

Preface

We, the Peel Committee Against Woman Abuse (PCAWA), represent over 30 agencies from the social service, health and judicial sectors in the Region of Peel. Since 1984, it has been our mandate to promote a comprehensive and effective response to woman abuse in Peel. In 1995, the Ministry of Community and Social Services provided funding to develop the first version of the Woman Abuse Protocol. At that time, the PCAWA concluded that the best way the Committee could support a coordinated response to woman abuse in the Region of Peel would be to develop a one-stop, accessible, collaborative, case-management model of service delivery. Accordingly, this first Protocol was successfully piloted by twelve agencies in March of 1997 and officially launched in November of 1999.

In 2000, PCAWA received subsequent funding from the Ministry of Community and Social Services to further develop a Woman Abuse Emergency Response Protocol for the Region of Peel. After careful consideration, the Protocol Sub-Committee (currently the Protocol Workgroup) agreed that this could best be accomplished by revising the original Protocol to include all organizations in the Region of Peel that provide services to abused women and by reviewing and incorporating current research on the subject. In November 2003, PCAWA launched the revised Protocol manual, the Region of Peel Woman Abuse Protocol: Best Practice Guidelines.

PCAWA received funding from the Ministry of the Attorney General, Domestic Violence Community Co-ordination Grant Program in April 2003 to market and provide training to Peel service providers on the updated Protocol. On March 5, 2004, PCAWA trained its member agencies on the revised Protocol through the workshop “Building Bridges: Working together to provide a coordinated and effective response to woman abuse in the Region of Peel.” A year later, on March 30, 2005, PCAWA reached beyond their own membership to introduce the Protocol to Peel organizations as diverse as faith groups, food banks and local businesses through the workshop “Community Action Against Woman Abuse in Peel.”

We believe that this manual promotes best practice in providing services to victims of woman abuse. Accordingly, the Protocol represents a values-based approach to woman abuse intervention and prevention that is informed by evidence and theory from a diverse range of sources. Moreover, it is specific to Peel Region’s experience and clearly conveys the importance of both process and outcome (both in developing the manual and in service provision). The manual is also significant because it provides a common language, (which is important for future research on woman abuse in Peel), and because it represents an inter-sectoral and inter-disciplinary collaboration that has inevitably helped to ensure a comprehensive, coordinated, and effective community response to woman abuse in Peel.

The process of developing the Protocol has been collaborative and inclusive, with every effort made to engage agencies from all sectors and professions. Additionally, the PCAWA has recognized the importance of and been committed to community development principles and practices as the means by which our community can come together to develop a coordinated and effective community response to woman abuse.

The Peel Committee Against Woman Abuse is grateful to the dedicated members of the Protocol Workgroup whose impressive investment of time and effort has made this valuable resource possible. Finally, the Peel Committee Against Woman Abuse would like to acknowledge and thank the Ministry of the Attorney General, Domestic Violence Community Co-ordination Grant Program and the Ministry of Community and Social Services for making this valuable resource possible.