

**Deputy Ministers' Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth Recommendations
Action Planning (MACY-RAP) Committee December Report
December 13, 2019**

In April 2019, the Government of Manitoba provided a report to the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth (MACY) on government actions undertaken to date in response to the MACY recommendations from the October 2019 MACY report titled "*Documenting the Decline: The Dangerous Space between Good Intentions and Meaningful Interventions*" ("Circling Star").

At that time, it was advised that whole of government reports would be released twice annually, once in June and once in December, on a go forward basis. As a result, the following report contains updates and actions undertaken associated with all MACY reports and recommendations currently underway.

The report on the recommendations from *Documenting the Decline: The Dangerous Space between Good Intentions and Meaningful Interventions* was provided to the MACY on June 27, 2019. Please see updates from that report below:

RECOMMENDATION ONE:

The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth recommends that the Province of Manitoba respond to the persistent lack of coordination between services for children and youth by developing and implementing a provincial strategy to train service providers on the requirement to share information across systems and ensure children and youth are at the centre of all service provision. This is to be developed, delivered, and evaluated in consultation with Manitoba Education and Training, Manitoba Families, Manitoba Justice, and Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living.

Status of implementation: In Progress

Information indicating a timeline for implementation:

Three Train the Trainer sessions for school divisions occurred in November 2019 and an ongoing network of school division trainers will provide feedback on the outcomes of the training sessions. A cross-departmental Train the Trainer session is scheduled for January 22, 2020, and will include staff in Education, Families, Justice, Health, Seniors and Active Living, Regional Health Authorities, and Child and Family Services Authorities. An update on the number of training sessions provided subsequent to the Train the Trainer session as well as feedback on training outcomes will be available for the next report to MACY in June 2020.

The government information page on PCISA can be found at this link:
<https://www.gov.mb.ca/informationsharingact/>

Manitoba Families has developed training for department staff on the PCISA. This has been delivered to stakeholders in Children's disABILITY Services in person, and has been recorded as an online training video on the Families intranet site.

The Children's disABILITY Services program has replaced all confidentiality and information sharing policy and forms with a policy that reflects the ability to share information under the PCISA. This includes an acknowledgement form to be reviewed with families at program intake so that they understand how their personal and personal health information may be shared under the authority of the PCISA and other statutes that address information sharing.

The PCISA is included in the third Caseworker Core Module titled Legal Principles and Practices in Child Welfare Services in Manitoba. The information sheet about this Act is given as a handout to the participants, and is attached.

RECOMMENDATION TWO:

The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth recommends that the Department of Education and Training through Healthy Child Manitoba (HCM), and with participation from all school divisions, conduct an urgent review of the current use of out-of-school suspensions and expulsions, and develop a province-wide strategy to limit, reduce, and phase-out exclusionary practices, except in situations of imminent safety risk to students and staff. This review and strategy should provide evidence-informed disciplinary alternatives that are in line with the best interests of the child and respect the right of children and youth to education.

Status of implementation: Pending

Information indicating a timeline for implementation:

A working group with participation from Manitoba Education, school division superintendents and the Manitoba School Boards Association began in October 2019 with expected updates on recommendations for data gathering and best practices to the Attendance Task Force in Spring 2020. The working group has partnered with the University of Winnipeg who is conducting research in this area to facilitate a focus on current best practices. The working group will share recommendations with the Attendance Task Force for feedback and subsequent plan for implementation.

RECOMMENDATION THREE:

The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth recommends the Department of Health, Seniors and Active Living implement, in full, recommendation 5.4, per the Virgo report, as follows: *“Establish a concerted cross-sectoral process to reduce perceived and real jurisdictional boundaries that challenge access to, and coordination of, services. The process of developing this [Manitoba’s Mental Health and Addictions] Strategy, as well as any new opportunities and resources for working together (e.g., through Jordan’s Principle), should be viewed as an accelerator of a new period of trust and collaboration*

based on shared beliefs and strengths among all partners, and should include an interest in wellness, hope and family/community health.” (MHA Strategy p.237)

Status: In Progress

Summary of activities completed since the June 27, 2019 report:

In February 2019, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak and Southern Chiefs’ Organization sent a letter to Prime Minister Trudeau and Premier Pallister inviting the Manitoba and federal governments to participate in a tripartite Jordan’s Principle Equity Roundtable. Minister Clarke of Manitoba Indigenous and Northern Relations responded to this invitation by welcoming further discussion.

