

**Ministry of Social Services Response/Action Plan to Jury Recommendations  
May 2015**

**To the Ministry of Social Services and Yorkton Tribal Council Child and Family Services**

Recommendation		Ministry Response/Action Plan
1	With introduction of possible mental health barriers on part of parents or guardians, a qualified mental services worker is involved with ensuring the complete understanding of concerns on behalf of the Child Services Provider at the time of involvement. For example services offered and/or before documents are signed.	<p><b>The Ministry will take this recommendation under consideration.</b></p> <p>Further analysis of this recommendation and current policy is required.</p> <p>As part of the caseworker’s ongoing assessment of a parent’s ability to safely parent their child(ren), they evaluate whether a parent has the necessary capacity to enter into a voluntary Parental Services Agreement. If there is question regarding the parent’s capacity, the caseworker is expected to consult with their supervisor to determine next steps, which may include consultation with mental health professionals.</p>
2	Parental Services Agreements should have follow up, upon completion.	<p><b>The Ministry accepts this recommendation.</b></p> <p>The Ministry has practice, policy and quality assurance measures in place to ensure there is follow-up upon completion of a Parental Services Agreement.</p> <p>On January 14, 2014, the Ministry’s First Nation and Métis Services (FNMS) Consultant provided training to YTC CFS staff regarding case planning, identification of mandate and ensuring Parental Services Agreements (PSAs) are used accurately and when applicable.</p> <p>The Ministry’s Quality Assurance Unit conducts Program File Reviews annually on the three Ministry Service Areas and the 17 First Nations Agencies. These reviews currently measure compliance regarding PSA follow up and completion. The Ministry’s Quality Assurance Unit also measures compliance regarding ongoing casework supervision which identifies and addresses any concerns with PSA completion.</p> <p>Where compliance is not optimal, recommendations are made and an action plan is implemented and tracked to ensure completion to address the compliance issue.</p>

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3	<p>Stronger recruitment and retention incentives for foster parents in rural areas.</p>	<p><b>The Ministry accepts this recommendation.</b></p> <p>The Ministry contracts with the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association to provide recruitment and retention. The Ministry has robust engagement and training programs in place for our foster families.</p> <p>The Ministry's Child and Family Programs Division is undergoing restructuring to better support out-of-home resources, including foster homes. These changes will promote a renewed emphasis on recruitment and retention, resource development and provincial consistency in program delivery. Additionally, the changes will provide increased provincial oversight and accountability.</p>
4	<p>Increase of monetary compensation and services provided for foster parents under Ministry of Social Services and Yorkton Tribal Council Child and Family Services.</p>	<p><b>The Ministry accepts this recommendation.</b></p> <p>The Ministry is grateful for the dedication and hard work of our foster parents.</p> <p>Since 2007, the Ministry has increased foster parent rates by 16.2%. The new budget sees a further increase for foster parents of 2%. Basic foster parent rates are the same both on and off reserve.</p> <p>The Ministry's 2015/16 budget saw a \$2.59 million increase for special needs costs. This is for both the cost of the needs themselves and increased uptake by extended family caregivers. These include, but are not limited to: travel, daycare, counselling, legal costs and health-related costs.</p> <p>The Minister of Social Services has sent a letter to the Honourable Bernard Valcourt, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, supporting equivalent funding for all programs and services delivered by First Nations Child and Family Service Agencies to that of their provincial counterparts. The Ministry will continue to work with our federal counterparts towards better outcomes for Aboriginal children, regardless of where they reside.</p>

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5	<p>Policy with regards to completion and forwarding of caregiver information form be followed.</p>	<p><b>The Ministry accepts this recommendation.</b></p> <p>Policy and quality assurance measures are in place to assess compliance annually as part of our practice of continuous improvement. Where concerns with compliance are identified, recommendations are made and an action plan is implemented and tracked to ensure completion to address the compliance issue.</p> <p>The Ministry has sent a communication to all staff to remind them of the importance of this policy and the need to adhere to it.</p>
6	<p>Concerns with regards to the child's behaviour and/or specific needs be brought to the immediate attention of the prospective Foster Parent before placement.</p>	<p><b>The Ministry accepts this recommendation.</b></p> <p>The Ministry has policy in place requiring that all relevant information regarding a child's needs and behaviours must be provided to any potential caregiver prior to placement. Quality assurance measures assess compliance annually as part of our practice of continuous improvement. Where concerns with compliance are identified, recommendations are made and an action plan is implemented and tracked to ensure completion to address the compliance issue.</p> <p>The Ministry has sent a communication to all staff to remind them of the importance of this policy and the need to adhere to it.</p>
7	<p>Re-evaluation of protocols with respect to training and qualifications of Foster Parents; more specifically re-assessment of child care skills and the introduction of a mandatory refresher course for Foster Parents on an appropriately decided basis.</p>	<p><b>The Ministry accepts this recommendation.</b></p> <p>In Saskatchewan, we have very rigorous policies, standards and processes for screening, approving and monitoring our foster homes.</p> <p>There are significant requirements to becoming a foster parent, including a comprehensive assessment, criminal record and child abuse record checks, home safety checks, references and medical assessments, and the completion of PRIDE training, CPR and First Aid Training, and cultural training. Additionally, there are ongoing assessments and training opportunities.</p>

