Review of Women’s Transition Housing and Supports Program

Consolidated Report: Key Findings and Recommendations
PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This report presents consolidated findings and recommendations of a review of the continuum of housing and support services in British Columbia for women and children fleeing violence. This review follows a client-centred approach, in that the report’s findings and recommendations are based on the unique needs of women that the Transition Housing Program aims to serve. The enclosed findings are based on consultations with service providers, clients, funders, government officials and key stakeholders that make up the women’s transition housing sector in British Columbia. The review was commissioned by BC Housing in partnership with the BC Society of Transition Houses, and was overseen by a Steering Committee of service providers representatives selected from across the province.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

On August 1, 2009, administration of the Transition Housing Program (THP) was transferred from the Ministry of Housing and Social Development to BC Housing as part of a Provincial initiative to strengthen links to the continuum of housing for women and children fleeing violence. The THP includes Transition Houses, Safe Homes and Second Stage Housing for women and their dependent children fleeing violence, and aims to offer integrated services to women and children that include community-based outreach and counseling programs coordinated by the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General.

Over the past several years, the women's transition housing sector has reported an increased demand for services and a need for additional training and supports. To date, primary funding for THP services has been provided through separate contacts with service providers, in an effort to address the immediate needs of women and children fleeing violence in their communities. One result of this lack of a comprehensive program and funding model is that there is currently no standard framework under which to properly plan, allocate and account for program resources. As a result, there is a wide range in the types, levels and processes for service delivery across the province and this has created a general sense of inequity and lack of accountability throughout the sector.

Following the transfer of program responsibility, BC Housing and the BC Society of Transition Houses came together to discuss ways to improve the delivery of women’s transitional housing and support services. The two organizations subsequently agreed to sponsor an independent review to evaluate the demand and unmet need for services, and to develop a framework that would guide and account for the future allocation of program resources. Key to the success of this review would be the participation of women’s transition housing providers in meaningful and focused consultations.

Many steps will likely be taken to build an effective and integrated system of funders, service providers and stakeholders across the women’s transition housing sector in British Columbia. The first step – this review and its recommendations – is expected to establish the THP goals.

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1 The term “violence” is used rather than “abuse” as this is the most widely accepted term in the Violence Against Women sector in BC.
and coordinate efforts to help ensure women and children fleeing violence are supported and linked to safe, affordable housing options and support services.

**Methodology**

This review was supported and overseen by two key committees: an Oversight Committee that established the direction and provided overall guidance and support for the review; and a Steering Committee made up of service provider representatives of the transition housing sector that participated in the design of the review and played a key role in the consultations and review of recommendations.

The findings presented in this report were developed in large part through consultations with service providers, funders, clients and key stakeholders that make up the Transition Housing Sector. In total, more than 32 interviews were conducted, and several meetings were held with Steering Committee representatives to receive input and feedback on key issues and recommendations. A list of participants included in the consultation process is attached as Appendix A to this report.

In addition to these interviews and meetings, two electronic surveys were administered to collect opinions on a range of topics, including women’s needs, program gaps, and existing services. More than 700 survey responses were received from the Violence Against Women (VAW) sector, including participation from key stakeholders such as police and community based victim services, members of Ending Violence Association and front-line staff working in the broader VAW sector. A copy of the two surveys and a summary of survey results are attached as Appendix B.

Opinions from women who have accessed THP services were also gathered through focus groups and interviews held in Nanaimo and Smithers, and the views of front-line staff working in these communities was incorporated into this review. A literature review of best practices regarding women fleeing violence was completed, and were incorporated into consultations and used to inform the recommendations. An inventory of sources is attached as Appendix F.

Recommendations presented in this report were reviewed with the Steering Committee to ensure issues were presented accurately and with an appropriate context, and consideration was given towards how to ensure future changes may be implemented through a series of next steps.
Key Findings

The economic, social, cultural and demographic status of women who access Transition House Program services has changed significantly in recent years. Statistics show that in 2004, BC has the second highest rate of women (9%) reporting violence in Canada. The increasing diversity of the population combined with the rate at which women are now accessing services across the province is placing a significant demand on existing resources and service providers to respond to the changing nature of required service delivery. At times, this diversity has put the needs of some women in direct conflict with those of other women, such as providing shelter to senior women without children while sheltering young women with children. Differences in organizational philosophy, agency to agency, determine many women’s access to THP services, particularly in cases of abuse by someone other than an intimate partner or where women have concurrent issues with mental health or substance use. Other special needs can also preclude women from shelter through the Transition Housing Program, such as disabilities. Targeted staff training, small changes to facilities and amendments to agency policies would improve access for many of the diverse groups of women fleeing violence.

Within each THP program type (Safe Homes, Transition Houses, Second/Third Stage Houses), there is substantial variation in what services are provided. Some of this variation is due to the differences by community of what other programs are in place to support women fleeing violence and the demographics of women seeking service. However, many participants in this review identified service level variations as an outcome of funding decisions made amongst regions and contract managers over the years. The implication of this variation in service is that not all women are able to access the services they need to deal with the violence they are experiencing. An equitable, transparent funding model which can reduce disparity in services yet still be flexible to individual community contexts is needed.

Barriers to referral between Violence Against Women agencies due to differences in service framework and approach, as well as staff lack of knowledge of community programs and services, were both identified as coordination related obstacles for women fleeing violence accessing the services they needed. Improvements to coordination and referral between Violence Against Women services, as well as with related social, health and justice services, are necessary for women to be able to have real choices in dealing with their violence.

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2 The latest year for which data is available.
Many women who request service at a transition house are not able to be sheltered simply due to space. Lack of space for women or their families resulted in over 6,000 women being turned away from Transition Houses in 2008/09. Supports are needed for transition houses to appropriately place women fleeing violence who seek shelter and are turned away due to insufficient space.

Women leaving the Transition Housing Program face significant challenges in finding a safe and affordable place to live. According to the sector-wide survey, THP staff estimate that, on average, 27% of women leaving transition houses become homeless, including staying with family and friends. Almost one third (average estimate of 30%) return to their previous address, an outcome which includes either returning to their home with the abuser removed, returning to their home with their violence situation resolved, or, most likely, returning to their home and to the abusive situation. Greater supports are needed, both within and without the Transition Housing Program, to help women fleeing violence access affordable housing.

**Summary of Recommendations**

Following best practices regarding the design and delivery of social services, the recommendations presented in this report are intended to address the unique needs of women fleeing violence. Specifically, the recommendations are intended to address the issues uncovered through consultations with the sector and data collected through surveys and administrative systems.

The recommendations are organized into the following categories:

**Program Framework:** Recommendations specific to the Transition Housing Program Framework and its components. These recommendations are those which are expected to be met with current funding levels, though a redistribution of funding may be necessary. (Recommendations listed alphanumerically, e.g. P1, P2)

**Implementation:** Recommendations to support the development and implementation of the Program Framework. These include actions BC Housing can take, such as improvements in training, reporting, and integration with the housing continuum.

**External to BC Housing:** Recommendations which are outside BC Housing’s control, requiring inter-ministerial partnerships or policy changes, yet necessary for successful outcomes for women accessing the Transition Housing Program.
Requiring Additional Resources: Longer term recommendations to allocate any additional funding, should it become available.

Program Framework

Recommendation P1: Confirm the core services for the program and update contracts with transition houses, safe homes and second stage houses.

Recommendation P2: Develop separate funding models for safe homes, transition houses and second stage houses to fund core services and adjustments for capacity differences between communities.

Recommendation P3: Establish service standards and practice guidelines for how Transition Housing Program agencies deliver core services.

Recommendation P4: Require service providers to deliver intake and referral services to women presenting with mental health and/or substance use issues.

Recommendation P5: Update program eligibility guidelines to ensure young women leading adult lives have access to transition housing services.

Recommendation P6: Expand the mandate of Transition Houses beyond “intimate partner violence” to include women fleeing any form of violence.

Implementation

Recommendation I1: Create an Advisory Council of Transition Housing Program agencies to support implementation of recommendations.

Recommendation I2: Partner with BC Society of Transition Houses to develop training materials available through the Internet, and implement a regional train-the-trainer model to deliver on-site training.

Recommendation I3: Update the BC Government’s Data Entry System (DES) to include outcomes-based reporting and update data entry guidelines to ensure consistent reporting of data provided by agencies.

Recommendation I4: Update the Priority Placement Program form to address concerns raised by BCSTH and THP providers.

Recommendation I5: Support transition houses to move towards best practices in facility design to better meet the needs of the diverse groups of women fleeing violence.
External to BC Housing

Recommendation E1: Strengthen provincial inter-ministry partnerships and direction for regional and community level operational protocols to improve coordination and integration of services for women.