The Equity Roundtable is set to have an operational, senior management, and political component. To date, there have been no trilateral meetings with First Nations, Canada and Manitoba. Officials from Manitoba have met separately with First Nations representatives and federal officials.

Manitoba respects the role of First Nations in leading the Jordan’s Principle Equity Roundtable and remains committed to participating as the Roundtable develops.

The interdepartmental working group met throughout 2019 and is exploring how Manitoba can best support Jordan’s Principle.

As requested by MACY, here is a list of initiatives that have been implemented that partially or fully address recommendations in the VIRGO Report as of September, 2019.

- signing a bilateral agreement with the federal government for funding for home and community care, and mental health and addiction services (Rec 7.1, 7.3)
- establishing a Provincial Problematic Substance Use and Harms (PSUH) Coordinating Committee within in Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living (MHSAL) to coordinate work related to existing and emerging PSUH challenges, such as crystal methamphetamine (Rec 1.3)
- adding six mental health inpatient beds to support patients with co-occurring mental illness and addiction challenges, at Health Sciences Centre (Rec 2.16)
- increasing the number of psychiatrists practicing in Manitoba through additional training opportunities, which has resulted in reduced wait times for psychiatric consultation (6.1)
- developing a Geriatric Psychiatry Training Program in the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA) to increase access to geriatric specialists (Rec 3.7, 6.1)
- signing a memorandum of understanding to enhance security at Eden Mental Health Centre and Boundary Trails Health Centre so that Eden has 24/7 security coverage (Rec 2.28)
- introducing legislation to enable consent to share information with family members and loved ones (Rec 2.4)
- enhancing the capacity of community- based service providers to support newcomer clients with mental health, and substance use and addiction issues,

- including funding for Addictions Foundation of Manitoba (AFM), Aurora Family Therapy, NEEDS Centre and Family Dynamics (Rec 2.25)
- Beginning the process to create a Provincial Mental Health and Addictions Program by transitioning existing MHA services that have a provincial scope under Shared Health, beginning with WRHA programs such as PsychHealth Centre, Crisis Response Centre and Crisis Stabilization Unit. Selkirk Mental Health Centre and Manitoba Adolescence Treatment Centre may also transition under Shared Health. Once enabling legislation under Bill 10 has passed and is in force, AFM will also move under Shared Health to support better integration of mental health and addictions services (Rec 7.8)
 - utilizing a whole-of-government approach to implementing recommendations (Rec 1.1)
 - establishing the VIRGO Implementation Project Team within MHSAL with dedicated staff focused on implementing the VIRGO strategy, including those projects/activities that include a strong inter-sectoral, cross-governmental component (Rec 10.3)
 - opening five Rapid Access to Addictions Medicine (RAAM) clinics and then expanding the hours, services and staffing resources of RAAM clinics to better serve clients seeking substance use and addiction services (Rec 2.17)
 - tripling the number of treatment beds for women at AFM's Winnipeg site from 12 to 36 (Rec 2.15)
 - adding four new treatment beds for women and their children at Behavioural Health Foundation while strengthening Indigenous cultural programming (Rec 2.15, 5.7)
 - signing on to Canada's Emergency Treatment Fund to establish flexible-length withdrawal management and stabilization services, including recovery beds, in Winnipeg and Brandon (Rec 2.6, 2.8, 7.3)
 - equipping paramedics with olanzapine to treat agitated patients at risk of developing meth psychosis (Rec 6.1)
 - adding addictions psychiatry consultation services to the Rapid Access to Consultative Expertise service to support primary care providers (Rec 6.4, 8.5)
 - enhancing access to addictions medication coverage for Suboxone, Naltrexone and Acamprosate through the Manitoba Pharmacare program (Rec 1.5, 2.27)
 - partnering with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba to increase training for prescribers who can administer opiate replacement therapy (Rec 2.17)
 - through implementing changes recommended in AFM's internal review, AFM has improved occupancy at their residential treatment programs from 84 per cent occupancy in April 2017 to 99 per cent occupancy in October 2018 (Rec 8.7)
 - conducting a formal review of the practice and impact of Manitobans being sent out of province for complex substance use and addiction and co-occurring disorders treatment, and exploring options to treat Manitobans within the province (Rec 8.8)
 - launching the Strongest Families Institute's technology-based mental health services for 200 children, youth and their families per year through an initial 5-year partnership with Bell Let's Talk, and then expanding the program to reach 500 more children, youth and their families every year, for a total of 700 per year (Rec 4.1, 7.2)

