



Service Coordination

Group #2

SUMMARY

The Domestic Violence Death Review Committee (DVDRC) recommendations (2004-2007) recognize the need for coordination of services in order to ensure seamless services be delivered to women who have experienced intimate partner violence (IPV). Four areas have been identified as priorities to further enhance service coordination to reduce the potential for lethality.

Inter-Ministerial Guidelines

Recommendations 2004-6, 2004-17, 2007-12, 2007-32

- Inter-ministerial guidelines should encourage and provide funding for enhanced coordinated practices and protocols within and between the Police, family and criminal courts as well as court-related services such as victim-witness services, mediation, supervised access, CAS, batterer intervention programs and probation supervision.
- Mention of existing models within the Province of Ontario could be replicated to manage high-risk cases.

Development of Inter-sectoral Protocols

Recommendations 2004-3, 2004-14, 2004-15, 2004-19, 2004-21, 2006-11, 2006-21, 2007-13, 2007-33

It is recommended that protocols be developed between sectors to enhance collaboration, to share information and to formalize practices.

Specific protocols recommended by the DVDRC:

- Child Protective Services and Violence against Women (VAW) Community
- Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies and Ontario Family Law Bar Association
- Shelters develop central registry of available housing and coordinate transportation services
- Police and Shelters
- Police and Crown: Surety
- Child Protective Services and School Boards
- Police and CPIC: Police response to breaches of restraining orders under the *Family Law Act*

Inter-sectoral Coordination of Services

Recommendations 2004-7, 2004-15, 2005-5, 2006-30, 2007-8

- Develop awareness of available services between sectors to facilitate seamless support to women who have experienced IPV.

Sectors identified: Ontario Works, healthcare, child protective services, VAW community, school boards

High-risk Case Management

Recommendations 2004-5, 2004-16, 2004-17, 2005-12, 2005-14, 2006-5, 2006-14, 2006-20, 2006-33, 2007-23, 2007-32

It is recommended that once a case has been identified as a high-risk case then there must be a systems response so that the case can be actively managed.

Sectors identified: Government (Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services and Ministry of the Attorney General), Police, Crown, Child Protective Services, VAW community, Healthcare.

Service Coordination - DVDRC Recommendations

Inter-Ministerial Guidelines

2004-6

It is recommended that awareness and education programs address the culture of silence surrounding domestic violence and its apparent acceptance that still exists in some families and small communities

2004-17

It is recommended that the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, Policing Standards Section either develop a stand-alone model to manage high risk domestic violence cases, or include domestic violence in the current standard that addresses high-risk cases

2007-12

To the Ministry of Community Safety & Correctional Services (MCSCS):

It is recommended the MCSCS review their current procedures for assessing risks posed by domestic violence perpetrators to assist in case planning and management and that they ensure adequate funding is in place for batterer intervention programs. (Similar to recommendations #16/2004, #17/2004, #20/2006)

2007-32

To the Ministry of the Attorney General (MAG) and Ministry of Community Safety & Correctional Services (MCSCS):

It is recommended that once a case has been identified as a high risk case then there must be a systems response so that the case can be actively managed. This would require that the justice partners involved with the case meet to discuss management options and strategies. Such dedicated teams already exist in parts of Ontario and should be the model for other communities to follow. (Similar to recommendations #27/2004, #14/2002)

Development of Inter-sectoral Protocols

2004-3

It is recommended that child welfare and protection agencies address the following issues:

- CAS/VAW Collaboration Agreement
- specialized training and education, especially on intervening directly with the offender on risk reduction and containment
- use of assessment reports that examine lethality risk
- quality assurance component
- increase skill and comfort level of workers in dealing with abusers and in supporting women at risk

2004-14

It is recommended that in any community where there are a number of shelters available to assist victims of domestic violence, a central registry of available beds for victims, as well as a means of transportation to the available facility, be established.

2004-15

It is recommended that shelters be supported to create ways to effectively coordinate services and referrals to minimize the need for a woman seeking shelter to navigate the system on her own, and to maximize the ways shelters can work together to provide a seamless and supportive response to the woman and her children

2004-19

It is recommended that a protocol be established between police and Crown counsel to ensure that persons proposed as surety:

- be properly investigated as to their suitability to act as surety;
- be fully informed about their responsibilities as surety both in writing and on the court record; and
- be warned, in writing and on the court record, as to their potential liability under estreatment [the obligations entered into when one agree to be a surety] and as party to a criminal offence in the event they breach their duty.

2004-21

It is recommended that a protocol be established for immediately entering restraining orders into the CPIC (Canadian Police Information Centre) system so that if there is a breach, the police can act immediately under the *Family Law Act*

2006-11

To the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, and the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS): It is recommended that a protocol be established to ensure that when Children's Aid Societies (CAS) receive information about domestic abuse from other professionals such as school guidance counsellors, that the information be forwarded in a structured way to all appropriate authorities, including police so that monitoring of such cases should involve and link all appropriate agencies

2006-21

The Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies and Ontario Family Law Bar Association should jointly develop protocols regarding children who appear to be in danger in the context of parental separations with a history of domestic violence. These children may not qualify for CAS protection because their mother appears to be trying to manage a safety plan as a private family matter. However, the CAS may be in a better position to limit any unsupervised access as a temporary measure pending a thorough assessment by the family court. Rationale: The perpetrator had access to the children without supervision even after he had put their lives in danger. CAS / police might have considered charging the perpetrator and requesting no access as a term of release, or alternatively making supervised visits with no access as a term of supervision pending a full court hearing

2007-13

To the Ministry of Community Safety & Correctional Services (MCSCS), Policing Standards Division, and the Ontario Association Chiefs of Police (OACP):

