

SUMMARY: FILE REVIEW Of the Death of a Youth in the Care of the Ministry

A. INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Children and Family Development (the ministry) conducted the File Review (FR) to examine case practice regarding the subject youth (the youth).

For the purpose of the FR, ministry records and BC Coroners Service documents were reviewed. The FR focused on a specific period of ministry involvement prior to the death of the youth.

B. TERM OF REFERENCE

1. Did the ministry meet its guardianship responsibility with regard to a collaborative care plan, specific to transitioning the youth to independence and adulthood?

C. BACKGROUND SUMMARY

The family had longstanding involvement with the ministry due to concerns of high risk issues, special needs, and the parent's ability to care for the youth. Support services were provided, but were not successful for the youth to remain safely at home. The youth, who did not identify as Indigenous, was in the care of the ministry during the period of review.

D. FINDINGS

The ministry partially met their responsibility developing a collaborative care plan for the youth, which was consistent with applicable legislation, policy and standards. Team members worked well together to provide support and services to meet the youth's needs. Appropriate steps were taken towards planning for adult services in preparation for the youth's transition out of care. The ministry could have accessed further professional consultation, specifically related to high risk issues. More detailed documentation would have provided opportunities for monitoring progress towards goals related to the youth's specific needs.

E. ACTIONS TAKEN TO DATE

1. The Service Delivery Area (SDA) began a process for identifying and tracking youth considered at high risk for a specific issue; Practice Team consultants meet with social workers to provide consultation, support, and develop plans. This process is ongoing, and will continue to support staff who work with high risk youth within the SDA.
2. SDA ministry staff attended training related to planning for youth in care.

F. ACTION PLAN

1. Discuss with involved ministry staff the importance of using the care plan as a guide to responsibilities and facilitating discussions with children, youth and their caregivers; as well as subsequently documenting those activities.
2. The involved ministry staff complete online training related to working with high risk youth.
3. Conduct a review of local ministry teams to ensure each team is aware of specialized services and committees, and are using the referral process for each.

The review was completed in March 2018. The above action plan is due for full implementation in August 2018.