

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### **A. Introduction**

The Violence Against Women (VAW) transfer payment agencies in the Central West Region, in collaboration with their Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) funder, have initiated a joint planning process to develop strategies to create a more responsive service system for women and children who have experienced domestic violence.

In November 2007, the Central West Region of MCSS established a VAW Service System Forum of senior management representatives of each of the MCSS-funded transfer payment agencies in Halton, Peel, Wellington, Dufferin and Kitchener-Waterloo. The primary function of the Forum was to develop a regional service system plan for VAW services, complete tasks to achieve goals specified in the plan, provide advice to MCSS and share relevant information. The VAW Service System Forum is co-chaired by a MCSS representative and a member of the Forum. The VAW Service System Forum is scheduled to meet a minimum of four (4) times a year.

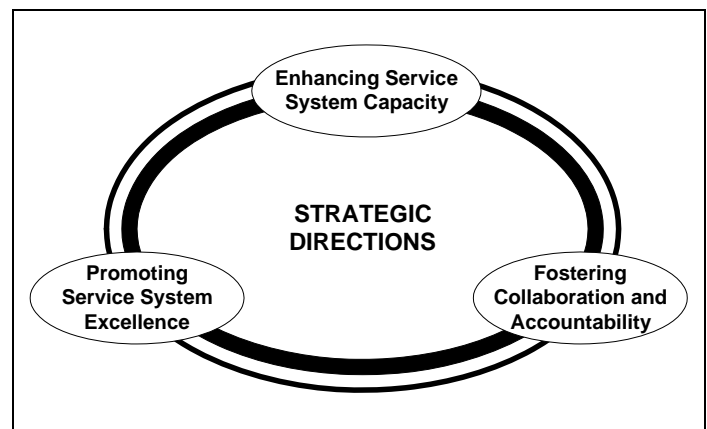
### **B. VAW Service System Strategic Plan**

Over the last year, the members of the VAW Service System Forum came together to develop a strategic plan. To assist the VAW Service System Forum in its planning endeavours, a consultation process was undertaken with key stakeholders of the service system, including women supported by the service system, VAW agency staff

and community partners in the five geographic areas. A total of 101 individuals participated in the stakeholder consultations.

The VAW Service System Forum developed a vision and values to guide their planning endeavours (see page 4). The strategic directions or priorities of the VAW service system focus on enhancing the VAW service system capacity, fostering service system collaboration and accountability, and promoting service system excellence through effective practices and outcome-based evaluation.

#### STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS OF THE VAW SERVICE SYSTEM: CENTRAL WEST REGION, MCSS



Goals and objectives have been developed for each of the strategic directions. Goals are broad-based statements that articulate the desired result. Objectives are specific outcomes that support the achievement of the goal.

### **STRATEGIC DIRECTION: ENHANCING VAW SERVICE SYSTEM CAPACITY**

#### *PREAMBLE*

The outcomes of various community planning processes, research initiatives and documented experiences indicate that the current VAW service system in the Central West Region is facing challenges in meeting the growing, diverse and complex needs of women experiencing violence and their children. Identifying needs, exploring opportunities and implementing strategies to enhance the VAW service system capacity were deemed a priority direction for the future.

#### *STRATEGIC GOAL ONE*

To identify needs, explore opportunities and implement strategies to enhance the capacity of the MCSS-funded VAW service system in the Central West Region.

#### *Objectives*

- 1.1 Conduct an analysis of the needs of women experiencing violence and their children and identify service gaps in the VAW service system in the Central West Region funded by MCSS.
- 1.2 Explore opportunities within the MCSS-funded VAW service system to enhance overall effectiveness and efficiency of current services and supports.
- 1.3 Identify strategies to better respond to the diverse needs of marginalized women.
- 1.4 Develop and implement a plan to enhance the capacity of the VAW service system to meet the diverse needs of marginalized women in the Central West Region.

### **STRATEGIC DIRECTION: FOSTERING COLLABORATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

#### *PREAMBLE*

Effectively responding to the current and future needs of women experiencing violence and their children requires the VAW service system and the broader service sector to continue to strengthen collaboration and mutual accountability among all partners. Of particular importance is the need to foster effective partnerships and accountability relationships between the VAW service system and the legal, social services, health and education sectors in order to be more responsive to women experiencing violence and their children.

#### *STRATEGIC GOAL TWO*

To explore and implement strategies to strengthen the collaboration and the accountability relationships between the VAW service system and the legal, social services, health and education sectors in order to be more responsive to women experiencing violence and their children.