- opening a fourth Program of Assertive Community Treatment team in Winnipeg to support adults in the community who are experiencing difficulties as a result of living with a mental illness (Rec 2.19)
- implementing tele-psychiatry in crisis and emergency settings in Winnipeg to reduce unnecessary transfers between emergency departments for psychiatric assessments (Rec 3.4)

RECOMMENDATION FOUR:

The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth recommends that the Department of Health, Seniors and Active Living, together with front-line addiction service providers in Manitoba, Healthy Child Manitoba, Indigenous communities, and subject matter experts on addictions, immediately respond to the lack of effective substance use treatment services for youth by prioritizing the development and implementation of a youth addiction action strategy. This strategy should be based on best practice evidence with the objective of ensuring that children and youth across Manitoba can exercise their right to the highest attainable standard of health.

Status: Alternate Solution

Summary of activities completed since the June 27, 2019 report:

Through the provincial cross-departmental working group on mental health and addictions (MHA), many initiatives are being implemented that address children and youth. Both in terms of prevention/promotion and access to services (see link to initiatives below). This cross-departmental work and the initiatives that have been announced thus far are improving access to MHA services for children and youth and form the basis of the alternate solution. A number of initiatives have been announced recently with a large focus on children and youth. Please see links to the most recent Government News Release and Backgrounder dated December 2, 2019.

<https://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?item=46417&posted=2019-12-02>
[https://news.gov.mb.ca/asset_library/en/newslinks/2019/12/BG-Mental Health Rural Launch-ED-HL.pdf](https://news.gov.mb.ca/asset_library/en/newslinks/2019/12/BG-Mental_Health_Rural_Launch-ED-HL.pdf)

RECOMMENDATION FIVE:

The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth recommends that the Department of Justice improve communication across the divisions within its department, including probation services, victim services, and prosecution services, as well as with the legal community (e.g. legal aid), and the courts to ensure that probation orders are relevant, effective, child-centred, realistic (given limitations in remote and rural communities), and achievable. The Advocate further recommends that the Department of Justice evaluate their capacity to provide the programming for youth to meet their probation conditions and determine whether or not existing programs and services are sufficient and accessible to youth living in rural and remote locations. When gaps are identified, strategies for culturally appropriate alternatives and program delivery need to be developed.

Status of implementation: In Progress

Information indicating a timeline for implementation:

- Manitoba Justice continues to regularly attend the Judge Liaison Meeting, where Prosecution Services and Defense are also in attendance, to further work on communication and the ability to work together in this regard.
- The Reclaiming Our Identity program rollout has begun and will continue. It has been offered within the Manitoba Youth Centre as well as in some communities. It will be offered in further communities in 2020. A training session to enable more staff to deliver this program is also being considered for 2020.
- In March of 2019, the Provincial Court of Manitoba established Canada's first docket designed for individuals diagnosed with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). The goal of the FASD docket is to ensure the sentencing judge can properly consider to what extent, if at all, the diagnosis contributed to the offending behavior. During submission, Counsel is invited to address how the FASD diagnosis contributes to the circumstances of the offence. If there is a link between the identified impacts of FASD and the offending behavior, the Court would explore how the sentence imposed would best reflect and respond to that link. Additionally, the Court also explores the degree of existing and available supports connected to the individual for improved outcomes. To lessen distraction, environmental modifications of the courtroom have included a silent keyboard for the court clerk, a sign outside the courtroom requesting a reduction/halt of spectators and improvements in the quality of lighting. Education and training is being provided to the court staff and the Sheriff's department. The FASD docket is available every Thursday for both adults and youth in custody and out of custody.
- It was recognized there was a number of youth and adults who had a previous diagnosis from the community before the Courts with little to no support services. In response, 3 probation positions were realigned to expand services in the FASD Justice Program to work with the individuals with a previous diagnosis between ages 12-25 in conjunction with the Court Docket. The support services assist the individual, their family and any community agencies to understand the diagnosis. The staff from the program advocate for participants to ensure they receive appropriate supports as a youth and transition to appropriate adult programs. The support also includes assisting participants and their families to attend Court or related appointments. As a result of this recent expansion in services, there have been 43 individuals who have received additional support services.
- February 2019, the government announced it was undertaking a review of the current youth justice system in Manitoba and its connections to the child welfare system, with the aim of ending cycles of crime for at-risk youth.
 - Senior staff, led by the ADM of the Community Safety Division in Justice and the ADM of Child and Family Services in Families are actively collaborating to develop a comprehensive strategic action plan that will have a significant impact on improving youth outcomes through:
 - Increasing supports for youth and reducing re-offending by youth
 - Reducing reliance on incarceration of youth while managing public safety

- Decreasing contacts with youth in the criminal justice system
- The Province is committed to sharing the recommendations and implementation plan with the public.