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		The Ministry's Child and Family Programs Division is undergoing restructuring to better support out-of-home resources, including foster homes. These changes will promote a renewed emphasis on recruitment and retention, resource development and provincial consistency in program delivery. Additionally, the changes will provide increased provincial oversight and accountability.
<b>To RCMP, Ministry of Social Services and Yorkton Tribal Council Child and Family Services</b>		
	Recommendation	Ministry Response/Action Plan
8	Communication and file sharing between all pertinent parties with regards to child welfare be shared in a timely manner.	<p><b>The Ministry accepts this recommendation.</b></p> <p>The Ministry is committed to integrated case management and working collaboratively with our 17 First Nations Child and Family Services (FNCFS) Agencies and other child serving ministries and organizations. This requires that information sharing occurs immediately when a child's safety is at risk.</p> <p>Improvements are ongoing and include initiatives such as the HUB, flexible response and the Child Abuse Protocol, which clearly identifies information sharing processes.</p> <p>The Ministry of Health held a Value Stream Mapping (VSM) Event in Regina, SK from March 23 to 26, 2015, attended by representatives from Social Services, Yorkton Tribal Council Child and Family Services, Health, Regional Health Authorities, Education, Regina Police Service and RCMP. At this event, an "Improvement Implementation Plan with Measures" and an action plan were developed focused on improved information sharing, with a goal for operational implementation of September 2015.</p>
<b>To the Ministry of Social Services and the Yorkton Tribal Council Child and Family Services</b>		
	Recommendation	Action
9	FASD, ADHD and other mental health issues should be addressed as soon as an issue is identified. Depending on results, a full-time therapist may be warranted.	<p><b>The Ministry accepts this recommendation.</b></p> <p>The Ministry will continue to work with the Ministries of Health and Education to ensure timely receipt of these services for families.</p> <p>The Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan, which was released in December 2014, has been accepted as a guide to improvements. There are recommendations that speak to needs in this area. The Ministry of Health will lead the development of an implementation plan with other human service ministries.</p>

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		<p>We expect the Disability Strategy to be released Spring/Summer 2015. The Disability Strategy will address and identify the support and service needs of children and adults who experience disability – whether physical, sensory, psychiatric, cognitive or intellectual.</p> <p>In 2015, the Ministry of Social Services implemented the Multi-Disciplinary Outreach Service, an intervention program to support families in caring for their children with intellectual and cognitive disabilities, inclusive of FASD.</p>
<b>To Yorkton Tribal Council Child and Family Services</b>		
Recommendation		Ministry Response/Action Plan
10	<p>Efforts to increase funding for positions for child welfare workers on Reserve should be made. A social worker and a mental health therapist are recommended on a priority basis with the necessity for a direct line of services from a child psychologist, speech and language pathologist, and occupational and physical therapists for children in rural areas.</p>	<p><b>The Ministry of Social Services will defer to Yorkton Tribal Council Child and Family Services for their response to this recommendation.</b></p> <p>The Minister of Social Services has sent a letter to the Honourable Bernard Valcourt, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, supporting equivalent funding for First Nations Child and Family Service Agencies to that of their provincial counterparts. The Ministry will continue to work with our federal counterparts towards better outcomes for Aboriginal children, regardless of where they reside.</p> <p>Our Ministry will work with federal, provincial and regional health authorities to ensure accessible services on and off reserve, in rural and urban settings.</p>
11	<p>An organized filing system be developed to ensure all employees have access to hard copies of all pertinent documents.</p>	<p><b>The Ministry of Social Services will defer to Yorkton Tribal Council Child and Family Services for their response to this recommendation.</b></p> <p>The Ministry is aware that Yorkton Tribal Council Child and Family Services has developed and fully implemented a case management database system.</p>
12	<p>Enforcement of policies with regards to completion of Investigation and Intake Reports be followed.</p>	<p><b>The Ministry of Social Services will defer to Yorkton Tribal Council Child and Family Services for their response to this recommendation.</b></p> <p>Yorkton Tribal Council Child and Family Services continues to work with the Children’s Research Centre (CRC) to enhance their use of the Structured Decision Making Model (SDM).</p>

