

TERMS OF REFERENCE

NOVA SCOTIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS, THE IWK HEALTH CENTER, AND CAPITAL DISTRICT HEALTH AUTHORITY

INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF POLICIES AND PRACTICES THAT IMPACT YOUTH LIVING WITH MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS ISSUES WHO MAY HAVE BEEN VICTIMIZED BY BULLYING, CYBER-BULLYING, OR SEXUAL ASSAULT

JUNE 25, 2013

PURPOSE

- Government has received an external review of Halifax Regional School Board's support of Rehtaeh Parsons. The Minister Responsible for Advisory Council on the Status of Women Act has accepted the recommendations. One recommendation is to "commission an expert, independent review of the programs and services of the IWK Health Centre (IWK) and the Capital Health Authority (CDHA) as they relate to the case of Rehtaeh Parsons."
- The review will focus on IWK and CDHA policies, procedures, and guidelines with respect to assessment, triage, referral, treatment, and follow up care for inpatient and community based programs as they relate to mental health and addictions services available to youth who are having difficulties with, but not limited to addictions, peer relationships, bullying, cyber-bullying, sexuality, and sexual assault.

SCOPE

The scope of the external review is an evaluation of the mental health and addictions services available to youth who are having difficulties with, but not limited to addictions, peer relationships, bullying, cyber-bullying, sexuality, and sexual assault. The reviewer will engage the IWK and CDHA clinical and administrative managers, directors, chiefs and vice presidents responsible for program, service and policy decisions in the Mental Health and Addictions Program to answer the following;

1. Are current treatment and counseling services for victims of bullying, cyber-bullying, or sexual assault and resulting issues, in relation to the subject of this review in keeping with accepted/national or best practices to meet the needs of youth?

2. Are existing policies, procedures, and guidelines in relation to the subject of this review in keeping with accepted/national or best practices with respect to assessment, triage, referral, treatment, and follow up care?
3. Are current policies, procedures, and guidelines in relation to the subject of this review in keeping with accepted/national or best practices regarding follow up in cases where youth are assessed to be a risk of self-harm or suicide when this risk is not at a level that requires hospitalization?
4. What policies, procedures, and guidelines in relation to the subject of this review, are in place to educate and support families/care providers and to ensure their concerns are given appropriate consideration during the assessment and triage phases of youth engagement?
5. Do current policies, in relation to the subject of this review, promote effective collaboration between the IWK, Mental Health Mobile Crisis Team, and Youth Health Centres in serving youth?

Process

The Department of Health and Wellness has appointed an independent expert, Dr. Jana Davidson to conduct the review. Dr. Jana Davidson is Vice President Medical Affairs and Psychiatrist in Chief of Children's & Women's Mental Health Programs at the Children's & Women's Health Centre of British Columbia (BC Mental Health & Addiction Services), and Head, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Program, Department of Psychiatry, University of British Columbia (UBC). She is a Clinical Professor, Department of Psychiatry, UBC, and a Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist.

Dr. Davidson will report to the Minister of Health and Wellness and the lead Minister for the Action Team on Sexual Violence and Bullying and will provide regular updates to the Ministers on the status of the independent review.

It is intended that as issues are identified to Kevin McNamara, Deputy Minister of Health and Wellness, Anne McGuire, President & CEO of IWK Health Center, and Chris Power, President & CEO of Capital District Health Authority, steps may be taken immediately to implement solutions to reach intended outcomes.

Dr. Davidson will work closely with the IWK, CDHA, Department of Health and Wellness, and any other relevant agency to gather any information necessary for the review process.

Dr. Davidson will do an environmental scan of other jurisdictions to determine existing relevant accepted/national or best practices policies.

Timeline

An update will be provided to the Ministers by the end of July, 2013; final report by end of September, 2013.

Product

Dr. Davidson will produce a concise final report, including specific recommendations to the Minister of Health and Wellness and lead Minister for the Action Team on Sexual Violence and Bullying by the end of September, 2013. The report will answer questions outlined above, and provide recommendations on changes required to more effectively help youth living with mental health and addictions issues, particularly those who may have been victimized by bullying, cyber-bullying or sexual assault.