

## **SUMMARY: DEPUTY DIRECTOR'S CASE REVIEW of the Death of a Child Known to the Ministry**

### **A. BACKGROUND**

The Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) conducted the Deputy Director's Review (DDR), to examine the facts associated with the case and to assess whether practice met with the applicable standards that were in effect during the time period reviewed in the DDR.

For the purposes of the DDR ministry documents and files were reviewed.

The DDR indicates historical involvement with the ministry existed for the parents of the subject child of the review.

The eleven intakes reviewed in the DDR span a period of time before and after the birth of the subject child of the review, and for a short time after the death of the child. During this same time period two regions and three offices were involved to accommodate the family's change in residence. Ministry services other than those offered and/or provided through the child welfare program area were offered to the family.

The intakes indicate issues existed for the family that could affect how the parents functioned in their parental roles. Some intakes were assessed as requiring a child protection investigation and others were assessed as requiring support services, or as requiring no further action. Attempts by the social workers to make contact with the family, including home visits, were often unsuccessful and the family seemed resistant to services that were offered or referrals that were made on their behalf, both by the ministry and by other community service providers.

The family's ministry file was opened and closed several times, the file being opened when an intake report was received by the ministry.

The DDR's final written report is dated within the first six months of 2008.

### **B. CONCLUSIONS**

In carefully reviewing the services provided to the family the DDR indicates that practice standards in effect during the time period reviewed were not consistently met and collaborative case planning was not demonstrated when instances to engage other service providers in assessment or planning seemed advantageous.

The DDR report notes that social workers made considerable efforts to work collaboratively with the parent. The social workers involved were supportive to the family in relation to the family's identified needs. Though some referrals for services were followed through on by the parents, services were continually and consistently offered and referrals made for services which were not engaged in by the parent(s).

The DDR report states that the death of the subject child cannot be linked directly to the practice of the involved social workers.

## **C. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The DDR's recommendations were developed over the course of two meetings, one in each region involved, and included managers, a team leader, and the author of the review report. The recommendations are presented in two sets; one for each of the regions involved, and are encapsulated as follows:

### First Region:

1. The intake team leader and the child protection consultant will review the intake identified as not meeting the applicable standard to understand what is needed to bring the intake up to standard.
2. The director of child welfare will make available to the team leaders across the region creative ways to look for themes when reviewing cases with multiple intakes.
3. The community services manager will offer an opportunity to the parent to reflect on the parent's own experiences with the ministry and how those experiences affect the parent's relationship with the ministry.

### Second Region:

1. Within 120 days of receiving a copy of the approved DDR report, the regional director of child welfare will publish on the region's best practice web site guidelines for workers pertaining to the assessment used in practice at a specific transitional time for a client.
2. Within 120 days of receiving a copy of the approved DDR report, the regional director of child welfare will publish on the region's best practice website guidelines for child protection workers pertaining to conducting a thorough analysis when assessing child protection reports.
3. Within 120 days of receiving a copy of the approved DDR report, the community services manager will advise the director of child welfare and the director of operations that Child and Family Service Standard 16: Conducting a Child Protection Investigation has been reviewed with staff in the office that provided service to the family.