Recommendation E2: Work with the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General to review and clarify roles and responsibilities for outreach services for women fleeing violence.

Recommendation E3: Transfer Community Education and Awareness contracts to the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General.

Recommendation E4: Consult with the broader VAW sector to confirm common principles that guide the design and delivery of women-centred services.

requiring additional resources

Recommendation R1: Increase access to post-transition house supports.

Recommendation R2: Develop a rental subsidy program for women fleeing violence.

Recommendation R3: Increase the allowable length of stay in safe homes from “typically no more 5 days” to “typically no more than 10 days”.

Recommendation R4: Support transition houses to appropriately place women fleeing violence who seek shelter and are turned away due to insufficient space.

Recommendation R5: Address regional disparity in access to second stage supports for women.

Recommendation R6: Continue to invest in permanent social housing, as part of the suite of affordable housing solutions.

Recommendation R7: Develop a case management tool to improve intake, information sharing and referral requirements.

Recommendation R8: Undertake a Strategic Planning process for the Transition Housing Program, building on the findings of the review process.
Next Steps

The Steering Committee prioritized the following three next steps to leverage the positive working relationship between BC Housing and service providers and build capacity throughout the sector to achieve the changes required to assist women and children to cope with violence:

1. Establish an Advisory Council to guide the development of the Transition Housing Program Framework and Funding Model. Terms of Reference for the Advisory Council need to be established, including mandate, membership, accountability, workplan and timeline.

2. Complete the Transition Housing Program framework, including a completed logic model, clarified roles and responsibilities and service standards. The development of the Program Framework should be done in consultation with the sector.

3. Complete the development of the Funding Model, including establishing clear criteria for what costs are included in each section. This will also require a definition of the time required to deliver core services, as well as tools and processes to apply for community adjustment funds.
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1.0 BACKGROUND

On August 1, 2009, administration of the Transition Housing Program (THP) was transferred from the Ministry of Housing and Social Development to BC Housing as part of a Provincial initiative to strengthen links to the continuum of housing for women and children fleeing violence. The THP includes Transition Houses, Safe Homes and Second Stage Housing for women and their dependent children fleeing violence, and aims to offer integrated services to women and children that include community-based outreach and counseling programs coordinated by the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General.

Over the past several years, the women’s transition housing sector has reported an increased demand for services and a need for additional training and supports. To date, primary funding for THP services has been provided through separate contacts with service providers, in an effort to address the immediate needs of women and children fleeing violence in their communities. One result of this lack of a comprehensive program and funding model is that there is currently no standard framework under which to properly plan, allocate and account for program resources. As a result, there is a wide range in the types, levels and processes for service delivery across the province and this has created a general sense of inequity and lack of accountability throughout the sector.

Following the transfer of program responsibility, BC Housing and the BC Society of Transition Houses came together to discuss ways to improve the delivery of women’s transitional housing and support services. The two organizations subsequently agreed to sponsor an independent review to evaluate the demand and unmet need for services, and to develop a framework that would guide and account for the future allocation of program resources. Key to the success of this review would be the participation of women’s transition housing providers in meaningful and focused consultations.

Many steps will likely be taken to build an effective and integrated system of funders, service providers and stakeholders across the women’s transition housing sector in British Columbia. The first step – this review and its recommendations – is expected to establish the THP goals and coordinate efforts to help ensure women and children fleeing violence are supported and linked to safe, affordable housing options and support services.
2.0 REVIEW OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

At the outset of this initiative, the Steering Committee worked to clearly define expectations, objectives, and required deliverables for the outcome of the review. Shared objectives for the review, key components with respect to how the review was carried out, and the main deliverables arising from the process are set out below.

The objectives of the review included:

• Understand and incorporate the expertise of service providers, clients, key stakeholders and administration staff in assessing the needs of the sector;

• Outline the design of a THP framework for delivering housing and services supporting women and children fleeing violence based on best practices, expert opinion and information available from other jurisdictions;

• Identify the key elements for development of a standardized funding approach and program guidelines for future contractual agreements;

• Enhance communications and linkages between sector stakeholders; and

• Incorporate the needs and opinions of clients into the design and delivery of future programming.

Key components of the review were:

• Identify and analyze existing THP capacity in communities across British Columbia;

• Conduct a review and gap analysis of unmet need and demand within the THP;

• Identify priority areas for adjustments, or for enhanced services, should funding be provided;

• Assess services and programs currently offered by other provincial and federal agencies as they relate to assisting THP service providers, taking into account the inter-provincial differences in legislative frameworks and policies;

• Make recommendations to manage within the budget provided for this program;

• Review and analyze best practices in housing and supporting women and children fleeing violence across the province, and in funding service providers;

• Consult with the sector, other funders supporting programs for women and children fleeing violence, and BC Housing staff and make recommendations on the over-arching principles, goals, outcomes and core services of the THP, including what services should not be funded under the THP;

• Recommend program guidelines for agencies funded by the THP;
• Work with BC Housing staff to develop a one to two year transition plan to migrate agencies into the program framework and revised funding model; and

• Identify means by which the THP can ensure links to other Violence Against Women (VAW) programs are maintained and enhanced, and recommend priorities for ongoing collaboration and coordination between BC Housing and the sector regarding VAW issues.

The major deliverables for this review were:

• Consultations with the women’s transition housing and support services sector, including service providers, key stakeholders, clients and BC Housing staff;

• Report on key findings from the Needs and Demand review (Phase 1), including recommendations impacting available funding;

• Document key elements of a program design framework (i.e. principles, goals, outcomes), in consultation with BC Housing and the review’s Steering Committee;

• Develop a consolidated final report, including recommendations; and

• Provide support for revisions to funding agreement and assist with the preparation of a transition plan.

The figure below illustrates the approach and timeline for the review:

**Figure 1: Review process**
This review was supported and overseen by two key committees: an Oversight Committee that established the direction and provided overall guidance and support for the review; and a Steering Committee made up of service provider representatives of the transition housing sector that participated in the design of the review and played a key role in the consultations and review of recommendations. The figure below shows the membership and relationship between the two committees:

![Diagram showing project structure and relationships]

Figure 2: Review project structure and relationships
3.0 APPROACH

The findings presented in this report were developed in large part through consultations with the service providers, funders, clients and key stakeholders that make up the Transition Housing Sector. In total, more than 30 interviews were conducted, and several meetings were held with Steering Committee representatives to receive input and feedback on key issues and recommendations. A list of participants included in the consultation process is attached as Appendix A to this report.

In addition to these interviews and meetings, two electronic surveys were administered to collect opinions on a range of topics, including women’s needs, program gaps, and existing services. More than 700 survey responses were received from the Violence Against Women (VAW) sector, including participation from key stakeholders such as police and community based victim services, members of Ending Violence Association and front-line staff working in the broader VAW sector. A copy of the two surveys and a summary of survey results are attached as Appendix B.

Opinions from women who have accessed THP services were also gathered through focus groups and interviews held in Nanaimo and Smithers, and the views of front-line staff working in these communities was incorporated into this review. A literature review of best practices regarding women fleeing violence was completed, and were incorporated into consultations and used to inform the recommendations. An inventory of sources is attached as Appendix F.

This report was presented to the Steering Committee for review and comment to ensure issues were presented accurately and with an appropriate context, and consideration was given towards how to ensure future changes may be implemented through a series of next steps.
4.0 ORGANIZATION OF THIS REPORT

The following sections of this report first summarize the findings of the review relating to the state of the Transition Housing Sector: how the Transition Housing Program fits into other services for women fleeing violence, what services are offered through the THP, the capacity of the THP across BC to meet the needs of women seeking service, and the housing outcomes of women leaving the THP.

The following section, Client Needs, goes into further detail on the needs of women fleeing violence, including unique needs by nine groups identified through literature and consultations with the sector. The client needs section also reports on sector priorities and areas of unmet demand identified through the sector consultation.

The Recommendations section is organized in four areas: recommendations related to the program framework, those required to implement the program framework, recommendations which are external to BC Housing, requiring inter-ministerial or other collaboration and finally, recommendations which require additional funding.

The final section, Next steps, presents the Steering Committee’s priorities for action following the close of the review.
5.0 THE TRANSITION HOUSING SECTOR

Broadly speaking, the Transition Housing Program sector is a network of funders, service providers and key stakeholders that aim to assist women and their children fleeing violence in British Columbia. The THP sector in BC has evolved from being made up of several smaller, independent organizations to one that now consists of a range of different organizations – often differing in type, size, governance, mandate, culture and philosophy. Today, the THP sector consists of more than 110 safe homes, transition houses or second/third stage houses. Ninety-nine (99) of these facilities are now funded through BC Housing. The Transition Housing Program provides approximately $30 million in funding to safe homes ($1.2 million), transition houses ($27.7 million), and second stage houses ($1.4 million).

