

**MANITOBA DOMESTIC  
VIOLENCE DEATH  
REVIEW COMMITTEE**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**2011/2012**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Manitoba Domestic Violence Death Review Committee (DVDRC) was established on June 16, 2010. The DVDRC examines domestic violence homicides that are no longer before the courts in order to identify trends, risk factors and systemic concerns to prevent future tragedies and recommend changes for improvement. Manitoba's approach extends beyond a "paper-only review" by interviewing families, friends, and co-workers who are able to share important information about the patterns and trends associated with domestic violence homicides. To ensure that the reviews are relevant to current service delivery models, the committee generally focuses on select matters that have occurred since 2006.

Manitoba's DVDRC is not legislated. Therefore, to mitigate privacy risks, Manitoba Justice – Victim Services completed a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) and asked that participating committee members enter into memorandums of understanding and confidentiality agreements. In addition, to assure an appropriate balance of protection of privacy and effective case reviews, both a DVDRC working group and an advisory committee were established. Advisory committee members include representatives from RESOLVE, the Women's Advisory Council, Status of Women, Probation Services, Prosecution Services, Victim Services, the Family Violence Prevention Program, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, Winnipeg Police Service (WPS) and the RCMP. Representatives of the smaller working group, who also sit on the advisory committee, include individuals from WPS, RCMP, Probation Services, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, Prosecution Services and Victim Services.

The DVDRC conducted one review in 2011/12 following concentrated efforts on establishing the terms of reference, developing policies and procedures, research, statistical analysis, developing DVDRC tools and risk assessment checklists, conducting interviews with those involved in the homicide, meeting with the larger advisory group and working group and ongoing development of the PIA. The DVDRC wishes to thank the Ontario DVDRC for allowing the committee to use some of their current tools, statistical charts and forms for the purposes of the initial review.

Although it was not possible to identify trends and patterns after only one review, an in-depth and comprehensive analysis of the first case allowed for several recommendations to be established.

### **Recommendations**

#### **Recommendation 1:**

Ensure that all police officers have direct access to cameras when responding to domestic violence calls so that injuries to victims can be photographed immediately.

#### **Recommendation 2:**

Ensure mandatory, ongoing domestic violence training for medical professionals and police agencies.

**Recommendation 3:**

Develop a public awareness campaign that specifically targets youth and promotes healthy relationships and domestic violence support services for family members including advertisement of the domestic violence toll-free number as a resource for families who have loved ones involved in domestic violence relationships.

**Recommendation 4:**

Review and explore the use of risk factor checklists and the implications for police, Victim Services, Prosecutions and Corrections and report to the advisory committee on the findings.

**Recommendation 5:**

Review and explore services available to family members impacted by domestic homicide that offer practical assistance and recommend where and how families can receive this support.

**Recommendation 6:**

Review and explore the creation of an information-sharing protocol with Animal Services in recognition that domestic violence is often linked to cases involving animal cruelty.