RECOMMENDATION SIX:

The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth recommends that the Department of Families in partnership with the Child and Family Services (CFS) Authorities: (1) clarify training content and expectations of workers and supervisors with respect to CFS minimum provincial standards, and (2) prioritize the development of high quality, culturally appropriate, modernized, and accessible training on the minimum provincial service standards within two years. The Advocate further recommends that all existing workers who have not received training on minimum standards and all new CFS workers be required to complete this training within three to six months.

Status: In Progress

Summary of activities completed since the June 27, 2019 report:

Manitoba is moving forward with its commitment to modernize the Child and Family Services Act. The “development of high quality, culturally appropriate, modernized, and accessible training on the minimum provincial service standards” will occur as part of this process. Timelines are also impacted by the new federal legislation, An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families, will be in force as of January 1, 2020. Manitoba is working with our Authority partners to examine the National Principles contained in the legislation (best interests of the child, cultural continuity, and substantive equality) as well as the service requirements as these have significant implications for child welfare practice.

In April 2019, the Provincial Government response to MACY on this recommendation outlined work of the CFS Authorities on training, included upcoming plans and some timelines for new approaches to this training. The following additional information was provided by the Authorities:

- The General Child and Family Services Authority remains as previously reported.
- The Métis Child and Family Services Authority continues to provide Standards Training as a part of staff orientation, with the next scheduled training to take place in spring 2020. The Authority is looking into additional ways to provide local training to agency staff.
- The Southern First Nations Network of Care has developed an electronic portal so staff can access up to date training materials including standards; case management standards training (two days) has been revised and will be delivered monthly starting January 2020; a 2-day pilot session has been scheduled and will be offered on October 30 & 31, 2019 for program managers; transitional planning training (two day) will include standards and has been added to the training calendar and will be offered on a quarterly basis and as requested; FASD standards training for staff and foster parents (one day) is provided quarterly; foster care standards (one day) is provided as requested.

- The First Nations of Northern Manitoba Child and Family Services Authority continues to work on development of their Standards Training, with a plan for it to be offered quarterly as well as upon agency request. The Standards Manager provides one on one training upon request.

The Department of Families will follow up with MACY to discuss ongoing reporting of training provided by the Authorities.

In 2018/2019 fiscal year, the CFS Branch provided Core Caseworker Training, Legal Module (includes review of Standards) to 97 agency staff. In the same fiscal year, the CFS Branch provided Supervisor Training on Fundamentals of Improving Individual Staff Performance, which includes training on Standard 1.8.1. Workforce Qualifications, to 22 Supervisors.

Manitoba's progress on the recommendations from *In Need of Protection: Angel's Story*, released December 13, 2018, is below:

RECOMMENDATION ONE:

The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth recommends that Manitoba Education and Training, Manitoba Families, Manitoba Justice, and Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living engage with experts in childhood trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) in order to develop a trauma prevention and response plan of action to (a) educate service providers and the public on ACEs, and (b) create appropriate, accessible immediate and long-term evidence-informed interventions to address the trauma crisis that is ongoing in Manitoba.

Status: In Progress

Summary of activities completed since the June 27, 2019 report:

Department of Families: Trauma and Resilience Training was designed and developed by the Department Training in 2017. This one-day no-cost session provides staff with appropriate and effective ways to support participants/clients struggling with the effects of trauma, and to implement trauma and resilience informed approaches.

As of December 9, 2019, 439 Department of Families employees have received this training. The 421 staff members trained are from the following program areas: Early Learning and Child Care, Employment and Income Assistance, Child and Family Services, Centralized Services and Resources, Family Conciliation, and MB Housing. This training has been delivered to staff in Winnipeg, the Pas, Dauphin, Swan River, Morden, Selkirk, Steinbach, Portage La Prairie, and Brandon.