The location of current THP-sector services is illustrated in the following figure:

![Figure 3: Location of THP-sector services](image-url)

The regional breakdown of current THP sector services is set out in the following table:
Transition Houses are typically staffed 24/7 and provide crisis intervention, emotional support, short-term housing and practical assistance in negotiating justice, social and health systems. Safe Homes are located in small, remote areas and provide crisis intervention, support and shorter-stay housing, while Second Stage Housing provides longer-term housing and support, typically following a stay in a Transition House or Safe Home.

The THP sector in BC is considered by many to be a leader amongst Canadian jurisdictions. For example, the THP sector in BC provides a range of transition housing options, such as safe homes and second stage housing, which enables greater flexibility in addressing the unique needs of smaller and more rural communities. However, increasing social issues and economic challenges are placing greater strain on existing resources and housing infrastructure. Compounded by increasing demand for accountability for public funding, there is a real need to recognize and address a range of pressures on the THP sector, such as the increasing complexity of clients’ needs and unmet demand for affordable housing and personal supports.

As illustrated below, the Transition Housing Program is supported by and works with a range of stakeholders, including:

- Umbrella organizations such as the BC Society of Transition Houses, Ending Violence Association of BC, BC Non-Profit Housing Association and ShelterNet BC.
- Related services including Violence Against Women services (e.g. Stopping the Violence, Police Based Victim Services, Community Based Victim Services, Children Who Witness Abuse) as well as other social service organizations serving Aboriginal, multicultural, disability, intersecting issues, and youth communities and other public health, justice and social services.
• Permanent Housing partnerships, including Non-profit housing providers, private market landlords and public housing managed by BC Housing.

• Funding agencies including BC Housing, the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General and local governments.

**Figure 5: THP Stakeholders**

### 5.1 Service Continuum

The continuum of services available to women and women with children fleeing violence often include five key types of services – screening and assessment, shelter, personal supports and referral, professional services, housing. This continuum can be further organized into three broad program areas: requesting service; temporary housing and core services; and, service linking and permanent housing.

**Request Service**

Most BC women fleeing violence first connect with Transition Housing Program services on their own. Half (50%) of BC women accessing shelters for abused women are self-referred. Nine percent were referred by another community agency and 7% by another transition house. As women often find the services without formal referral, it is important that information be widely available about how to connect directly with houses.

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3 Information on referrals is recorded on the DES form, which does not provide an option for reporting referrals through VictimLink. THP staff report anecdotally that many women are referred through VictimLink.
**Temporary Housing and Core Services**
Safe Homes, Transition Houses and Second Stage Houses provide a range of services that vary from house to house and from community to community. Services and programs have often been developed in consideration of what other services for women fleeing violence are present, or absent, in the community. Though emergency shelters are not funded through the Transition Housing Program, many women fleeing violence use these shelters as part of their pathway to safety.

**Service Linking and Permanent Housing**
Public services include those which women fleeing violence often require in addition to personal supports provided by transition housing providers. Transition housing clients may be referred to services such as legal advocacy and victim’s services delivered by providers of justice, mental health, therapy, counselling and detox services. To help address the challenge of locating permanent housing for women fleeing violence, a variety of programs are available to assist women move from transition housing to more stable and longer term housing.

A conceptual illustration of this service continuum is set out below.

![Figure 6: Continuum of services](image)

Though the image above suggests a linear relationship, this is not necessarily how many women experience transition housing programs. It is important to recognize that many women return to shelters multiple times, often as a result of the same abusive relationship. In a 2008 survey of shelters for abused women in BC, 25% of respondents had previously used the shelter.
these, 30% had been there once before, 25% had been there two or more times; 6% had been there five or more times. Research suggests that women accessing transition houses may be at different stages of coping with an abusive relationship, including:

- Seeking time out from an abusive relationship (where the woman usually returns);
- Leveraging power in an unequal relationship (e.g. where a woman is attempting to get her partner to stop drinking, or to start counseling);
- Making decisions about the future of the relationship (e.g. where a woman needs space to think about leaving because of fear or escalation of violence); and
- Transitioning away from the relationship (where the woman has made decision to leave).

The implications of providing service to women at a variety of stages in dealing with an abusive relationship is that not all women will progress in a linear fashion through services, or have an end goal of leaving the relationship. This therefore requires THP agencies to be flexible in the services they offer, meeting women where they are at.

5.2 Programs and Services

The heart of a women-centred service delivery model is that women accessing services have the right to choose which services best meet their unique needs. The role of the service provider, in part, is to present the range of service options and support the woman in receiving those chosen services.

The THP offers a range of services to women fleeing violence. Included in this review was a survey that requested service providers in each of the three program areas to identify THP services they provided. The following table summarizes the results, and highlights the diversity of services delivered under the THP. Key findings are discussed in the sections that follow.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Most / All agencies</th>
<th>Some agencies</th>
<th>Few agencies</th>
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<td>Transition House</td>
<td>Second Stage</td>
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<td>Transition Houses</td>
<td>Second/Third Stage Houses</td>
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<td>Assist residents in understanding and coping with the effects of abusive cycles and family violence</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parenting support</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structured play / educational programs for resident children</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market rental housing listings</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laundry facilities</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addictions support</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respite for resident parents</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter for women not fleeing abuse as a primary issue</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services for former residents</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child care</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation for pets</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 7: Services provided by THP agencies**

Within each program type (Safe Homes, Transition Houses, Second/Third Stage Houses), there is substantial variation in what services are provided. Some of this variation is related to the different needs of each community, other programs in place to support women fleeing violence, and the demographics of women seeking service. However, many participants in this review
identified service level variations as an outcome of funding decisions made amongst regions and contract managers over the years. As a result, while all agencies would like to deliver certain services they see as core to women fleeing violence, not all agencies have been provided funding to do so. This point is highlighted in the chart below, which shows that the variation in funding per bed for 10-bed houses across BC, ranging from $33,265 to $64,000 per bed.

![Per-bed funding for ten-bed houses across BC](image)

Figure 8: Per-bed funding for ten-bed houses across BC

**Safe Homes**

The most substantial variation in safe home services is in the facilities. Many BC safe homes now own a housing unit(s) where they can temporarily shelter women. They may also use hotels or residential homes, if appropriate. Some use only hotels, and a small number use only residential homes.

There is only one other province in Canada with a safe home program and little literature in the area, so it is difficult to assess best practices, but through the consultation safe home providers in BC reported that in most communities an apartment model would be more cost effective and provide better service to women. However, not all communities have been able to purchase a housing unit.

The other significant variation in safe home services is the staffing model. Some have 24/7 on call, others are only on call during the daytime. Some have mandatory overnight
accompaniment, some have this as an option, others cannot provide overnight accompaniment at all. There are innovations in place in some safe homes to work with transition houses or other safe homes to deliver the overnight on call service more efficiently; the issue is not how the service is delivered, but whether it is delivered at all.

**Transition Houses**

Most of the variation in service delivery in transition houses relates to how or to what extent services are provided, rather than if the service is provided at all. For example, some may typically provide accompaniment only to certain services, but all transition houses provide some degree of accompaniment to women fleeing violence. However there are at least three areas where some services seen as core for women fleeing violence are not delivered in all houses.

- First, all transition houses are contracted to provide 24 /7 staffing, but a small number do not do so.
- Second, while most transition houses provide some degree of child support work, many are not contracted or funded to do so. The number of hours of child support work varies substantially agency to agency. Five agencies report no child support hours on their DES statistics for 2008-09. What services the child support worker provides varies again (structured play and education programs, child care, respite care, counseling, etc.)
- Third, almost one quarter of agencies responding to the Agency survey reported that they did not conduct risk assessments. Research has highlighted the importance of risk screening or assessment as part of safety planning for women fleeing violence. A risk assessment requires information on both the offender and the victim which is not available to THP staff. Yet it is important that THP staff identify risks to women’s safety (and any children). The Ministry of Public Safety and the Solicitor General is currently exploring roles around risk assessment and will work with the broad VAW sector to share findings and help to standardize language around risk screening, assessment and safety planning.

Finally, some transition houses report that they sometimes ask their women support worker staff to provide services for which they are not funded or trained to provide, because women fleeing violence need the service and, often, it is not otherwise available in their community. A common example of this is women support workers providing legal advocacy (distinct from advocating to help a woman access legal aid). Providing legal advocacy is not a core service for which transition houses are funded.