Police services across Ontario should consider implementing procedures that stipulate that when there are grounds to arrest and /or charge a person in relation to a domestic assault, and where there are public safety issues, or a delay in processing the charges, the accused should immediately be placed on the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) as a Special Interest Police (SIP) entry, advising that grounds exist to arrest. (Similar to recommendation #21/2004)

2007-33

To the Ministry of the Attorney General (MAG) and Ministry of Community Safety & Correctional Services (MCSCS):

It is recommended that all potential sureties be required to watch an educational videotape on their role as it relates to domestic violence cases (e.g. Huron County Crown video). As well, that each police department assign a police officer to routinely call all sureties in high risk cases to check on bail compliance and the stability of the accused. (Similar to recommendations #19/2004, #20/2004)

Inter-sectoral Coordination of Services**2004-7**

It is recommended that all healthcare providers be taught to be mindful of the dynamics of domestic violence and the potential for lethality, especially when working with patients who have a history of alcohol and/or drug abuse, depression, anxiety, or suicidal ideation. When domestic violence is identified in the patient's life, the potential for lethality should be assessed by the healthcare provider or the patient should be referred to others with an expertise in making such assessments

2004-15

It is recommended that shelters be supported to create ways to effectively coordinate services and referrals to minimize the need for a woman seeking shelter to navigate the system on her own, and to maximize the ways shelters can work together to provide a seamless and supportive response to the woman and her children

2005-5

Police and other front-line workers (health/educational/social) need to be made aware of the resources available in their respective communities to address issues of family breakdown, conflict, and mental health, and to make referrals when necessary

2006-30

It is recommended that the Ministry of Education encourage school boards to make professional development and distribution of resource material on domestic violence a priority. Ontario has available materials ranging from educators' resource guides to curriculum material on domestic violence prevention

that could be implemented in a more comprehensive, consistent and integrated basis. (e.g., Handbook for Educators, Choices, 4thR). The goal of the training should be to prepare all staff to help youth/children who are victims of domestic violence (dating violence) or who have been exposed to domestic violence. Assisting these students may mean providing support, guidance and referrals to appropriate community services. Staff need to be prepared to deal with disclosures that may transpire in a formal (counseling session) or informal (after class) setting, and be prepared to follow-up with students who may be dealing with chronic problems in this area. (Similar to Recommendation #9/2002)

2007-8

To Ontario Works:

We recommend that Ontario Works ensure that all of its employees are well trained in recognizing situations of domestic violence and assisting their clients in obtaining the services they require.

High-risk Case Management

2004-5

It is recommended that there be ongoing training for police on the appropriate response to domestic violence cases that involve child custody and access, which may be a time of high risk requiring special vigilance. These cases require the development of a high-risk case management protocol specific to domestic violence cases. Such a protocol needs to be accompanied by appropriate training focused on addressing the dual goals of victim safety (intervention) and offender risk reduction/containment (case management).

2004-16

It is recommended that police put processes into practice to identify, monitor and manage high-risk cases, and to vigorously enforce bail conditions arising from a violent offence or threat of violence. Further, it is recommended that police services institute a dedicated police unit that has links to community-based experts to deal specifically with high-risk domestic violence cases, to ensure an appropriate case management response in such cases

2004-17

It is recommended that the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, Policing Standards Section either develop a stand-alone model to manage high risk domestic violence cases, or include domestic violence in the current standard that addresses high-risk cases

2005-12

It is recommended that each police service appoint an appropriate number of officers, specially trained in the issues of domestic violence, as case managers. The case managers' duties would include reviewing all domestic violence cases, identifying—i.e., “red flagging”—any high risk matters, and tracking the cases as they proceed to completion.

2005-14

There is a need for greater use of case conferencing systems that share information and action plans between justice partners, health professionals, and counsellors regarding safety issues and “high risk” cases.

2006-5

It is recommended that the Ministry of the Attorney General take the lead in consultations with justice and community stakeholders and develop a provincial plan for high risk management of domestic violence cases that present with indicators of potential dangerousness or lethality. (Similar to Recommendation #17/2004)

2006-14

To the Ministry of the Attorney General, and the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services: It is recommended that when the courts have mandated intervention/counselling programs related to domestic violence incidents, there be some mechanism to ensure that the conditions and orders are monitored and followed up, regardless of whether the accused person is the primary offender/aggressor or not.

2006-20

To the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services (MCSCS), Policing Standards Division; and the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police (OACP): Police services across Ontario as well as Police Colleges should encourage monitoring of high-risk domestic violence perpetrators who could be red-flagged because of the extreme dangers that they pose to their ex-partners and children. This should

include a proactive approach to victims and perpetrators without the need for further calls to the police, and may involve a coordinating function with other service providers such as Child Protection Agencies. (Similar to Recommendation #17/2004)

2006-33

It is recommended that the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario caution psychiatrists offering an opinion on child custody and access arrangements for separating parents that the opinion should be based on assessment of both parents and children as well as having collateral sources of information. Furthermore, the Ontario Psychiatric Association should provide and/or promote continuing medical education regarding the dynamics of domestic violence and the risk factors for lethality associated with separation, divorce, custody and access issues. (Similar to Recommendation #8/2004)

2007-23

Recommendation 23

To the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS):

It is recommended that CAS refer cases with multiple risk factors like alleged child abuse, parental alcoholism and domestic violence to high risk case management. (Similar to recommendation #8/2004)

2007-32

To the Ministry of the Attorney General (MAG) and Ministry of Community Safety & Correctional Services (MCSCS):

It is recommended that once a case has been identified as a high risk case then there must be a systems response so that the case can be actively managed. This would require that the justice partners involved with the case meet to discuss management options and strategies. Such dedicated teams already exist in parts of Ontario and should be the model for other communities to follow. (Similar to recommendations #27/2004, #14/2002)