

SUMMARY: DEPUTY DIRECTOR'S REVIEW of an Incident Involving a Child in Care of 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 does not indicate any previous child welfare concerns on the part of the subject child's (the child's) caregivers, prior to the child's placement with the caregivers. Ministry involvement with the caregivers was limited to providing training programs, assessment and support. The child was involved with counselling support services provided by a community based professional.

The MCFD files and documentation indicate that practice standards were met, for the most part, in the assessment of the caregivers' ability to provide care for the child.

The DDR's final written report is dated after January 01, 2008.

B. CONCLUSIONS

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

The DDR contains reference to social work practice that surpassed guardianship standards such as the assessment components of the child's comprehensive plan of care (CPOC) and the documentation on the child's file.

The DDR report states that the incident involving the child cannot be linked directly to the practice of the involved social workers; however there were steps that could have been taken by social workers that may have mitigated further risk to the child.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

The DDR's recommendations were developed by the Regional Director of Child Welfare and the Regional Deputy Director, as well as the Provincial Director of Child Welfare. The recommendations are as follows:

1. The Community Service Manager will share and debrief this DDR report with involved staff on the Guardianship and Resources Team by December 31, 2007.
2. The Community Services Manager will, by February 29, 2008, review with MCFD staff the Child in Care Standard - Number Nine and reinforce the need to have private, in-person contact with children in care at least every 90 days.
3. The Regional Director of Integrated Practice will, by December 31, 2007, reinforce with the Community Services Manager and Team Leaders responsible for Resources, the need to assess any immediate safety concerns for children in care whenever police make inquiries of them.
4. The Regional Director of Integrated Practice will send a letter to police agencies in the region reinforcing the need to inform the Regional Director of Integrated Practice in a timely way, whenever Ministry approved caregivers may be persons of interest to them in any investigation.
5. The Provincial Director will review with the Regional Community Services Manager and team leaders of the applicable program areas the utilization of Questionnaire 2 of the Structured Analysis Family Evaluation (SAFE). The Regional Director of Integrated Practice will also ensure that this objective is highlighted in the SAFE training for the applicable program area staff.