**Second stage houses**
At least half the second stage houses in the province do not receive operational funding through the Transition Housing Program. Some of these houses are funded through other government programs. Many offer a limited number and depth of service, primarily providing safe, affordable shelter. Unlike THP funded second stage houses, non-THP funded second stage houses usually do not have a staff person onsite. Women in non-THP funded second stage houses, if they access VAW services related to their housing at all, usually go to the transition house to access them.

5.3 Community Capacity

Across BC, there are approximately 10 shelter beds for every 100,000 women. In 2007-2008, nearly 17,000 women and children accessed these shelters, of which 12,292 women and children were admitted to transition houses, 746 to safe homes, 534 to second stage houses, and 3,330 to emergency shelters or women’s emergency centres. Following a policy decision in 2005 to expand transition housing services, it is estimated that 95% of women in BC now have access to Transition House or Safe Home services within one hour of their home.

The Transition Housing Program provides valuable service for thousands of women and children fleeing violence across BC every year. Yet over half of women and children (56%) who request service from the Transition Housing Program are not sheltered. Only two percent are later admitted from a waitlist. The primary reasons for not providing shelter are:

- capacity (number of beds and rooms available, as well as current mix of residents in the house);
- the woman chooses not to stay;
- organizational philosophy and interpretation of mandate; and,
- special needs which agencies and staff cannot meet.

The figure which follows provides a snapshot of women and children accessing transition houses in 2008-09 (not including safe homes, second stage housing or women-only emergency shelters). Key facets of this snapshot include:

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4 Transition Homes in Canada: National, Provincial and Territorial Fact Sheets, Statistics Canada, 2007-08
5 Province Announces New Women’s Transition House Funding, Jan. 26, 2005
**Request Service:** Based on operational data collected from service providers by BC Housing⁶, nearly 37,000 women and their children requested services from transition houses. Half of these women reported referring themselves, reinforcing the importance of making information about transition houses easily available to women. Almost one third of the women requesting service did not have violence as a primary issue.

**Not Sheltered Immediately:** Approximately one in three women and one of every two children were immediately sheltered, and the majority of women not admitted to shelters for a range of reasons were referred to other services. The figure lists reasons women were not able to be sheltered: most commonly, lack of space (33%), followed by women’s primary reason for needing service being out of the agency’s mandate (27%). One in five women chose not to stay.

**Waitlisted:** A small number of women requesting service were waitlisted, and 2% of women and children not immediately sheltered were eventually sheltered. Most were sheltered within one week, but 25% waited over two weeks.

**Referred:** Women not sheltered immediately were most commonly referred to another transition house or to an emergency shelter. Not all houses have the staff time or resources to ensure women fleeing violence who are unable to be sheltered and are referred elsewhere are able to find shelter. For example, some houses are able to call around to other houses or shelters looking for a space, while keeping the woman on the other line, so she does not have to make multiple calls and go through repeated screenings and assessments.

**Sheltered:** Those who were sheltered were offered a variety of services, and the diagram which follows lists the percentage of women in transition houses across BC who chose to access each type of service. In addition to the in-house support, accompaniment and advocacy services offered to residents, a key service within transition houses is to refer, both for women who are sheltered and those who are not. Half of those who were admitted stayed for one week or less.

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⁶ STV Data Entry System Form collects monthly statistics
The figure above leads to and illustrates a number of key characteristics and challenges in the THP sector.

One key conclusion to be drawn from the above diagram is that many women who request service at a transition house are not able to be sheltered. These women are turned away for a variety of reasons. For example, almost one third of women who present for service are not fleeing violence. Differences in organizational philosophy, agency to agency, determine many women’s access to THP services, particularly in cases of violence by someone other than an intimate partner or where women have concurrent issues with mental health or substance use. Where agencies determine they cannot shelter women, they refer them to other resources, if they exist, but THP staff acknowledge that lack of shelter alternatives and staff time means that they do not know where many women who are not sheltered go.

In addition, many Transition Houses provide limited services to non-residents. For example, in 2008-09 Transition Houses provided support through 59,700 counseling or crisis calls from non-residents and 14,617 individual or group counseling sessions with non-residents. These
counseling sessions with non-residents are one way that Transition Houses can provide services to abused women even if they are not providing them shelter. Most non-resident services are funded and provided through the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, in a range of Violence Against Women service providers, including some which are also funded through the Transition Housing Program. These agencies often serve as a point of referral and entry for the Transition Housing Program, as well as delivering limited post-transition house outreach. It is therefore important that VAW services appropriately refer to Transition Housing Programs, and vice versa. Unfortunately, VAW providers of all types commonly report differences in framework and approach to service delivery as a barrier to partnerships and referral. Women’s outcomes vary with each community’s commitment to coordination and resources for coordination.

Another factor influencing the outcome for women fleeing violence is the overall capacity of her community to provide the services she needs, when she needs them. Within the Transition Housing Program itself, there is variation amongst agencies as to what services are provided and to what extent. For example, not all transition houses offer child support services or provide help navigating housing applications. Some safe homes require mandatory overnight accompaniment, others do not provide overnight accompaniment as an option. Some second stage houses offer limited to no staff support, primarily providing a safe and affordable place to live, while others offer up to 1,574 staff hours annually per bed in the house.

Finally, along with capacity within the Transition Housing Program, the capacity of the surrounding community to provide complementary services is important. Many THP providers report delivering some services considered outside of their mandate and expertise because they know women need these services and are not otherwise able to access them. In some cases, the services either do not exist or have long waitlists; in others, THP staff believes the service is inappropriate for women fleeing violence. The following chart demonstrates the THP Executive Directors’ perception of the existence, accessibility and appropriateness of VAW related services for women fleeing violence in their community.
5.4 Housing outcomes

A common issue raised through the consultation is the challenge women leaving the Transition Housing Program face in finding a safe and affordable place to live. According to the sector-wide survey, THP staff estimate that, on average, 27% of women leaving transition houses become homeless, including staying with family and friends. Almost one third (average estimate of 30%) return to their previous address, an outcome which includes either returning to their home with the abuser removed, returning to their home with their violence situation resolved, or, most likely, returning to their home and to the abusive situation.
While addressing housing options available to women after they leave the THP is not within the control of THP agencies, THP staff can and do improve the services they provide to help women find and successfully maintain housing. Some agencies already provide many or all of these services, including:

- supplying easy access to market housing listings;
- building inter-agency relationships with local non-profit and private market landlords;
- building tenancy skills;
- linking women to the various rental subsidy programs; and
- filling out the appropriate Priority Placement forms.

One indicator of success of supports for women fleeing violence is that women who do not choose to return to their relationships do not have to. Therefore, a review of the THP program must include some consideration of the other factors which enable women to access safe and affordable housing.

Second stage housing serves as one bridge between the short term stay at safe homes and transition houses and long term housing. Yet there are only second stage spaces for a small number of women leaving safe homes or transition houses, typically less than 10%.

A variety of rental subsidies are also available to help eligible women to afford private market housing. It must be noted, however, that most women fleeing violence are not able to access
any of these supports to find long term housing, and therefore are more likely to become homeless or return unwillingly to their abuser.

One subsidy, the Rental Assistance Program, is only available to women with dependent children who are working or receiving employment insurance, typically less than one quarter of women leaving transition houses. However, the review found that few THP staff were aware of the Rental Assistance Program. Many women leaving transition houses are eligible for Homeless Outreach Program subsidies, intended to prevent homelessness, but only a small number of subsidies are available throughout BC. Rent subsidies for people with disabilities can also be accessed by some women with disabilities fleeing violence.

Finally, the Priority Placement Program helps women fleeing violence move to the top of the housing registry waitlist for available BC Housing units, as well as a small number of non-profit managed units. The following table summarizes use of and outcomes related to the Priority Placement Program forms throughout BC.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Women who completed PPP form</th>
<th>Women housed in BC Housing managed housing</th>
<th>Women housed in other non-profit or co-op housing</th>
<th>Total women housed through PPP forms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>62 (24%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>68 (35%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>57 (34%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 12: Priority Placement Form performance measures**

5.5 Sector priorities

The sector-wide survey provided an essential touchstone for understanding the priorities of the Transition Housing Program sector. Based on findings from the first part of the consultation, a list of fourteen key issues was provided to survey respondents, who were asked to rank them in order of priority. The resulting order was as follows:

1. Access to housing after leaving transition housing services
2. Services for women with mental health and/or addictions issues
3. Outreach services for women fleeing violence after leaving transition houses
4. Women’s ability to become financially independent from abusers
5. Women in need not accessing Violence Against Women services
6. Wages for Violence Against Women staff
7. Inconsistent funding model
8. Training for Violence Against Women staff
9. Services for women needing shelter for whom violence is not the primary issue
10. Defined core services for all safe homes, transition houses and second stage houses
11. Provincial Coordination of Violence Against Women services
12. Regional Coordination of Violence Against Women services
13. Outcome measure evaluation framework which is valid for transition housing program
14. Physical layout or condition of transition housing

Lower ranking of certain issues does not mean current work in this area should be stopped. Rather, this data provides important feedback on where new work is needed.

