the *Intimate Partner Violence Intervention Act*, SNB2017, c 5 as examinable content;
2. The new program introduces eight days of intensive skills training during which candidates work through several complex cases, one of which has D/IPV as a central element;
3. The new program requires participation in a mandatory, year-long, blended-learning *Sustainable Practice Course* that includes:
 - a) an online lesson dedicated to *Domestic and Intimate Partner Violence*;
 - b) several online lessons that support development of underlying competencies such as emotional intelligence, wellness (including awareness of mental health, addiction, and trauma), intercultural competence, Indigenous awareness, high-stakes communication, and community service integration;
 - c) in-person activities (e.g. discussion groups, role-playing exercise) designed to support self-awareness, build resilience, encourage effective peer support, and help individuals to speak up in challenging times;
 - d) a strong focus on reflective practice, including reflection on D/IPV; and
 - e) access to supporting resources, including D/IPV-related publications and tools.

Recommendation #9

That the Law Society of New Brunswick require, as part of their Rules on Mandatory Continuing Professional Development, that every member of the Law Society of New Brunswick complete a course on D/IPV.

Law Society of New Brunswick

The Law Society's *Rules on Mandatory Continuing Professional Development* (the "Rules") came into force on January 1, 2010. Pursuant to the *Rules*, every practising member shall complete 12 hours of continuing professional development in every calendar year. It is up to the members to decide which courses to complete. Some of the larger law societies across Canada make it mandatory that at least two of the 12 hours must pertain to any combination of professional responsibility and ethics and practice management.

The Law Society of New Brunswick is too small and does not have the resources to make a course mandatory on any topic in view of the fact that any mandatory courses must be provided in both official languages and in all regions of the Province. In addition, we believe that any mandatory course does not provide meaningful education to our members. Finally, we believe that it would not be proper to impose a mandatory course on D/IPV for every member Law Society when only a portion of the members practice family law where most of the cases dealing domestic/intimate partner violence are present.

The Law Society will not require, as part of the *Rules*, that every member of the Law Society of New Brunswick complete a course on D/IPV for the reasons outlined above.

Notwithstanding the Law Society position on mandatory courses, with the guiding principles in mind, we recommend that the Law Society consider the following:

1. Offering to its members a one- to two-hour, online, for-credit, free-of-charge course that reflects learning objectives similar to those identified for the *Domestic and Intimate Partner Violence* lesson (referenced above);
2. Informing Law Society members about critical supporting competencies (e.g. trauma-informed practice, intercultural competence) and strategies for developing in these areas;
3. Offering credits for in-person workshop to Law Society members that provides participants a practical opportunity to work through one or more D/IPV scenarios – ideally as a collaborative effort engaging multiple disciplines; and
4. Providing a list of resources and tools for continued, self-directed learning in this area.

We believe that exposure to D/IPV concepts in these multiple ways will help support meaningful, transformative education. The Law Society also welcomes the opportunity to collaborate with others to help address this critical issue.

Recommendation #10

That the Minister of Justice and Public Safety, the Office of the Attorney General and the New Brunswick Legal Aid Services Commission, ensure all lawyers practicing whom may represent any or all, victims, perpetrators and child victims exposed to D/IPV, should receive education and training on issues of D/IPV, that should include the following:

- 1) Recognize the impact, exposure, and associated safety concerns that D/IPV has on children;
- 2) Recognize and identify both warning signs and risk factors of D/IPV;
- 3) Recognize and incorporate a trauma informed approach when interacting with victims of D/IPV;
- 4) Understand the significance of and be informed by the validated D/IPV risk assessments utilized in NB, which include the DA, and the ODARA; and
- 5) Understand that the completion of supervised access of children, intervention and parenting education programs in cases of D/IPV should not be sole indicators of reduced risk.

Public Safety

While the Department of Public Safety does not provide regular education nor training to lawyers, the department can collaborate with the Office of the Attorney General, the New Brunswick Legal Aid Services Commission, and the Women's Equality Branch in the development and delivery of D/IPV training to this audience, particularly as it relates to the DA and the ODARA. Because the ODARA is intended to be used in bail decision-making, 38 Crown Prosecutors (and more than 70 other service providers) received a 1.5 hour-information session on the risk assessment tool in 2015. This session was video-recorded for future training opportunities. Further, a presentation on the ODARA was delivered to the New Brunswick Association of Provincial Court Judges in October 2015. Offers were made to provide the same information sessions to the New Brunswick Legal Aid Services Commission.

