

Breaking the Silence

A Coordinated Response to Sexual Violence in Nova Scotia

August 2015 Update

As many of you know, June was a big month for the Sexual Violence Strategy. On June 16, 2015, the Province launched "Breaking the Silence: A Coordinated Response to Sexual Violence in Nova Scotia". June also saw the hiring of the Provincial Specialist, Sarah Granke, who is overseeing the implementation of the strategy. Although we are still in the beginning phases of putting the strategy into action, we are moving forward to ensure that together we can better support victims/survivors of sexual violence and ultimately prevent sexual violence from occurring in the first place.

As the strategy continues to roll-out over the next two years, it is important for us to keep open lines of communication. This is something we heard clearly over the first year of community engagement. As part of keeping stakeholders up to date, we will send out e-updates every two months to let you know where the strategy is at, any new developments, arising opportunities and milestones. So here we are: Edition 1!

Provincial Committees

The inaugural meetings were held for the two provincial committees, one on public awareness and the other on training, on June 22 and July 3rd, respectively. The role of the committees is to help guide and shape the development of public awareness and education/training materials. Consistency in our approach to public awareness and learning opportunities will help foster shared

understanding on the issue of sexual violence, help support the foundation of prevention, bring increased visibility to support services, and improve coordination of responses to victims and survivors in our respective communities.

Public Awareness

Sherri Bain
Jane Gavin-Hebert
Sarah Granke
Chenise Haché
Pamela Harrison
Sherry Jackson-Smith
Angela Johnston
Kevin Kindred
Melissa MacKay
Rhonda McLean
Louise Smith-MacDonald
Miia Suokonautio
Lisa Tobin

Training Committee

Dee Dooley
Dale Gruchy
Jane Gavin-Hebert
Sarah Granke
Lucille Harper
Nancy MacDonald
Ainslie McDougall
Donna Machin
KelleyAnne Malinen
Margaret Mauger
Deepak Prasad
Norma Jean Profitt

In the works...

The interdepartmental committee is in the process of being formed and will consist of representatives from the Departments of Community Services, Health and Wellness, Justice, Education and Early Childhood Development, Labour and Advanced Education and the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women. This committee will work to identify, coordinate and align government policies and process relevant to sexual violence.

We are also in the midst of developing the Prevention Innovation Fund and hope to have a call for applications in the near future. Stay tuned for more information and get your creative juices flowing!

Community Support Network Workshops:

Building together a collaborative and compassionate service response for victims in our communities

Workshops are currently being organized in nine regions of the province for September and October. These gatherings will bring together a range of service providers to:

- Continue building relationships
- Expand existing asset and resource maps of community-based services
- Create a shared image of a collaborative and compassionate service response for victims of sexual violence in our communities
- Collectively identify how to further coordinate counselling and support Services; increase visibility and accessibility of services; provide navigation support to victims; foster safer spaces and ensure that services are nonjudgmental
- Develop an action plan and funding proposal for regional priorities



Counselling and Support:

Victims require increased access to counseling options and services which are more immediate, inclusive culturally, competent and trauma informed.



Visibility:

Victims and survivors of sexual violence, along with their allies, need to be able to identify appropriate services and know where to connect for support. Support should be anonymous and available for those who do not choose to report to police.



Navigation Support:

Victims and survivors require support navigating systems and sectors and must have a clear path to follow. The path must be marked with shared standards, protocols, choices and clearly defined roles and responsibilities.



Safe Spaces & Nonjudgmental Services:

Victims and survivors require safe spaces – physical and emotional – to discuss their experiences. They require compassionate services across sectors, systems and agencies. Victims and survivors need to be believed.

Hewlett Photography



Provincial Specialist Sarah Granke

For the last decade, Sarah has mobilized her skills and passion to support populations that face marginalization, always with a strengths-based and anti-oppressive perspective. As a community based advocate, health educator, counsellor and researcher, she has worked at the community and grassroots level to champion the health, well-being and safety of communities. Sarah's commitment to social justice has included developing and expanding the youth program at Manitoba's LGBTQ resource centre; bringing together over 400 young women from across the country to explore and take action on complex issues; providing non-judgmental, inclusive sexual health education to youth; supporting survivors on their healing journey as a sexual assault counsellor; and working on the Faculty of Social Work Equity Action Strategic Plan at Wilfrid Laurier University (WLU). Sarah recently completed a Master of Social Work Degree at WLU with a clinical focus on trauma recovery and sexual violence. Hailing from the prairie city of Winnipeg, she is thrilled to call Nova Scotia her new home.

Questions? Connect with us at strategy@novascotia.ca or sarah.granke@novascotia.ca