Of note is the finding from the Sector-wide survey, including Transition Housing Program staff, that the Violence Against Women services in highest demand, which women are most likely to have to wait for, are outside the Transition Housing Program. The two programs staff participating in the Sector survey reported as being in highest demand were the Stopping the Violence and Children Who Witness Abuse counselling services. It is a testament to Transition Housing Program staff’s commitment to the needs of women fleeing violence, that they identified the most pressing need outside of their own programs.

To summarize, the Transition Housing Program provides a wide range of services to support women and any dependent children fleeing violence. There are indications that the current system lacks capacity to serve women fleeing violence, as seen, for example, in the number of women who request service but are not able to be sheltered. As the needs of women fleeing violence change, the program must also change to respond to these needs. Though the Transition Housing Program is not able to meet all of those needs, THP agencies need to work closely with related service agencies to support women fleeing violence to access the services they need.
6.0 CLIENT NEEDS

The economic, social, cultural and demographic status of women who access Transition House Program services has changed significantly in recent years. Statistics show that in 2004, BC had the second highest rate of women (9%) reporting violence in Canada. The increasing diversity of the population combined with the rate at which women are now accessing services across the province is placing a significant demand on existing resources and service providers to respond to the changing nature of required service delivery. At times, this diversity has put the needs of some women in direct conflict with those of other women, such as providing shelter to senior women without children while sheltering young women with children.

Not all women fleeing violence access support services. Some women do not even report violence to a friend. Based on the General Social Survey (GSS) conducted by Statistics Canada, 12% of women disclosing violence did so for the first time with the survey interviewer. When asked to report the reasons they did not make contact with social services for assistance in coping with violence, respondents indicated that they:

- did not want or need help from a social service agency (48%);
- felt the incident was too minor (21%);
- did not know service was available (5%); and
- lived in an area where no service was available (5%).

Amongst women who disclosed violence on the GSS, only 11% indicated that they accessed a transition house, and only 16% of those leaving abusive homes reported ending up in a shelter. The majority of women (83%) turned to informal supports, such as friends, family and neighbours.

Those women who chose to access Transition Houses indicated doing so because either they feared for the safety of themselves (or their children, friends or relatives), or they believed they did not have sufficient resources or relationships with family or friends to turn to for shelter and support. The lack of financial resources or a network of friends and family combined with the fear of harm coming to themselves and or their children helped to explain the difference in profile between women reporting violence and women accessing services. Of those women who accessed a Transition House, the following key statistics from a snapshot of residents of Canada’s shelters for abused women in 2008 found:

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7 The latest year for which data is available.
• Nearly half (48%) of women were admitted with their children; 21% did not have their children with them; other women did not have parenting responsibilities or did not disclose them.

• More than 9 in 10 women who left Canadian shelters for abused women did not plan to return to live with their spouses.

• Most abused women in shelters were fleeing the violence of a current spouse or partner, 12% were fleeing violence from a former spouse or partner; 6% from a relative; and 7% from someone they were dating or had dated.

6.1 Demographics of women served

One of the challenges in assessing the reach of the Transition Housing Program into the diverse communities of women fleeing violence is that neither the studies of women fleeing violence, nor the Transition Housing Program statistics capture comprehensive demographic information. Research data is available on frequency of spousal violence within certain age ranges, Aboriginal identity, sexual orientation, education and income levels. Transition Housing Program statistics capture only the numbers of women served by certain age ranges and the numbers of any children served.

In the VAW Sector survey conducted as part of this review, VAW staff was asked to estimate the percents of women they served within a variety of demographic groups. These groups are not mutually exclusive, e.g. an Aboriginal mother of a teenage boy living with her, would be counted three times in the Aboriginal, Women with Children and Women with Teenage boy categories, respectively. The reported percentages are the average of all estimates in each group. Results of these questions were analyzed to assess potential differences in service use by region and by Transition Housing Program agencies compared to other Violence Against Women service agencies. Detailed results of this analysis are reported in Appendix B.

While the results are only estimates, they present useful and previously unavailable information as to the demographics of women served by Violence Against Women services. Across the province, there were regional variations in estimates of percentages of some groups of women served. For example, there were much higher estimates of immigrant, refugee and non-status women served on the Lower Mainland and in the Fraser Valley than in other regions of the province. Looking only at a provincial average may not justify the need for targeted services in one region.
The largest group of women served was women with children living with them, an estimated 55%. The second largest group was women with substance use (estimated 47%). These two (not mutually exclusive) groups are frequently described in opposition to each other by THP staff; in order to keep services safe and appropriate for women and their children, services to women with substance use must be limited and regulated. The presence of women with children can itself be a deterrent for some other groups of women; older women (estimated 30%) can find it difficult to live communally with children who are appropriately loud and rambunctious. Similarly, women with children in the care of the Ministry of Children and Family Development (estimated 27%), may find it painful to live communally with children.

Some of the smaller groups may be a result of limited mandates and service accessibility. For example, many THP agencies would see fleeing violence related to gangs (estimated 6%) or sex work (estimated 11%) as outside of their mandate, and would not provide service to these women. Some THP contracts limit service to adult women, therefore preventing agencies from serving women under 19 (estimated 8%). Almost one third of BC Transition Housing Program facilities are not physically accessible, which may contribute to the lower number of women with disabilities receiving services (estimated 13%).

The following figure illustrates the various groups of women who access THP services, according to the results of this review.

Figure 13: Key characteristics, women served by THP services
Given the limited demographic data available on women fleeing violence, it is fair to conclude that the percentages of some groups of women served by the Transition Housing Program is comparable to the percentages experiencing violence (see chart below). Similarly, in the Sector-wide survey completed as part of this review, Transition Housing Program staff reported comparable estimates of percents of women served to the estimates of other Violence Against Women staff.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of Canadian women reporting spousal violence in General Social Survey</th>
<th>BC THP staff estimates % women served</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Young women (under 25) 9%</td>
<td>(under 19) 9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older women (over 55+) 17%</td>
<td>(over 45+) 30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal 21%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesbian/gay 1%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 14: Key groups served, Canada and BC

These statistics for women fleeing violence and women accessing support services such as Transition Houses highlight the challenge in reaching and providing services to women of all economic, social, cultural and demographic backgrounds. As part of this review, significant effort was placed into identifying the unique needs of women in BC who would be expected to benefit from services delivered either directly or indirectly through the THP. A review of the literature, consultations with service providers, clients, funders and key stakeholders, combined with the results from surveys of over 700 front line staff and managers, helped to distinguish between different groups of women fleeing violence in BC, and highlight the unique barriers each group faces to accessing and benefiting from THP services. These unique needs are described in more detail in the following sections.

6.2 Aboriginal women

According to best estimates from staff, across BC an average of 35% of women served through the Transition Housing Program were Aboriginal. Two in five respondents (41%) to the Sector wide survey conducted as part of this review reported that their agencies have programs or services targeted for Aboriginal women. The number of Aboriginal women served and the prevalence of appropriate programs varied by region, with a high concentration in the North (see chart below). In addition, it should be noted that some THP staff reported a concern that their services were not being accessed by Aboriginal women, often citing transportation challenges and lack of cultural competency in the agency.

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8 Most transition houses would serve women with a broader experience of abuse than spousal violence.
Aboriginal women are three times more likely to experience violence, and often experience more severe violence, than non-Aboriginal women. Despite this reality, the caseloads of many THP services do not reflect this higher-than-average need for service. Through consultations with staff and service providers, specific needs for Aboriginal women were identified as follows:

- staff with an understanding of indigenous cultural knowledge and sensitivity;
- culturally appropriate size and structure of existing facilities (e.g. big beds for bedsharing, more beds / room);
- indigenous staff;
- signals that Aboriginal women are welcome (e.g. Aboriginal art, cultural food, anti-racism policies);
- transportation to and from the transition house; and,
- longer stays due to additional challenges finding housing linked to racism.