The Department of Families includes the issue of trauma in the two day Working With Refugees training which is provided to staff at no cost. To date, 254 Families staff have completed this training.

The Province has recently announced a significant number of new initiatives to support Manitobans dealing with mental health and addictions challenges, including universal supports to aimed at reducing trauma experienced by Manitobans as well as supports to Manitobans dealing with the trauma they have already experienced, such as \$2.4 million in increased funding to counselling services through Klinik and the Laurel Centre (<https://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?item=46063&posted=2019-11-04>)

RECOMMENDATION TWO:

The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth recommends that the Department of Families, in collaboration with Manitoba Education and Training, Manitoba Justice, and Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living, in consultation with Manitoba Status of Women, Indigenous and Northern Relations, the Winnipeg Police Service and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, (1) expand StreetReach, Winnipeg Outreach Network (WON), and culturally appropriate services in First Nations and rural and remote communities; and (2) independently evaluate and then update Tracia's Trust: Manitoba's Sexual Exploitation Strategy.

Status: In Progress

Summary of activities completed since the June 27, 2019 report:

In February 2019, it was announced that Proceeds of Crime funds would be used to provide bi-monthly work by StreetReach with RCMP in Thompson to locate and assist at-risk and vulnerable youth. StreetReach staff visited Thompson four times, working with RCMP for two days each time on the joint project. On each visit, StreetReach staff and RCMP were out in the community, attending areas frequented by high risk youth, locating missing youths, connecting youth with supports, and building relationships with community members and other service providers. As part of this work, over 50 youths were helped to return to their residence.

The province has announced several new investments that address this recommendation:

- Enhancement of the existing StreetReach Winnipeg services to include specialized mental health, addictions, and spiritual care/elder supports. It is noted that this enhancement is in keeping with the feedback provided by community during the Tracia's Trust Research.
- Development of a new 4 bed unit to be provided by Neecheewam which will provide specialized mental health and addictions treatment as well as spiritual and cultural supports to sexually exploited youths. The model was built in response to the feedback provided by experiential youths. The individualized approach to treatment means that admission dates will be kept flexible, and will accommodate youths who may need multiple short term attempts before feeling able to commit to longer term treatment.
- Development of Indigenous Land Based healing through ceremonies and teachings, to be offered twice monthly to sexually exploited youths and significant adults in their lives.

- Enhancement and expansion of StreetReach services to include services to Thompson. Building upon the experience of the recent joint project for RCMP and StreetReach and past work in Thompson, this enhancement and expansion will begin with community consultations in December 2019 to inform the design of this program.

Further information about these announcements can be found at these links:

<https://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?item=46177&posted=2019-11-12>

<https://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?item=46217&posted=2019-11-19>

Manitoba will examine StreetReach as part of the current review of the youth justice system and its connections to the child welfare system. The release of the Tracia's Trust research in 2019 pivots the work in this area towards evidence and planning for further programming resources and services for sexually exploited youth.

RECOMMENDATION THREE:

The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth recommends that Communication Services Manitoba, Manitoba Education and Training, Manitoba Families, Manitoba Justice, Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living, Manitoba Status of Women, and Manitoba Indigenous and Northern Relations collaborate with youth advisory groups, the Canadian Centre for Child Protection, Winnipeg Police Service, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Indigenous and community organizations, and the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth to carry out ongoing public education via awareness campaigns that (a) denounce the sexual exploitation of children and youth and (b) raise awareness about the ongoing demand for purchasing sex and/or sexually exploiting children and youth in Manitoba.

Status: In Progress

Summary of activities completed since the June 27, 2019 report:

The June 2019 response from the Province to MACY provided several specific examples of public education in the area of sexual exploitation.

Some additional examples of the work undertaken by the Tracia's Trust Regional Teams and the Sexual Exploitation Unit (SEU) (Child and Youth Services Division, Department of Families) to increase awareness about the issue of sexual exploitation and the harm it causes include:

- The Tracia's Trust Regional Teams participated in the annual grandmothers walk on September 21, 2019 to promote awareness surrounding violence and exploitation of children.
- The SEU presented research findings to staff working in FASD programs, (e.g., insight mentors and FASD outreach staff).
- StreetReach regularly presents on their program, indicators, personal safety, etc, to youth in schools as well as to university students (12 presentations since January).
- Manitoba supported a northern event in Thompson MB during Stop Child Sexual Exploitation Awareness Week.

