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MINISTER :

Honourable R. T. (Rich) Coleman
Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General

IDENTIFIER NUMBER:

DATE:

June 13, 2002

TITLE:

Funding of victim service programs

ISSUE:

A review of victims service program mandates and funding has been undertaken by the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, with the goals of making victims services available to as many communities as possible across the Province and establishing a comprehensive funding formula for organizations providing victims services.

Under the new program, 18 new police-based victims programs will be offered in communities that currently do not have access to them. In addition, a new crisis line will be established for victims of family and sexual violence. The line will operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and will refer callers to appropriate resources.

Community-based victims programs will also be available to communities with populations over 20,000. Previously, there was no consistent rationale to provide funding to these programs, and they have developed on an ad hoc basis. Recognizing that community-based victims programs offer needed services to victims who may initially decline to contact the police, at least six new programs will be established in communities that do not currently have access to these services.

Overall funding for these three Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General victims services will be maintained at approximately \$9.3 million.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General is seeking Cabinet concurrence with the funding allocation for victim service programs as follows:

Police-based programs	\$3,649,705
Community-based programs	5,307,205
New crisis line	<u>400,000</u>
TOTAL	\$9,356,910

BACKGROUND:

New Era documents

- The Vision for the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General's Service Plan states:
"People feel safe at home and in their communities and have confidence in the efficiency, effectiveness, responsiveness and integrity of police and corrections programs. Victims of crime and those who are vulnerable receive support and protection. Businesses and individuals prosper in a fair and effective regulatory environment."
- The Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General Service Plan summary 2002/03 – 2004/05 states:
"The goal of the strategic shifts is to bring greater accountability, community ownership, program rationalization, and deregulation to the delivery of public safety and community protection. These shifts are.....
 - Increase efficiencies in liquor licensing, crime prevention and victim services by reducing regulations, consolidating service delivery, and encouraging community ownership of community-based programs."

Current victim service programs funded

- Victims had been served by three main programs – police, community and crown-based. Crown Victim/Witness Services were eliminated this year, while police-based and community-based programs have been maintained.
- Police-based programs are mandated to provide justice-related services to victims of all types of crime. Essential services include court support, general justice-related and case-specific information, practical assistance, emotional support and referral. In 2001/02, 79 police-based programs utilizing 671 volunteers served 80,798 victims.
- Community-based services are mandated to provide justice-related services to various groups of victims who are initially reluctant to report to the police. These victims include women who are victims of violence in intimate relationships, victims of sexual assault and child abuse, male survivors of childhood abuse, aboriginal victims and multicultural victims. Essential services include practical and ongoing emotional support, general justice-related and case-specific information, safety planning, and, in some cases, telephone crisis services. In 2001/02, 69 community-based programs utilizing 260 volunteers served 49,292 victims.
- Currently, provincial funding of \$3,336,834 is provided to police-based programs, the provincial police-based association, and the RCMP (to support unfunded communities). Community-based programs and a provincial community-based association are funded for a total of \$5,862,995.

- Community-based programs include 18 sexual assault/woman assault centres and three male survivor programs, seven aboriginal and four multicultural programs.
- In addition, a province-wide Victim Information Line is funded at \$157,036.
- Total current funding for victim services is \$9,356,865.

Results of Victim Service Review

Changes were necessary to ensure greater access to services for all victims in the province.

Two key principles guided this review:

- Increase consistency, access and efficiency, not reduce expenditures. Program funding changes have been made to ensure consistency with funding formula and to make funds available for new and enhanced victim services;
- Continue to provide victim services in all communities currently served.

The key results of this review are:

- Both police-based and community-based programs will be maintained.
- Funding principles have been developed to ensure consistent funding of and equitable access to victim services throughout the province.

Police-based programs

Police-based programs will be provided in all police jurisdictions with a police strength of four or more. In addition:

- all current programs will be maintained;
- 18 RCMP detachments will get new victim services;
- a new funding formula based on police strength of the policing jurisdiction will be introduced for communities with populations under 300,000. In communities over 300,000, funding will be based on population;
- 41 police-based programs will receive funding increases and 37 will receive decreases;
- the police-based program mandate will be unchanged.

New crisis line

A new province-wide crisis line will provide telephone crisis services to victims of family and sexual violence on a 24 hours a day, seven days a week basis, and will incorporate the functions of the current Victim Information Line.

Community-based programs

All communities over 20,000 are eligible for a community-based program. In addition:

- a new funding formula based on community population will be introduced, with the result that 21 community-based programs will receive funding increases, 31 will receive decreases, and at least six new community-based programs will be funded;
- specialized victim services and sexual assault/woman assault centre programs will be consolidated in 12 communities;
- two community-based programs will be eliminated and two more will be converted into police-based programs;

- in addition to the six new programs, six other communities are eligible for funding according to the new funding formula, and programs will be established as future resources permit;
- the community-based program mandate will be modified to require the provision of court support services.

Victim Services funds have been redistributed to ensure more equitable and efficient services across the province. Proposed funding levels after implementation of the service review are: \$3,649,705 for police-based programs, including their association and the grant to the RCMP; \$400,000 for the new crisis line; and \$5,307,205 for community-based programs, including their association; for a total of \$9,356,910.

Implementation

- Programs that will be eliminated will receive four months notice of termination.
- Target date for implementation of new police-based victim services is November 1, 2002.
- Community-based program consolidation will occur January 1, 2003.
- Target date for new community-based programs is January 1, 2003.
- The crisis line will be implemented April 1, 2003.

RECOMMENDED DECISION:

Concurrence with proposed new programs and funding allocation effective June 30, 2002.

SIGNATURE:

R.T. (Rich) Coleman
Solicitor General

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