

WOMEN'S EMERGENCY SHELTER PROGRAM REVIEW REPORT – RECOMMENDATIONS – FEBRUARY 28, 2007

Recommendation	Government Response	Status
<b>#1 Affordable, safe, suitable housing</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with government and community partners to develop affordable and transitional housing strategies to meet the needs of abused women and children.</li> <li>• Support and encourage municipalities, housing authorities, other community partner and shelters to work together to identify and develop affordable and transitional housing options at the local level.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Accept Recommendation</b></p> <p>Children's Services is participating in the Premier's Task Force on Affordable Housing and will continue to work with its cross-sector and Cross-Ministry partners to address this issue.</p>	<p>In progress</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct a cross jurisdictional analysis to assess the costs and effectiveness of 2nd stage and other transitional housing programs; including an evaluation of the 2nd stage housing pilot projects in Edmonton and Calgary and develop recommendations for next steps.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Accept Recommendation</b></p> <p>Children's Services will be working with stakeholders and partners to develop a strategy to review 2nd stage housing and other transitional housing programs.</p>	<p>Planned for 07/08</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support shelters to work collaboratively with community partners to support abused women to safely stay in their homes, when they choose to do so.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Accept Recommendation</b></p> <p>Training on the <i>Protection Against Family Violence Act</i> is underway across the province and specialized family violence law enforcement responses are in place in several areas across Alberta. Both initiatives can support victims to stay in their homes when it is safe to do so.</p>	<p>In progress</p>

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<b>#2 Transportation</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess transportation options to meet specific shelter service needs in urban, rural and remote communities including the transportation needs of clients attempting to access shelters.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Accept Recommendation</b></p> <p>Children's Services provides \$2M annually to support outreach programming in shelters, including support for those who are unable to make their own arrangements for transportation to shelters.</p>	<p>In progress</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage partnerships and agreements at provincial, regional and local levels to co-ordinate and facilitate transportation to and from shelters.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Accept Recommendation</b></p> <p>Alberta Works Policy supports basic needs of victims of family violence as they re-establish in the community including their transportation needs.</p>	<p>In progress</p>
<b>#3 Shelter Operations</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simplify and clarify data collection and reporting processes, including turnaways and exit surveys, to increase accuracy and provide a consistent understanding of the information that is being presented</li> <li>Explore collaborative options to better meet the needs of women in need and women in crisis who are not abused and outside of Children's Services women's shelter program mandate for abused women with and without children.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Accept Recommendation</b></p> <p>Children's Services, Alberta Council of Women's Shelters and Canadian Outcomes Research Institute are working together to enhance effective information collection and reporting practices.</p>	<p>In progress</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure flexibility and discretion for Shelter Directors to grant extensions on length of stay.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Accept Recommendation</b></p> <p>Shelter Directors have discretion to grant extensions on length of stay for women in shelters.</p>	<p>Complete</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore opportunities for additional support to address challenges associated with a communal living environment.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Accept Recommendation</b></p> <p>Children's Services, Alberta Council of Women's Shelters and individual shelters will work together to identify and address the challenges that come with living in a communal environment.</p>	<p>In progress</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess operating pressures identified by shelters and allocate available resources to address priority areas.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Accept Recommendation</b></p> <p>Children's Services is working with shelters to ensure that shelter operating budgets are covering insurance and utility costs. Staff recruitment and retention are essential components of quality service delivery; a 3% annual salary increase was allocated to all contracted shelter staff, retroactive to April 1, 2006.</p>	<p>Salary increases complete</p> <p>Review of operating pressures in progress</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support shelters in meeting the training needs of staff, and ensure equitable access to training opportunities for shelters in rural and remote communities.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Accept Recommendation</b></p> <p>Alberta Council of Women's Shelters, Canadian Outcomes Research Institute and Children's Services offer annual training to shelter workers, and are working to ensure that rural and remote shelters staff have the necessary resources to attend and participate in training.</p> <p>Videoconferencing is being utilized to deliver shelter worker and cross sector training to enhance the response to family violence province wide.</p>	<p>In progress</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

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<b>#4 Transitional Supports</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate shelter and community outreach program data and assess key opportunities and challenges to building additional outreach capacity to work with women, children and other family members impacted by family violence, who are not in emergency shelter.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Accept Recommendation</b></p> <p>Children's Services is working with shelters to identify successes and challenges in outreach service delivery, to develop and enhance effective outreach programs to serve families not currently in emergency shelter.</p>	<p>\$2 million per year provided annually to fund outreach positions in women's shelters</p> <p>In progress</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with shelters to identify ways to collaborate with community partners to increase the capacity to provide specialized transitional supports needed by women and children leaving shelters.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Accept Recommendation</b></p> <p>Children's Services is working with the Interdepartmental Committee on Family Violence to document information on transitional supports offered through the partnering ministries. This co-ordinated information will be provided to community partners.</p>	<p>In progress</p>
<b>#5 Complex Needs</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support shelters to engage in collaborative cross-sector training to better meet the multiple and complex needs of clients, such as mental health concerns, addictions issues, cultural barriers and post-traumatic stress.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Accept Recommendation</b></p> <p>Cross-Ministry and stakeholder partners are working together to co-ordinate services and supports to address the multiple and complex needs of clients. This includes Memoranda of Understanding, shared working guidelines and protocol development.</p>	<p>In progress</p>

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<b>#6 Children</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support shelters in managing the diverse needs of children and youth in shelters.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Accept Recommendation</b></p> <p>Children's Services and Alberta Council of Women's Shelters are working together to identify ways to increase access to appropriate child care options at the shelter and community level.</p> <p>Shelter facilities are encouraged to adapt their in-house programming to meet the expressed needs of clients and children in shelters.</p>	<p>In progress</p> <p>One time grants have been provided to all emergency and second stage housing programs to enhance child care supports.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advance collaborative efforts to ensure safe visitation and/or exchange supports are available for children whose parents/guardians have been or continue to be in an abusive relationship</li> </ul>	<p><b>Accept Recommendation</b></p> <p>Children's Services is developing a sustainable plan that will increase access to safe visitation across Alberta.</p>	<p>In progress</p> <p>Five pilot sites are being implemented.</p>
<b>#7 Prevention/Education/Intervention</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build awareness and provide information about the services and supports available in women's shelters and through the larger community network to prevent and respond to family violence.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Accept Recommendation</b></p> <p>Collaboration and co-ordination of services, and information sharing are key action areas identified in the action plan for the Cross-Ministry Strategy for the Prevention of Family Violence and Bullying.</p>	<p>In progress</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support shelters and other community-based service providers in developing and mobilizing a co-ordinated and collaborative community response to family violence.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Accept Recommendation</b></p> <p>Public Education and Awareness is an essential part of the social change key area for action for Alberta's Strategy for the Prevention of Family Violence and Bullying. Prevention of Family Violence and Bullying will continue to work closely with stakeholder partners in public education and awareness initiatives.</p>	<p>In progress</p>