- The Brandon regional team promoted awareness surrounding the issue of sexual exploitation during annual Indigenous day celebrations.
- The SEU provided on site education and training to both management and employees working at the Manitoba Hydro Keeyask Project in 2018/19.

The Department of Families continues to work with our partners in other Departments and in the community to seek new opportunities to increase awareness about this issue.

RECOMMENDATION FOUR:

The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth recommends that the Minister of Families, through the Child and Family Services Division (CFSD), in collaboration with the four child and family services Authorities, (1) conduct an evidence-informed review and update of existing provincial service standards, and (2) establish province-wide measures of service accountability through a provincial quality assurance framework. Both the service standards and the quality assurance measures must be consistent throughout the province, culturally appropriate, and supported and enforced by the governing child and family services Authorities within their child and family services agencies. As per provincial legislation, quality assurance measures at the authority level must then be assessed and monitored by the Minister of Families.

Status: In Progress

Summary of activities completed since the June 27, 2019 report:
See response to Circling Star, Recommendation #6

RECOMMENDATION FIVE:

The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth recommends that the Department of Health, Seniors and Active Living and Department of Families, in collaboration with the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba, (1) review and reform the province's treatment programs for children and youth and (2) create safe and secure facilities for youth in Manitoba who are sexually exploited and harmfully involved in substance misuse.

Status: In Progress

Summary of activities completed since the June 27, 2019 report:

As noted under the response to Recommendation 2 of this same report, the Province has announced the development of a new 4 bed unit to be provided by Neecheewam which will provide specialized mental health and addictions treatment as well as spiritual and cultural supports to sexually exploited youths. The model was built in response to the feedback provided by experiential youths. The individualized approach to treatment means that admission dates will be kept flexible, and will accommodate youths who may need multiple short term attempts before feeling able to commit to longer term treatment. In summer 2019, Compass Residential Youth Program, AFM's youth live-in treatment program, collaborated with Family Services, StreetReach and MACY to deliver a 4-week

for a small group of high risk youth referred to AFM from organizations like CFS agencies and MACY. This program was designed to address the different needs of high risk sexually exploited female and transgendered youths, and to include land based treatment.

The Addictions Foundation of Manitoba (AFM) has done an internal review to address occupancy challenges in the treatment programs. Through implementing changes recommended in their internal review, AFM has improved occupancy at their residential treatment programs from 84% occupancy in April 2017 to 99% occupancy in October 2018. AFM has also moved from providing their community based services for youth in one location to imbedding the youth counsellors into a number of organizations.

RECOMMENDATION SIX:

The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth recommends that the Department of Health, Seniors and Active Living, in collaboration with the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba and other stakeholders, amend The Youth Drug Stabilization (Support for Parents) Act so that longer warrants or successive warrants are possible to ensure children and youth get the medically supported withdrawal management services they need based on evidence-informed treatment best practices for addictions (e.g. methamphetamine, alcohol, opioids).

Status: In Progress

Summary of activities completed since the June 27, 2019 report:

An interdepartmental review of the issue is in progress but no timeline is available.

Manitoba's progress on the recommendations from *Learning from Nelson Mandela: A Report on the use of Solitary Confinement and Pepper Spray in Manitoba Youth Custody Facilities*, released February 21, 2019, is below:

RECOMMENDATION ONE:

The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth recommends that the Manitoba government and Manitoba Justice amend *The Correctional Services Act* to prohibit the solitary confinement of youth for a period exceeding 24 hours, per the Nelson Mandela Rules.

Status of implementation: In Progress

Information indicating a timeline for implementation:

- Manitoba Justice does not practice solitary confinement as defined by the Nelson Mandela Rules, i.e. the confinement of inmates for 22 hours or more a day without meaningful human contact.

- The Youth Observation Policy allows for a youth to be secured alone in a cell, however, it also requires that any youth placed in Observation have meaningful daily contact, which is described as: in-person interaction with a staff member that is significant, relevant, purposeful and individualized for the young person, intended to contribute to their rehabilitation and reintegration.
- Observation is to be used as a last resort and only to the extent necessary.
- Manitoba Justice and Manitoba Families are working together on a youth justice review. This work is ongoing and at this point a completion date cannot be determined.
- The Youth Observation Policy is attached.