Recommendation #11

That the Minister of Justice and Public Safety implement evidenced-based and regionally accessible D/IPV programs and services as part of sentencing for perpetrators to decrease D/IPV and risk of lethality. It should be noted that an “anger management” program is not a substitute for a D/IPV rehabilitation program.

Public Safety

In the context of the New Brunswick’s Crime Prevention and Reduction Strategy, the Department of Public Safety completed a review of criminogenic programs with the goal to ensure current community correctional approaches are evidence-based. The review identified areas for improvement in existing programs and services including interventions focused on D/IPV. While all Community Services regions throughout New Brunswick have access to D/IPV rehabilitation programs, plans are underway to increase the quality of D/IPV assessment, interventions and case management approaches with the goal to reduce recidivism and increase victim and community safety.

Recommendation #12

That the Minister of Health and Regional Health Authorities mandate training for all primary health care staff on the co-occurrence of D/IPV and mental health and substance abuse. This training would improve assessments and interventions to ensure coordination of response and to manage risk of lethality.

Health

The Department of Health has an ongoing project for the integration of addictions and mental health in primary health care. The stakeholder engagement phase is nearing completion. During the next phase, further assessment of knowledge gaps and needs will be conducted by the project leads to identify opportunities for better education and training in relation to mental health and addictions issues. During this process, staff may be able to determine options for better education and training related to assessing and screening for risk of D/IPV by primary health care providers. The focus to date has been on identifying mild to moderate depression and anxiety. In addition, the Department of Health will assess the potential use of Tele-Care as a resource for available programs and services.

Although, there is no specific D/IPV component to the research study being conducted in Zone 4 (The Roots of Hope project), family physicians are being trained with a focus on identifying mental illness and suicidal tendencies. Again, based on the success and uptake amongst physicians, the project could serve as a model for expansion to other regions of the province and other health care workers, with the added lens of D/IPV.

Recommendation #13

That the Government of New Brunswick implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action, number 57. “We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to provide education to public servants on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.”¹ Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action, 2012, page 7.

¹ Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action, 2012, page 7.

Public Safety

The Department of Public Safety will support the delivery of training developed by Finance and Treasury Board on the history of Aboriginal peoples to its employees.

To assist in providing program and policy support to the Department and its employees, staff within the Policy and Operation Support Branch has received training and certification in: Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples®, Indigenous Consultation & Engagement, Creating an Indigenous Engagement Plan, How to Negotiate with Indigenous Peoples and Working with United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

As well, correctional staff, probation officers and victim service coordinators receive Aboriginal cultural and traditional awareness training. In preparation for province-wide rollout of the Changing Directions model (focused on chronic repeat offenders), Systemic Factors training was provided to all probation officers across New Brunswick which focuses on increasing the understanding of indigenous culture, history and barriers faced by indigenous clients. The purpose of this training is to ensure case management and service provision is tailored to the unique needs of, and challenges faced by, Indigenous clients.

Finance and Treasury Board

The Department of Finance and Treasury Board has consulted with the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. Aboriginal Affairs has contracted the development of eLearning modules through the University of New Brunswick to respond to the requirements noted, specifically for the provision of education to public servants on the history of Aboriginal peoples in New Brunswick, including the history and legacy of residential schools, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law and Aboriginal-Crown relations, among other topics.

Upon the development of the modules, Finance and Treasury Board will be available in a support role to ensure the modules are made available to all GNB employees.

Aboriginal Affairs

The Department of Aboriginal Affairs values the importance of educating the public servants on the history of Aboriginal peoples. The Department has promoted Aboriginal Cultural Awareness through education and information sessions for GNB staff for the past several years; however, these sessions have always been attended on a voluntary basis. In response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action (specifically #57), the Department of Aboriginal Affairs has partnered with the University of New Brunswick and NB Power to develop new training modules to promote Aboriginal cultural competency, including topics such as the history of Aboriginal peoples in New Brunswick, early contact, treaties, residential schools and their impacts, and general cultural awareness. The Department is anticipating incorporating these modules into GNB's performance management system in 2020, as a mandatory component for all employees.

Women's Equality Branch

The Women's Equality Branch is committed to implementing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action number 57. As training becomes available, the Branch will support its employees in receiving skills-based training regarding intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.