There are differences of opinion about the need for Aboriginal managed transition housing. Some concerns include the reduction of anonymity and confidentiality, due to the increased likelihood that staff may know or be related to the women using the services, or their families. This is less of a concern in larger, urban settings.
6.3 Homeless women

Increasingly, transition houses are being asked to serve women who may have been homeless for some time (with their homelessness rooted in violence) but with different service and programming needs than women fleeing current domestic violence. These women may be fleeing non-traditional violence, such as sex work and gangs. THP staff estimated that on average, 33% of THP funded agencies had programs or services targeted for homeless women.

Some transition houses have created space for women not fleeing violence, but who are in need of safe shelter. This group often has unique needs and characteristics – for example, these women usually have a shorter length of stay than other client groups. As many mothers who are homeless have had their children apprehended, living communally with children can be difficult and painful for some of these women and they may need separate quiet spaces where children do not go. Homeless women without a history of violence typically require assistance securing financial resources and affordable housing. Some of these women have experienced historical violence, may still be destabilized by that violence and benefit from THP services, even if they no longer fear their ex-partner. In BC, in 2008-09, 32% of women requesting service at transition houses did not have violence as a primary issue.

6.4 Immigrant, Refugee and Non-status women

Immigrant, refugee and non-status women often have unique vulnerabilities. They can be in unfamiliar environments, and facing the loss of traditional supports of family, friends and advisors from their country of origin. Some women never experienced violence until arriving to Canada, when the adjustment to a new country disrupted family life. Other families come from societies which believe that men are entitled to dominate and “discipline” their wives. Depending on attitudes, some women who leave abusive relationships may be alienated by their cultural community. Mothers whose immigration to Canada was sponsored by their partner, have children here, and subsequently had their sponsorship cancelled, have no formal status in Canada and are not eligible for any financial support. Second stage houses, in particular, have noted an increasing number of these women, and that if they house them, they must cover their costs entirely.

Though immigrant, refugee and non-status women fleeing violence are more common in the Lower Mainland, THP agencies in each region of BC serve immigrant women (see chart below). Across BC, THP staff estimate serving, on average, 12% of immigrant women, though immigrant women are 28% of the provincial population. Providing adequate service to immigrant women
can be a particular challenge for rural and small communities. Across BC, 35% of THP staff report that their agency has a program or service targeted for immigrant women.

It is often challenging to raise awareness about the issues of violence against women and the supports available to avoid or respond to violence with immigrant women. English is typically not their first language and if women do not speak English, they need multi-lingual staff. Alternatively, some Transition Houses have developed community partnerships to gain access to translation services in languages not spoken by staff. In addition, and similar to Aboriginal women, barriers to immigrant, refugee and non-status women include: staff without cultural knowledge and/or sensitivity; lack of multicultural staff; and lack of signals that women of diverse cultures are welcome (e.g. cultural food and spices, halal and kosher pots and dishes, anti-racism policies).

6.5 Lesbian, Bisexual, Queer, Two-Spirited and Transgendered women

Women fleeing from same-sex relationships face some specific challenges. For example, women fleeing violence from a same-sex relationship may need additional security as it may be easier (depending on the house structure) for her partner to enter the house than it would be for a male partner to gain access to a house. While most, if not all, THP services will serve women fleeing violence from a same-sex relationship, there may be a potential for heightened conflict between straight and gay women living in a communal environment.
Transgendered women, both male to female and female to male, are not served by most transition houses, yet may experience violence and have nowhere to go. Some Transition Houses note serving transgendered women outside of the shelter.

THP staff estimate that women in same-sex relationships make up about 5% of the women served through the Transition House Program, and Transgendered women less than 2%.

6.6 Older women (45+)

Older women comprise a significant proportion of the women served by the THP sector. THP staff estimate that 28% of women they serve were older women (45+); in 2008-09, 5% of women who stayed overnight in the transition house were 55 or older. Older women are an increasing area of focus for VAW services.

Older women who experience violence have often been living with violence in their lives for an extended period of time, and as a result, have entrenched coping strategies. These women are likely to describe violence in a different manner than younger women, such as suggesting that “someone is hurting me”, and may not respond to current language and terms including “violence” or “violence”. This is important because older women are often reluctant to disclose the fact that they are being abused, particularly when the abuser is their child.

Older women may also experience challenges living communally - particularly with children - and require quiet spaces separate from those occupied by mothers with children. For example, older women may need separate sleeping areas and ensuite bathrooms with accessible facilities as many older women have disabilities. Older women typically need more personal supports accessing or managing medical issues. Stays at transition homes can create a situation where women become separated from professional caregivers or home support personnel that have provided care in their homes. To respond to these needs, the design of services and understanding of staff must incorporate a basic understanding and preparation for common medical issues.9

6.7 Women with disabilities

Women with disabilities experience violence at rates similar to that of ‘able-bodied’ women, but often stay in abusive relationships for a longer period of time. Women with disabilities tend to be de-sexualized, and reports of violence are often not taken seriously. Violence by primary caregivers poses an additional challenge for women with disabilities to report abuse. This likely

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9 BCSTH has training resources available specific to the needs of older women.
leads to a loss of needed care and can place additional strain on Transition Housing services to deliver extended care. Access to service is further complicated by the fact that nearly one-third of BC transition housing facilities are not properly equipped to support women with physical disabilities. In addition, few houses offer programming supports for women with hearing or visual impairments (e.g. brochures in Braille), and require staff with an understanding of the unique challenges of women with disabilities.

THP staff estimated that 15% of women they served had disabilities. In 2008-09, less than 1% of women not sheltered immediately who requested service from a Transition House were turned away due to lack of physical accessibility (63 women). More women may simply not have requested service, knowing the house in their area was not physically accessible.

### 6.8 Women with Mental Health and / or Substance Use Issues

Research has shown that the experience of violence can result in increased issues related to mental health and substance use. Many women experiencing violence turn to drugs and/or alcohol to cope with their abuse, and women challenged with mental health issues may turn to self-medication. Researchers are also increasingly aware of the impact violence has on the lives of women with chronic and persistent mental health problems. Across Canada, 21% of women accessing shelters for abused women cited mental health problems as one reason for seeking shelter; 22% cited drug and alcohol addiction.

Despite this need, hundreds of women are turned away from BC transition houses as their substance use or mental health issues have needs that cannot be met. In 2008-09, over 522 women fleeing violence were turned away from Transition Houses because their mental health needs could not be met, and an additional 396 women requesting service were turned away because a mental health issue was their primary concern, and were seen as outside agencies’ mandates. In the same year, over 963 women fleeing violence were turned away from Transition Houses because their substance use needs could not be met, and an additional 634 women requesting service were turned away because a substance use issue was their primary concern, and were seen as outside agencies’ mandates.

Women fleeing violence who also use substances or are challenged with mental health issues have no less right to services delivered in a respectful and non-judgmental way. Yet women with mental health or substance use issues feel unable to openly discuss their situations for fear of being prevented appropriate care and attention. It is important for service providers to
recognize the connections between violence and challenges with mental health and substance use.

There are successful models in BC where agencies have developed an integrated model of service provision that provides connections between points of service access – such as Transition Houses – and the system of professional health services, in order to provide women with intersecting issues the range of supports they need.

Some of the key characteristics of current service policies for these groups are summarized on the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THP agency policies on sheltering women with substance use&lt;sup&gt;10&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>THP agency policies on sheltering women with mental health issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• 43% described using harm reduction approaches, removing women for problematic behaviour, and most had rules preventing using onsite;</td>
<td>• 57% described sheltering women with severe mental health issues if, as assessed on a case by case basis, they were stable, able to live communally and care for themselves and any children. There were varying definitions of stable, including requirements to take medication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 37% described requiring women to abstain while staying in the house;</td>
<td>• 16% described providing temporary shelter if necessary, but referring as quickly as possible to local mental health services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 14% required abstention and women to be clean for up to 30 days before entering;</td>
<td>• 27% described typically not sheltering women with severe mental health issues, citing staff capacity and safety concerns for other residents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 6% reported that serving women with addictions was outside their mandate.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 17: Key characteristics, women served by THP services*

### 6.9 Young women (under 19)

In 2008-09, 4% of women who stayed overnight in a transition house were under 19. According to the best available information, Canadian women 15 to 24 are more likely to experience violence than older Canadian women. Young women needing transition house services are often living adult lives, and may be more likely to be fleeing non-traditional violence such as sex work. These young women need programming which responds to their diverse experiences of violence. Some young women living in transition houses are supported through funding and services from the Ministry of Children and Families, such as receiving temporary housing that assists with a transition from a foster care home.

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<sup>10</sup> The VAW survey used the term “addictions” instead of “substance use”.
Young women can be particularly challenged by house rules such as house curfew, requirements to go to bedrooms at a particular time, and lack of recreation activities in the house such as exercise equipment. Having young women in the house can also make it harder for houses to also accommodate mothers with older teenage boys.