RECOMMENDATION TWO:

The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth recommends that the Manitoba government and Manitoba Justice restrict the use of any form of segregation under 24 hours in youth custody facilities through an amendment to *The Correctional Services Regulation*.

Status of implementation: In Progress

Information indicating a timeline for implementation:

- The Youth Observation Policy addresses this recommendation at this time.
- The youth justice review is ongoing and a completion date is not yet determined.

RECOMMENDATION THREE:

The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth recommends that Manitoba Justice collect, track, analyse, and report on incidents of segregation across youth custody facilities to ensure transparency and accountability.

Status of implementation: In Progress

Information indicating a timeline for implementation:

- A tracking form has been developed for this purpose and is in use at both the Manitoba Youth Centre and Agassiz Youth Centre.
- The information collected on this form is scheduled to be provided to the MACY at set intervals on an ongoing basis.
- The tracking form in use is attached.

RECOMMENDATION FOUR:

The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth recommends that Manitoba Justice immediately prohibit the use of pepper spray in youth custody facilities except in situations of immediate risk to life* to correctional staff or other youth in custody by amending *The Correctional Services Regulation*.

Status of implementation: Complete

Information indicating a timeline for implementation:

-Standing Order #974 from Agassiz Youth Centre attached.

RECOMMENDATION FIVE:

The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth recommends that Manitoba Justice respond to the overrepresentation of youth with mental illnesses, cognitive vulnerabilities, and childhood trauma by developing an action plan with Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living and Manitoba Families for the implementation of evidence informed and culturally-safe therapeutic behavioural management alternatives to solitary confinement and pepper spray, with the goals of enhancing the rehabilitation and successful reintegration of youth into Manitoba communities, reducing recidivism, and improving the public safety of all Manitobans.

Status of implementation: In Progress

Information indicating a timeline for implementation:

- Youth in custody have access to nurses, psychiatric nurses, psychologists and psychiatrists.
- In addition, youth also have access to Chaplaincy and Indigenous Spiritual Care Providers who are trained and experienced in working with and assisting youth.
- Senior staff, led by the ADM of the Community Safety Division in Justice and the ADM of Child and Family Services in Families are actively meeting and working on initiatives related to youth who intersect both departments.
- February 2019, the government announced it was undertaking a review of the current youth justice system in Manitoba and its connections to the child welfare system, with the aim of ending cycles of crime for at-risk youth.
 - Senior staff, led by the ADM of the Community Safety Division in Justice and the ADM of Child and Family Services in Families are actively collaborating to develop a comprehensive strategic action plan that will have a significant impact on improving youth outcomes through:
 - Increasing supports for youth and reducing re-offending by youth
 - Reducing reliance on incarceration of youth while managing public safety
 - Decreasing contacts with youth in the criminal justice system
 - The Province is committed to sharing the recommendations and implementation plan with the public.

RECOMMENDATION SIX:

The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth recommends that Manitoba Justice and Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living immediately embark on the development of a specialized health facility led and run by mental health professionals to provide

evidence-informed programming for youth with mental illnesses or cognitive vulnerabilities in custody, including youth who are found not criminally responsible.

Status of implementation: In Progress

Information indicating a timeline for implementation:

- The youth justice review is ongoing and at this time a completion date has not been determined.
- See recommendation five.

Manitoba's progress on the recommendations from *A Place Where it Feels Like Home: The Story of Tina Fontaine*, released March 12, 2019, is below:

RECOMMENDATION ONE:

The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth recommends that Manitoba Education and Training ensure its recently established *Commission on Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education* review the measurement of and response to absenteeism across Manitoba. It is further recommended that the Commission review the use of out-of-school suspensions and expulsions, with the goal of developing a province-wide strategy to limit, reduce, and phase-out exclusionary practices, except in situations of imminent safety risk to students and staff. This review and strategy should provide evidence-informed practices that are in line with the best interests of the child and respect the right to education for children and youth.

Status of implementation: Pending

Information indicating a timeline for implementation:

Collaboration between Manitoba Education, school division superintendents and the Manitoba School Boards Association began in October 2019 with expected updates on recommendations for data gathering and best practices to the Attendance Task Force in Spring 2020. See response to recommendation one from ***Documenting the Decline: The Dangerous Space between Good Intentions and Meaningful Interventions***.

RECOMMENDATION TWO:

The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth recommends that Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living expedite the public release of a clear implementation plan to address the child and youth-specific recommendations contained in the report on *Improving Access and Coordination of Mental Health and Addiction Services: A Provincial Strategy for all Manitobans* ("Virgo Report").

