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McGuinty Government Investing In Training To Help Reduce Domestic Violence

Expert Panel Will Develop Training Tools For Emergency Department Personnel

TORONTO, Dec. 1 /CNW/ - The McGuinty government is investing in training to help emergency department personnel better recognize the signs of domestic violence and provide supports to women in need, Sandra Pupatello, Minister Responsible for Women's Issues, announced today at Women's College Ambulatory Care Centre.

"Experts and frontline workers from across the province told us to invest in early intervention strategies, and that is what we are doing," said Pupatello. "It is imperative that we give emergency department personnel the tools they need to intervene early in cases of domestic violence."

This \$302,000 investment is part of the \$5.9 million the government is spending for training, research and conferences under its comprehensive, four-year, \$66-million Domestic Violence Action Plan. A panel will assemble the tools and information that emergency department personnel require to identify the signs of domestic violence in women. The panel will develop an e-learning program, which will be available to all emergency departments in Ontario.

"Ontarians recognize that domestic violence is a serious health care issue," said George Smitherman, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. "Our government is honoured to have the enthusiastic support of eminent members of the medical and social services community, as we work to reduce domestic violence."

"Emergency departments are often the first place victims of domestic violence go for help, so training for frontline personnel is critical," said Dr. Brian Schwartz, Director at the Sunnybrook-Osler Centre for Prehospital Care, and expert panel co-chair.

"We want to develop a training program that will boost the capacity of emergency department personnel to support at-risk women," said Dr. Robin Mason, Research Scientist, Centre for Research in Women's Health, Sunnybrook & Women's College Health Sciences Centre, and co-chair of the Expert Panel.

This is the third expert panel established to help frontline workers identify and provide the appropriate supports to women and children who may be exposed to domestic violence. In November, 2005, the government announced English-language and French-language expert panels, which will develop training tools to help elementary school teachers, principals and counsellors identify and provide appropriate supports and information for children who may be exposed to domestic violence.

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Backgrounder

December 1, 2005

EXPERT TRAINING PANEL FOR EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL

The expert training panel will develop a training package to help emergency department personnel identify women who may be exposed to domestic violence, at the earliest opportunity, and provide the appropriate responses, supports and information. The panel comprises:

Co-Chairs

Dr. Brian Schwartz - Director, Sunnybrook-Osler Centre for Prehospital Care, Sunnybrook & Women's College Health Sciences Centre and Scientific Advisor, Emergency Management Unit, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

Dr. Robin Mason - Research Scientist, Violence and Health Research Program, Centre for Research in Women's Health, Sunnybrook & Women's College Health Sciences Centre

Members

- Sharon Armstrong, Emergency Department Nurse, Pembroke Regional Hospital
- Shirley Broekstra, Manager, Sexual Assault Care Centre, The Scarborough Hospital, Grace Division
- Mary Carter, Program Coordinator, St. Joseph's Health Centre, Sudbury Regional Hospital
- Nancy DiPietro, Manager, Nina's Place, Regional Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Centre of Halton, Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital, Burlington
- Dawn Dowson, Coordinator, Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centre, Thunder Bay Health Sciences Centre
- Dr. Joyce Lock, Physician, Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital, and Medical Director, Nina's Place, Burlington
- Sheila Macdonald, Provincial Coordinator, Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centres, Sunnybrook & Women's College Health Sciences Centre
- Patti McGillicuddy, Social Worker, Sunnybrook & Women's College Health Sciences Centre
- Robbie Schwartz, Crisis Intervention Social Worker, Psychiatric Crisis Team, Markham Stouffville Hospital, and Lecturer, University of Toronto
- Dr. Dominick Shelton, Emergency Physician, Sunnybrook & Women's College Health Sciences Centre
- Dr. Carolyn Snider, Resident Physician, Sunnybrook & Women's College Health Sciences Centre, Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto
- Dr. Andre Tan, Physician/Course Coordinator, Domestic Violence Education, Faculty of Medicine, Queen's University, Kingston
- Dr. Andrew Worster, Emergency Physician, Hamilton Health Sciences Centre, McMaster University Medical Centre

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