#### *Objectives*

- 2.1 Promote enhanced collaboration with the child welfare system partners by pursuing opportunities to increase awareness of and responsiveness to women experiencing violence and their children.
- 2.2 Identify and pursue mutual opportunities between Ontario Works and the VAW sector to strengthen partnerships.
- 2.3 Initiate a dialogue with representatives of the legal services and court systems and the VAW service system to explore

opportunities and implement strategies to promote a more collaborative approach to strengthen the service system accountability to women experiencing violence and their children.

- 2.4 Explore opportunities with education sector partners to increase awareness of women experiencing violence and their children within the context of current provincial initiatives.
- 2.5 Enhance partnerships with health sector partners to improve access and outcomes for women experiencing violence who have mental health and addiction challenges.

**STRATEGIC DIRECTION: PROMOTING SERVICE SYSTEM EXCELLENCE**

*PREAMBLE*

The ability of the VAW service system in the Central West Region to demonstrate excellence in outcomes achieved is key to future success. Enhancing the capacity of the VAW service system in this regard was viewed as critically important for the future.

*STRATEGIC GOAL THREE*

To promote excellence in the VAW service system through the implementation of

effective practices and an outcome-based evaluation process.

*Objectives*

- 3.1 Identify effective practices in the field of VAW services and supports and develop a resource document.
- 3.2 Identify the key components of an outcome-based evaluation process and develop a resource document.

Each of the MCSS-funded VAW transfer payment agencies in the Central West Region have been provided with both a printed and an electronic version of the VAW Service System Strategic Plan.

***C. Implementation Strategy***

Three Implementation Teams have been established to complete tasks identified in an implementation workplan to achieve specific strategic goals during the period of January-December 2009. Each Implementation Team is composed of members of the VAW Service System Forum from different geographic areas. University placement students are providing resource and administrative support to each of the Implementation Teams.

***For Further Information***

If you require further information on the VAW Service System Forum, please contact either of the VAW Service System Forum Co-chairs:

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### VAW SERVICE SYSTEM VISION AND VALUES: CENTRAL WEST REGION, MCSS

#### VISION

- *Shared Responsibility:* The prevention of domestic violence is a shared responsibility of citizens, communities and governments, leading to inspired leadership, commitment and action.
- *Responsive Service System:* The uniqueness and diversity of women and their children are valued and celebrated by the partners of the service system. The service system responds in an integrated and client-directed manner, demonstrating compassion towards a woman's reality.
- *Service System Capacity:* The VAW service system reflects a continuum of supports that are accessible, affordable, flexible and effective, resulting in a positive difference in the lives of women. Collaboration among VAW service system partners is embraced, and quality is promoted.
- *Resource Sustainability:* Adequate, equitable and sustainable resources are available to enable communities and the service system to prevent domestic violence.
- *Accountable Relationships:* Accountable relationships are characterized by open communication, transparency, integrity and the capacity to demonstrate results achieved.

#### VALUES

- *Respect and Dignity:* We believe in providing an environment in which women and their children are treated with respect and dignity.
- *Uniqueness and Diversity:* We value and honour the uniqueness and diversity of women and their children by achieving a culturally sensitive and competent service system.
- *Women/Client-centred Approach:* We embrace a women/client-centred approach to service delivery that recognizes strengths, supports choice and self-determination, promotes individualized approaches, and advocates for the empowerment of women.
- *Context:* We believe that the prevention of domestic violence benefits from an anti-oppressive and feminine-analysis context that eliminates the culture of male privilege.
- *Shared Responsibility:* We view the prevention of domestic violence as a shared responsibility of communities and government funders who advocate for and achieve social change.
- *Safety and Security:* We believe that women and their children have a right to be protected from harm.
- *Equity and Access:* We believe in the principles of equitable and timely access to services.
- *Best Practices and Quality:* We believe that adopting best practices and implementing continuous quality improvement approaches are critical in the pursuit of excellence.
- *Effectiveness:* We monitor the effectiveness of services and supports through evaluation, research, ethical practices and professionalism.
- *Partnerships:* We respect the role of other community partners and promote collaborative relationships.
- *Integrated Service System:* We support an integrated service system that results in a continuum of services and supports for women.
- *Learning and Innovation:* We foster continuous learning and nurture innovation.
- *Sustainability:* We believe that the prevention of domestic violence requires an adequate and sustainable investment of public funds.
- *Accountability:* We promote accountability through open communication, transparency and the capacity to demonstrate outcomes achieved.