Status: Complete Alternate Solution

Summary of activities completed since the June 27, 2019 report:

Manitoba's Clinical and Preventive Services Plan (MCPSP) is a project within Manitoba's Health System Transformation and the Virgo Report has been incorporated into this broader health system plan. As noted in the recently released MCPSP:

- In 2017/18, substance use/addiction and mental health problems and illnesses were declared a national priority. In Manitoba, many individuals including children and youth and Indigenous populations face challenges with coordination and equitable access to mental health and addictions services across the province – there is opportunity to build upon the Virgo Report recommendations and consider alternate modes and settings of care to improve access to limited resources.
- Virgo Consultants created a Provincial Strategic Plan to improve access and coordination which has informed many of the discussions and planning at the various provincial clinical teams
- Manitoba will adopt a Stepped Care Model whereby mental health and addictions treatment and recovery support services are aligned to five tiers of complexity as outlined by the 2018 Virgo Report. It is anticipated that the future model will result in:
 - Improved access and coordination of mental health and addictions services
 - Standardized, streamlined care to support enhanced patient outcomes
 - Improved primary care capacity to support service delivery closer to home

The current focus is on making short term changes and implementing initiatives that will have an immediate impact. A number of initiatives have been announced recently with a large focus on children and youth. Please see links to the most recent Government News Release and Backgrounder dated December 2, 2019.

<https://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?item=46417&posted=2019-12-02>
[https://news.gov.mb.ca/asset_library/en/newslinks/2019/12/BG-Mental Health Rural Launch-ED-HL.pdf](https://news.gov.mb.ca/asset_library/en/newslinks/2019/12/BG-Mental_Health_Rural_Launch-ED-HL.pdf)

RECOMMENDATION THREE:

The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth recommends that Manitoba Justice evaluate the continuum of Victim Support Services for children and develop quality control measures to ensure that services are child centred and provided in a timely manner.

Status of implementation: Complete

Information indicating a timeline for implementation:

- The Compensation for Victims of Crime program has developed template letters to ensure that information provided to victims about benefits is clear and consistent.
- Copies of these letters are attached.

RECOMMENDATION FOUR:

The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth recommends that the Manitoba government, through its Deputy Ministers of Health and Social Policy and Priorities (DMHSPP) committee, work with the government's Legislation and Strategic Policy Branch to analyse the province of Alberta's *Protection of Sexually Exploited Children Act* and Alberta's *Drug-Endangered Children Act* to determine how safe and secure treatment facilities can be introduced in Manitoba. It is further recommended that the DMHSPP committee develop a plan to ensure the continuum of services for children and youth includes safe, secure, home-like settings for treatment and programming when children and youth are at imminent risk of harm or death.

Status: In Progress

Summary of activities completed since the June 27, 2019 report:

Please refer to response to Recommendations #5 and #6 in In Need of Protection: Angel's Story.

RECOMMENDATION FIVE:

The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth recommends that Manitoba Families, in consultation with other government departments and relevant stakeholders, create a new protocol to ensure that response plans are created for missing youth in general, and sexually exploited youth in particular who are at risk of imminent harm.

Status: Complete – ongoing

Summary of activities completed since the June 27, 2019 report:

As noted in June, there has been specific collaboration between the Child and Youth Services Division and the WPS Missing Persons Unit to address the issues raised in this recommendation, including providing additional clarification to group care facilities on the distinction between absent and missing youths.

It is noted that the Facility Standard on Absences was updated in 2017 to reflect some of the issues raised by this recommendation. A copy of this Standard has been provided.

The work of Thunderwing Block by Block Initiative is an ongoing collaboration, providing the opportunity for police and service providers to look at individual cases. The follow up can range from identifying a youth may be increasingly at risk and need additional supports and services, or identifying that a placement resource needs clarification about the difference between absent and missing youth.

The recent announcement of the establishment of additional community hub approaches in Portage La Prairie and Thompson will provide the setting for increased collaboration between CFS agencies and local police as well as other community service providers and include the issue of missing children and youths

<https://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?item=46018&posted=2019-10-28>,
<https://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?item=46217&posted=2019-11-19>).

StreetReach has continual and ongoing direct work with Winnipeg Police Service and RCMP in this area. The response provided to Recommendation 2 in Angel's Story includes information about some of that cooperative work.