The unique needs detailed for all the groups above are summarized in the figure below.

To summarize, the Transition Housing Program is accessed by diverse groups of women. As the demographics of women requesting service change, Transition Housing Program staff are challenged to balance the unique needs of all women, some of which can be in conflict with each other.
7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Following best practices regarding the design and delivery of social services, the recommendations presented in this report are intended to address the unique needs of women fleeing violence. Specifically, the recommendations are intended to address the specific issues uncovered through consultations with the sector and data collected through surveys and administrative systems.

The review process identified a range of issues related to consistency of service provision and service standards from agency to agency. The implication of these issues is that not all women are able to access the services they need to deal with the violence they are experiencing. These were often discussed in terms of the implication for women who have a negative experience at a VAW agency, that is, that she is less likely to seek help again. The recommendations flowing from these issues address regional disparity in funding and services and the capacities of THP staff to meet the diverse needs of women fleeing violence.

Finally, the review process examined how the Transition Housing Program connects with other Violence Against Women and related social, health and justice services. Though several of the recommendations flowing from this examination are out of scope for the Transition Housing Program agencies or its funding and support, the recommendations nonetheless are important to the successful outcomes for women fleeing violence. Timely access to counselling, victim’s services, legal aid, mental health services, substance use treatment, and affordable housing are all necessary for women to be able to have real choices in dealing with their abuse. The recommendations flowing from these issues relate to coordination between THP and other core services women fleeing violence may need.

The recommendations are organized into the following categories:

7.1 Program Framework: Recommendations specific to the Transition Housing Program Framework and its components. The Program Framework components, including mandate, eligibility, core services, service standards and funding model, will help to ensure that women fleeing violence through the Transition Housing Program are offered consistent and acceptable standards of service. These recommendations are those which are expected to be met with current funding levels, though a redistribution of funding may be necessary. (Recommendations listed alphanumerically, e.g. P1, P2)

7.2 Implementation: Recommendations to support the development and implementation of the Program Framework. These include actions BC Housing can take, such as
improvements in training, reporting, and integration with the housing continuum. (Recommendations listed alphanumerically, e.g. I1, I2)

7.3 External to BC Housing: Recommendations which are outside BC Housing’s control, requiring inter-ministerial partnerships or policy changes. (Recommendations listed alphanumerically, e.g. E1, E2)

7.4 Requiring Additional Resources: Longer term recommendations to allocate any additional funding, should it become available. (Recommendations listed alphanumerically, e.g. R1, R2)

7.1 PROGRAM FRAMEWORK

The following are recommendations specific to the Transition Housing Program Framework and its components. The Program Framework components, including mandate, eligibility, core services, service standards and funding model, will help to ensure that women fleeing violence through the Transition Housing Program are offered consistent and acceptable standards of service. These recommendations are those which are expected to be met with current funding levels, though a redistribution of funding may be necessary.

**Recommendation P1:**
Confirm the core services for the program and update contracts with transition houses, safe homes and second stage houses.

Funding inequity between service providers has resulted in differences in the level and mix of transition housing and support services delivered across the sector and available within BC communities. Responses to the survey of sector agencies and an analysis of operational data collected through BC Housing’s DES indicate that services considered ‘core’ to the program are not delivered in a consistent manner. In addition, service providers have indicated that what programs are actually delivered can be different than what is described in service delivery contracts. There is also considerable variation in how these core services are delivered across the province. The resulting gaps in service have in some cases led some women fleeing violence to have inconsistent experiences and be dissatisfied with the program.

Based on consultations with service providers and clients and through several discussions with Steering Committee members, services that should be considered core to Transition Houses and funded through BC Housing include:

- Shelter (including immediate hygiene needs, laundry facilities and food to prepare meals)
- Crisis intervention
- Safety planning and assessment
- Advocacy and accompaniment
- Support to assist resident parents and children in understanding and coping with the effects of abusive cycles and family violence
- Emotional support (group and individual, if needed)
- Transportation
- Information and proactive referrals to community resources
- Help to obtain food, clothing, identification, housing, healthcare and daycare
- Child support work
- Parenting support
- Supporting women coping with the dynamics of a communal living environment
- Maintain relationships with related services
- Administration

The above listed core services are common practice within transition houses. For most transition houses, identifying this more detailed list of core services will not change service provision, rather it will articulate and acknowledge the valuable and varied work these agencies do. Through the development of the program framework, more detail is needed for each core service to provide service guidelines. For example, help to obtain housing (9th bullet from the top) could include the following:

- supplying easy access to market housing listings;
- building inter-agency relationships with local non-profit and private market landlords;
- building tenancy skills;
- linking women to the various rental subsidy programs; and
- filling out the appropriate Priority Placement forms.

Core services should align with and complement services delivered through other programs and funders, such as VAW, health, justice and social services. Differences in service delivery experienced by women can also be mitigated somewhat through implementing clear definitions and standards for the core services.
**Recommendation P2:**
Develop separate funding models for safe homes, transition houses and second stage houses to fund core services and adjustments for capacity differences between communities.

Historically, there has been no standard method to allocate funding to THP agencies. The current system does not take into account the cost per bed or cost per client; instead, funding tends to be based on amounts previously provided or decisions made on an agency-by-agency basis. Funding allocation has also not taken into account differences in community capacities such as transportation and professional services. As a result, there are wide variances in terms of the level and relative amounts given to service providers and over time these funding disparities have been accentuated. There are now significant funding disparities between agencies that have no reasonable explanation, creating a sense of unfairness amongst agencies.

A funding model that is client-driven, transparent, flexible, defendable and equitable is required. In addition to allocating funds in a transparent and fair manner, a funding model should also be flexible enough to account for unique differences between communities. For example, a model should award funding based not only on a per-bed basis, but should also recognize differences in transportation costs that factor into the total cost of providing services for rural agencies.

The figure below illustrates the recommended components of a funding model, providing a starting point from which to develop a formula that allocates funding to deliver core services, maintain program assets, and adjust for capacity differences between the communities in which service providers operate. Development of the detailed formula in consultation with the sector should be considered a high priority, and be used to allocate 2011 funding dollars.

**Figure 19: Components of the funding model**
Facilities costs
There is a significant range in facilities costs across THP agencies. Facilities costs related to rent or mortgage payments vary considerably depending on price of land and age of building; for transition houses, facilities costs ranged from $5,190 to $85,177 per year. Similarly, some THP agencies pay property taxes, while others have these taxes waived by their municipality. The variation in these fixed costs is too great to apply a formula to. Therefore, it is recommended that fixed facilities costs for THP facilities be fully funded, such as rent / mortgage payments and property tax costs. Other facilities costs, such as maintenance and contributions to replacement reserves, should be funded according to BC Housing guidelines. Replacement reserve contributions should be provided to compensate agencies for the depreciation of house and core assets used in delivering service.

Core services
Each type of Transition Housing Program service (safe home, transition house, second stage house) has its own set of core services and related costs, yet all three can be served by a similar funding model. These core services were discussed in Recommendation P1. For transition and second stage houses, core service funding should be based on the number of beds available in the house. The model should account for the economies of scale realized by larger facilities by allowing for a larger cost per bed for smaller facilities. The suggested cutoff is up to and including 10 beds. See Appendix C for a rationale for this suggested cutoff.

Administration
Administration covers activities such as program management, payroll processing, systems maintenance, reporting and audits. Administration costs should be calculated as a percentage of an agency’s total funding, and guidelines and definitions should be provided to ensure consistent recording within the program’s chart of accounts. The percentage used to calculate administration funding can be based on data collected on past budgets and reports submitted through DES, however, consideration should be given to any future changes to required work to be covered under administration.

Community adjustment funds
A transparent funding process will be established for securing community adjustment funding for additional services or resources (e.g. more travel money for rural or remote communities).

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11 For safe homes a different calculation will be necessary. Core services include direct service staff time and program costs e.g. client travel, food, cleaning supplies. In some smaller agencies, Executive Directors provide direct service to clients, and therefore would be counted within core service.
This fund is not intended to be accessed by most THP agencies to supplement core funding, but is intended to be used as needed to address differences in communities which require additional funding outside of the core service cost. It is recommended as well that a brief and equitable application process be established for agencies to request this funding.

**Recommendation P3:** Establish service standards and practice guidelines for how Transition Housing Program agencies deliver core services.

According to THP staff participants in this review, inconsistent service delivery standards and guidelines amongst Transition Housing Program agencies have had serious and unforeseen results. A common example of this includes reports from multiple houses of women fleeing violence being turned away from houses with empty rooms because they were driving nice cars, and appeared to have other resources. Other service inconsistencies such as not undertaking an assessment with the woman at point of intake can expose the woman and house to avoidable safety and security issues.

