

Classification **PUBLIC**

Meeting **February 13th, 2012**

Agenda Item **Monitoring Report:
Assistance to Victims of Crime**



Recommended Motion:

THAT the Board finds that all provisions of the *Assistance to Victims of Crime Board Policy Monitoring Report* have been complied with.

Assistance to Victims of Crime

I hereby submit my monitoring report on your Ends Policy, Assistance to Victims of Crime, according to the schedule set out. I certify that the information contained in this report is true.

Signed: _____
Chief of Police

Date: _____

Broadest Policy Provision:

The police are often the first point of contact within the criminal justice system for victims of crime, who have a wide range of needs based on their own unique circumstances. Having experienced the trauma of being victimized, all victims deserve special care and attention.

It is the policy of the Durham Regional Police Services Board that the Durham Regional Police Service will extend victims of crime an abundance of respect, understanding and appropriate levels of support and services.

“Citizens or visitors who are victims of a crime in Durham Region are referred to appropriate support services.”

Interpretation of the Chief of Police:

It is my interpretation that the Board End of Community Safety is directly related to Section 1, principle 4 of the *Police Services Act, 1990* - "*The importance of respect for victims of crime and understanding of their needs*". The Victim Services Board End is also responsive to sec 4(2) (3) of the *Police Services Act* regarding adequate and effective police services involving: assistance to victims of crime. This Board End encompasses all manner of victim services either provided directly or indirectly by the Durham Regional Police Service.

It is my interpretation of this policy that it requires that victims of crime receive and/or are referred in a timely manner to the appropriate level of support in accordance to the severity of the crime and the vulnerability and needs of the victim. While providing service to every victim of a crime is an ideal, neither the Service nor the related community agencies currently have the capacity to meet that ideal. Therefore it is my interpretation that the "appropriate levels of support and services" includes the option of providing no referral to victims of very minor offences, or for those who decline or apparently are not in need of such support. Further it is my interpretation that referral means providing the victim's information (only with the victim's approval) to other victim service providers.

It is my further interpretation that in every case where we provide a Crown Brief to the Ministry of the Attorney General that this constitutes de facto referrals to Victim Witness Assistance Program (VWAP) of the Ministry of the Attorney General.

It is my further interpretation that "appropriate levels of support and services" is one that refers the victim to an agency that provides services in the field or specialty that the victim needs and that said agency either has a memorandum of understanding with us or is funded and/or regulated by the Federal, provincial or municipal levels of government.

Compliance Statement:

I report **compliance** with this policy.

Data Support:

VICTIM SERVICES YEAR END STATISTICS			
	2009	2010	2011
Referrals Provided to Clients			
Bereavement and Grief Counselling	113	130	170
Counselling Services (i.e.: family, individual, men, women, youth)	1,251	1,223	1,551
Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Service (i.e.: DVSACC, DRCC and DRIVEN)	522	504	262
Elder and Vulnerable Adult Services (i.e.: Alzheimer Society, Durham Access to Care)	62	167	241
Employment, Education and Housing (non-emergency) Services	15	19	37
Financial Assistance / Injuries Compensation and the Victim Quick Response Program (VQRP)	78	100	88
Lawyers / Legal and Justice Services (i.e.: Luke's Place, Legal Aid and VWAP)	743	852	1,017
Mental Health Services (i.e.: Durham Mental Health Services)	146	134	164
Immigration and Interpreter Services (i.e.: Women's Multicultural Resource and Counselling)	4	2	4
Shelters and Emergency Housing (i.e.: Bethesda, Denise, Herizon House, YWCA and Youth)	190	205	121
Services outside the Durham Region	23	61	63
Services Provided to Clients			
Phone contact made	n/a	n/a	1,841
Information Package / Home letter mail out	1,684	1,894	2,426
Declined services	171	127	195
Additional Stats			
Females assisted	n/a	3,049	3,370
Males assisted	n/a	927	1,311
Client called in for assistance (not directly related to a current GO incident)	n/a	796	933
Officer requested VSU contact a victim (i.e.: Major Crime, Traffic Management, Divisions or Units)	44	59	20
Total number of Versadex reports followed up	3,781	4,490	4,578

Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Service

The lower number in this category is the result of more referrals going to counselling agencies other than the Domestic Violence Sexual Assault Care Centre (DVSSAC). Currently there is a significant waiting period for counselling through the DVSSAC and it is important to arrange the required counselling for these victims in a timely manner.

Elder and Vulnerable Adult Services

The increase in referrals in this category was the result of assistance provided to the Senior Support Coordinator by the officer assigned to Victim Services who assisted with managing the work .

Shelter and Emergency Housing

The decreased number in this category was the result of appropriate counselling services being provided to victims requiring assistance in dealing with issues which allowed these persons to remain in their homes.

Information Packages/ Home Letter Mail Out

There was a significant increase in the number of victim assistance packages sent to victims of crime this year because of a new policy of sending information packages to victims even if they had been contacted by telephone by our police service. This new process ensures that victims receive essential information in a form that they can refer to as required.

Services Outside Durham

This category relates to the number of victims who reside outside of Durham Region and who are referred to agencies for assistance such as VCARS operating in their own communities.

The Durham Regional Police Victim Services Unit (VSU) is the primary provider of support to victims of crime within the Service. In 2011 the unit was a hybrid model of sworn police officers and civilian specialists from Victims Services of Durham Region, a program of the Ministry of the Attorney General (MAG).

During the course of 2011 the VSU followed up with 4578 Versadex reports. The VSU ensured that the needs of our community members were met in each instance either by the provision and/or offering of direct support, advice, or consultation. Of the 4578 cases, 3655 referrals were made to our Community Partners for further intervention, assistance or support as required. In 195 cases victims declined any assistance however in all cases they were sent an information package.

In 2011 the Durham Regional Police Service provided 12,071 prosecutorial briefs to the Durham Region Crown Attorney's Office. Each brief constitutes a referral to the Victim Witness Assistance Program (VWAP – MAG).

The Victim Services Unit and the Professional Standards Unit indicate that our Service has not received any complaints, from victims or our community partners, regarding the provision of victim assistance services.