Recommendation #14

That the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs in collaboration with the Ministers of Social Development, Justice and Public Safety, Health, Office of the Attorney General, Women's Equality and the NB Association of Chiefs of Police, ensure that ongoing training is provided to all front-line employees intervening with the public and training to recognize the warning signs and risk factors associated with D/IPV. This training must incorporate the historical and current factors (colonization, residential schools, racism and isolation) that have contributed to higher risks of D/IPV and homicide among First Nations population.

Aboriginal Affairs

The Minister of Aboriginal Affairs supports the training of all front-line employees to recognize the warning signs and risk factors associated with D/IPV. The Department is developing training modules to provide awareness and general information about Aboriginal Peoples in New Brunswick to all public servants. The Department supports other GNB departments in developing or engaging appropriate training opportunities specific to their mandates, for all front-line employees, and will continue to provide recommendations for appropriate sources of information and training to departments.

Health

Currently, neither RHA has mandatory training to specifically recognize the warning signs and risk factors associated with D/IPV among First Nations populations. Should training materials or information package be provided or identified by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, the Department of Health is ready to collaborate and share this information with stakeholder partners.

Women's Equality Branch

The Women's Equality Branch is committed to working with the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs in collaboration with the Ministers of Social Development, Justice, Public Safety, Health, Office of the Attorney General, and the NB Association of Chiefs of Police to ensure that ongoing training is provided to all front-line employees intervening with the public. The Women's Equality Branch has the capacity to facilitate skills-based training for front-line service providers to recognize warning signs and risk factors associated with domestic and intimate partner violence through Intimate Partner Violence Intervention 101 and Danger Assessment training. It is committed to reviewing existing curriculum to ensure that the historical and current factors (colonization, residential schools, racism and isolation that have contributed to the higher risk of domestic and intimate partner violence and homicide among indigenous populations) are thoroughly incorporated into existing and future curriculum.

Recommendation #15

That the Ministers of Justice and Public Safety, Social Development, Health, the Office of the Attorney General and the NB Association of Chiefs of Police ensure that their D/IPV training to judges, crown prosecutors, family and criminal court lawyers and frontline staff includes awareness and understanding of, and the ability to recognize resistance/reactive violence to dispel myths of mutual violence.

Public Safety

The Department of Public Safety's D/IPV and ODARA training includes information on how domestic/intimate partner violence varies in pattern, type and effect. The training encourages police officers to recognize the complexities

associated with D/IPV, including the importance of examining pattern over time to identify the different types of violence: minor, isolated violence; victim resistance violence; and coercive-control violence. D/IPV is assessed differently than other forms of violence. Responsibility for stranger violence is assessed by determining the primary aggressor in a specific violent exchange. Unlike stranger violence, D/IPV is usually a cumulative process. When assessing responsibility, pattern and effect in a D/IPV context, the details of the most recent event should not be looked at in isolation. Rather, complete information about the cumulative pattern and effects of verbal abuse, domination, coercive control, and violence over the course of the relationship should be evaluated. Officers are also informed that the type of violence has implications for interim release (risk), risk to children and adult, appropriate sentence, safety planning and recidivism. Failure to distinguish type of violence may result in over reaction (criminal) to minor, isolated and separation violence; over criminalization of victim resistance violence; under reaction to coercion-control violence; and serious implications across criminal, child protections and family law systems. These responses may lead to missed opportunities for interventions with victims, their abusive partners and children; loss of faith in the system by victims; and abusive partners' continued use of violence that is potentially more frequent and severe.

The Department of Public Safety will ensure that its D/IPV training will continue to include this important information so frontline staff are able to recognize victim resistance/reactive violence.

New Brunswick Association of Chiefs of Police

The NBACP will pursue the inclusion of awareness and understanding of and the ability to recognize resistance/reactive violence to dispel myths of mutual violence.

Social Development

The Department of Social Development has implemented a specialized, three-day training module on domestic/intimate partner violence for Child Protection and Family Enhancement Services social workers and supervisors, and Family Group Conference Coordinators. One of the objectives of the training is to strengthen social workers' understanding of intimate partner violence dynamics, which includes recognizing the different types of intimate partner violence. Resistance/reactive violence is explored with the participants by engaging participants in a discussion of what resistance/reactive violence may look like in their practice. The training helps to dispel the myth of mutual violence while providing practice implications for social workers that promote the safety of victims in domestic/intimate partner violence situations.

As of May 30, 2019, 261 social workers have completed the training.