

SUMMARY: COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW Of a Critical Injury of a Youth Known to the Ministry

A. INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Children and Family Development (the Ministry) conducted a comprehensive review (CR) to examine the case practice involving the subject youth (the youth) of the CR.

For the purpose of the CR, Ministry electronic and physical records, and BC Coroner Service documents were reviewed. Ministry staff members were interviewed. The CR focused on the period of Ministry involvement prior to and following the critical injury of the youth.

B. TERM(S) OF REFERENCE

1. Were the Ministry's responses to protection reports and subsequent assessment and planning, consistent with applicable standards, legislation, policy and accompanying tools?
2. To what extent did the Ministry's policy changes and the introduction of new assessment tools influence practice in this case?

C. BACKGROUND SUMMARY

The Ministry had more than one involvement with the family due to community professionals reporting concerns for the youth being in a high risk situation. The primary caregiver had high risk behaviors that impacted their ability to function in their parental role. The parent agreed to participate in prevention services however, did not adequately follow through with the required intervention. As a result of the youth's critical injury and identified child protection issues, the youth was brought into the Director's care and remains in a Ministry approved resource.

D. FINDINGS

1. The Ministry's responses to protection reports, along with the subsequent assessment and planning, were not consistent with applicable standards, legislation, policy and accompanying tools.
2. Systemic issues were identified which impacted the Ministry's response to the youth's safety: clarity of staff roles and responsibilities in a co-managed case, caseload priorities, and multiple child welfare policy and practice changes were not trained and implemented by the Ministry in a clear and thorough fashion.

E. ACTIONS TAKEN TO DATE

1. A provincial practice directive was issued to address file transfer delays, stating a file transfer must be completed within 2 days of a family relocating to another community.
2. The Community Service Manager met with the involved staff and reviewed the requirements for prior contact checks as specified by the Ministry child protection response model.

F. ACTION PLAN

1. The involved child protection team leaders and staff will engage in a review of roles and responsibilities in child protection response options: Family Development Response and Investigation; including, the necessity of reviewing all service delivery files, checking out of province records and utilizing structured decision making tools during each response.
2. The Provincial Director of Child Welfare (through the Director of Practice) will provide practice guidance for the involved program area staff regarding collaboration/joint management of cases. This will include involving the respective consultants when providing service to children who have parents with high risk behaviors.