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		<p>The Ministry and Yorkton Tribal Council Child and Family Services have practice, policy and quality assurance measures in place with regards to the completion of Intake Reports and Investigations.</p> <p>Where concerns with compliance are identified, recommendations are made and an action plan is implemented and tracked to ensure completion to address the compliance issue.</p>
<b>To the Ministry of Social Services and Yorkton Tribal Council Child and Family Services</b>		
	Recommendation	Ministry Response/Action Plan
13	Funding efforts be made for a facility for children with complex needs under the age of twelve.	<p><b>The Ministry of Social Services will take this recommendation under consideration.</b></p> <p>Further analysis of this recommendation and a review of current out-of-home residential resources is required.</p> <p>There are existing residential programs located throughout the province providing services for children and youth under the age of twelve.</p> <p>The Ministry of Social Services' budget saw a \$2.0 million increase for the development of specialized residential options for children that are medically fragile and / or with complex needs.</p>
14	MSS & YTC pursue [sic] implementation of prevention awareness for mothers with respect to FASD through their various resources.	<p><b>The Ministry of Social Services will take this recommendation under consideration.</b></p> <p>The Ministry will discuss this recommendation further with our partners at Yorkton Tribal Council Child and Family Services, the Ministry of Health and the Saskatchewan Prevention Institute.</p> <p>Over the past three years, \$1.8 million in new FASD programming has been implemented, including community supports such as mentorship, family support programming, life skills and addictions programming, youth-targeted FASD prevention programming and intensive FASD prevention programming for women at risk of having a child with FASD.</p> <p>In 2015, the Ministry of Social Services implemented the Multi-Disciplinary Outreach Service, an intervention program to support families in caring for their children with intellectual and cognitive disabilities, inclusive of FASD.</p>

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		Family Resource Centres in Yorkton, Regina and Sandy Bay provide parenting education to strengthen parenting skills that will foster nurturing environments; early learning to enhance child development with positive experiences and play; family wellness and support to identify and build skills and promote family health and wellness; and information and referrals to families to access supports for raising healthy children.
<b>To Yorkton Tribal Council Child and Family Services</b>		
	Recommendation	Ministry Response/Action Plan
15	Criminal Investigation on a child through the RCMP not be a hinderance to an ongoing investigation by YTC.	<p><b>The Ministry of Social Services will defer to Yorkton Tribal Council Child and Family Services for their response to this recommendation.</b></p> <p>Current policy exists where a child welfare investigation can occur and be completed, concurrently to a criminal investigation. The Child Abuse Protocol, which was revised and implemented in October 2014, clearly identifies this. Ongoing training on the revised Protocol is underway throughout the province.</p>
16	Staff are supplied with all necessary equipment and training to adequately perform their duties.	<p><b>The Ministry of Social Services will defer to Yorkton Tribal Council Child and Family Services for their response to this recommendation.</b></p> <p>The Ministry has worked very closely with Yorkton Tribal Council Child and Family Services to provide case practice reviews, intensive on-site support, training, and clinical supervision to support their delivery of quality services.</p>
<b>To the Ministry of Social Services</b>		
	Recommendation	Ministry Response/Action Plan
17	Protocols for Alcohol and Drug Assessment for parents/guardians be enforced.	<p><b>The Ministry of Social Services will take this recommendation under consideration.</b></p> <p>Further analysis of this recommendation is required.</p> <p>The Ministry cannot enforce alcohol and drug treatment as this is an adult's right to self-determination. Our role is to assess and intervene where there are child welfare issues. Should an addiction issue be creating an unsafe environment for a child or children, we would then respond according to the family's need.</p> <p>The Ministry continues to work with our partners at Health, the Health Regions and on reserve National Native</p>

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		<p>Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program (NNADAP) workers to access addictions treatment for families as required.</p> <p>The Ministry of Health is leading the implementation of the Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan, which was released in December 2014 as a guide for government with an inter-ministerial and cross-sectoral approach to address complex issues presented by mental health and addictions challenges. The Ministry of Social Services is a participant.</p>
18	<p>An Assessment and Case Plan be completed by 120 days after Intake Report, regardless of the introduction of a new Intake Report. References to subsequent [sic] Intake Reports and Assessment and Case Plans should be made if applicable.</p>	<p><b>The Ministry of Social Services accepts this recommendation.</b></p> <p>There are policy and quality assurance measures in place to assess compliance annually as part of our practice of continuous improvement.</p> <p>Where compliance is not optimal, recommendations are made and an action plan is implemented and tracked to ensure completion to address the compliance issue.</p>
19	<p>The size of service centres for rural office be re-evaluated in relation to available staffing and service concerns.</p>	<p><b>The Ministry of Social Services accepts this recommendation.</b></p> <p>The Ministry has entered into a contract with the Children's Research Council to conduct a workload assignment study in the 2015/16 fiscal year.</p> <p>The Ministry's supervisors and managers pay close attention to the volume and complexity of their front-line workers' cases, ensuring that caseworkers have the capacity to provide essential services to families.</p>