Service standards are a crucial building block in addressing inconsistencies across different service providers, and can help ensure that safeguards are in place to mitigate risks. Some THP-funded agencies have pursued and achieved accreditation on their own, usually with the Council On Accreditation (COA) or Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). However, accreditation is costly and time consuming, and typically beyond the financial reach or capacity of many smaller THP agencies. The standards developed within that process, while useful, will likely not address most of the types of service delivery concerns raised through this consultation.

Recognition of the utility and value of service standards is widely shared, and while THP service standards were introduced by a previous Ministry responsible for the Transition Housing Program, a lack of consultation with and support from service providers led to a failure in adopting these standards. This experience highlights the importance of including THP service providers in the design of standards, and the need for consultation regarding the scope and timeline of implementing changes within the sector.

Development of standards through cross-sector consultation, led by a clear authority for managing the process, should be considered an important step towards delivery of consistent, quality services. It is also recommended that BCSTH lead the development of program guidelines, as BCSTH is well positioned to both work with agencies to develop service guidelines and to monitor and support implementation.
Recommendation P4: 
Require service providers to deliver intake and referral services to women presenting with mental health and/or substance use issues.

A survey of VAW staff indicated that of the women they serve, approximately 20% have severe mental health issues and 40% have substance use issues. In addition, consultation participants identified services for women with mental health or substance use issues as the second most pressing issue for the sector. Despite this urgency, there is no policy that describes the requirements of service providers to assist these women.

Mental health and substance use issues are common amongst women fleeing violence, and are often rooted in the violence women have experienced. Yet many THP staff report that serving women with these challenges is outside of their agency’s mandate and their personal skill sets. THP staff also reports that women who do not have substance use or mental health issues fear those who do, and as a result, some of these women may not be accessing transition houses. In contrast, women with substance use and mental health issues try to hide this from service providers to ensure access to service – a practice that typically leads to more problematic behaviour and safety concerns as these serious issues cannot be discussed and treated.

The THP was established to protect and support women fleeing violence. The THP is one of several doors for women to access a larger network of support services, including those services funded under the program. The transition housing sector is led and staffed by a dedicated, trained group of individuals who are responsible for the safety and dynamics of a house. Decisions regarding who is admitted to a house take into account a range of factors, which often cannot be systematically laid out in some form of check list or form that determines access. However, some guiding principles can be articulated.

First, safety is the single most important outcome of transition housing work, and should not be compromised under any situation. Consideration must be given to the specific obligations of THP providers, and take into account how the well-being and safety of women and their children in the house can be affected by women with substance abuse or mental health issues. Second, most staff delivering THP services are not trained to deliver service to women with mental health and substance use issues. Third, women fleeing violence who also use substances or are challenged with mental health issues have no less right to services delivered in a respectful and non-judgmental way.

These principles should be at the root of policy development regarding the provision of services to women with mental health and/or addictions challenges. Such policy must provide a
balanced approach between the safety and needs of women with mental health and substance use and the risks to staff, women and children in the house. While THP agencies should not be forced to provide shelter, service providers should be required to complete an intake process and at a minimum refer women with mental health or substance abuse to appropriate services. To achieve this recommendation, staff must be provided with training on how to recognize, manage and refer women to required health and social services.

**Recommendation P5:**
*Update program eligibility guidelines to ensure young women leading adult lives have access to transition housing services.*

According to Statistics Canada, rates of spousal violence and homicide are highest for women ages 15 to 24 years. While THP staff estimates that 9% of women accessing services are under the age of 19, one in four agencies reported that they did not provide shelter to women under 19 (2008/09). This illustrates serious challenges both in terms of providing a welcoming environment for young women, and the policies of some organizations with respect to the access to services.

Most THP contracts define the client group as “adult women”. Agencies’ liability insurance is underwritten by the provincial government and is based on the services set out in the contract, so most agencies are not insured to provide services to women under 19. Some agencies that have services for younger women have special agreements with the Ministry of Children and Family Development which addresses the liability insurance issue. The DES data and consultations suggest that some agencies interpret the contract language to allow them to serve young women leading adult lives. MPSSG has already determined that the “mature minor” rule applies to their victim services, thereby enabling services to be offered to some minors without the consent or involvement of a parent.

It is recommended that BC Housing work with MPSSG to explore what language needs to be reflected in the contract to enable THP agencies to have insurance coverage to serve young women leading adult lives, and move forward on steps to encourage and enable THP agencies to serve this group.

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12 This recommendation is related to other recommendations in training and facilities, which will further assist THP staff in understanding overlapping issues of abuse, mental health and substance use as well as sheltering or appropriately referring women with mental health or substance use issues. Both BCSTH’s Promising Practices project and the BC Centre for Women’s Excellence Building Bridges project can provide helpful resources in the implementation of this recommendation.
Recommendation P6: Expand the mandate of Transition Houses beyond “intimate partner violence” to include women fleeing any form of violence.

THP staff reports an increasing number of women are fleeing non-traditional forms of violence, and many see transition housing programs as part of the response to the broad range of violence women experience. THP staff estimates that, on average, 6% of the women they serve are leaving gangs and 11% are leaving sex work. Through the consultation, THP staff indicated that this is an increasing percentage of women seeking service.

Currently, three quarters of agencies define domestic violence more broadly than intimate partner violence, including violence from other family members or roommates. Two thirds of houses hold both that broader definition of domestic violence and have mandates that include non-traditional forms of violence, such as threats or violence related to fleeing gangs, drug debts or the sex trade. However, less flexible definitions of violence or narrow mandates do exist within the sector. Despite the changing nature of violence, a small number of agencies continue to focus their resources on women fleeing intimate partner violence. In some cases this can be attributed to services delivered through other agencies being available in the community to respond to non-intimate partner violence. In other cases, it simply reflects individual and agency values.

Agencies that provide services to all women, regardless of nature or source of violence, typically do so in one of two ways. Some agencies do not restrict in any way their definition of violence, and therefore already consider women fleeing any form of violence as eligible clients under their primary mandate. Other agencies take a different approach by identifying intimate partner violence as their primary mandate, while recognizing other forms of violence, threats or abuse as a secondary mandate. Secondary mandates are addressed differently across agencies, but typically have shorter lengths of stay than primary mandates.

The central concern with extending the primary mandate of all service providers regards the limited number of available beds. Assuming more women are eligible for admission under an expanded mandate, houses operating close to capacity may be forced to turn away women attempting to access services. Another concern voiced by service providers is that staff in agencies currently providing service to women fleeing intimate partner violence may not have the skills to deal with non-traditional forms of violence – although these same providers recognize that the power dynamics in these different violence situations are typically very similar. Other concerns included a requirement to have more staff on shift, or insufficient
safeguards in place to protect residents from abusers searching out women fleeing drug debts or gangs.

Taking into account the range of issues and concerns, extending the current mandate beyond intimate partner violence will require a change in practice for only a small number of Transition Houses. This clarification of the program mandate still allows houses to determine primary and secondary mandates, as appropriate given other services in their communities. More importantly, not extending the mandate would perpetuate the current situation which excludes some women from accessing THP services. Therefore, it is recommended that all agencies contracted under the THP be required to provide service to all women, regardless of the nature of violence.

7.2 IMPLEMENTATION

The following recommendations will support the development and implementation of the Program Framework. These include actions BC Housing can take, such as improvements in training, reporting, and integration with the housing continuum.

Recommendation R1:
Create an Advisory Council of Transition Housing Program agencies to support implementation of recommendations.

An Advisory Council made up of representatives from the sector should be established to build on the momentum and cross-sector relationships developed during this review process. The mandate of the council should be limited in term, and restricted to implementing changes required to achieve the goals and recommendations adopted in this report. The council is not intended to be a permanent group that acts as the “voice of the sector” – this is the role and mandate of existing organizations including BCSTH and EVA.

Membership should reflect the service provider sector, and include a range of skills and experience to guide and oversee the implementation of specific recommendations. Council members would participate in planning key initiatives within the Council’s mandate, and contribute to the communication, coordination and development of key deliverables such as work plans, frameworks and systems. As a starting point, Terms of Reference should be developed that includes the mandate, authority, accountability, governance structure, work plan and timeline for the Council.

13 In the Agency survey, only 5% of houses held organizational policies which defined abuse solely as from an intimate partner. An additional 11% served women fleeing other forms of abuse only as a secondary mandate.
The Steering Committee reviewed initiatives anticipated at the conclusion of this review, and provided guidance on the priority and general timeline for undertaking this work. The suggested priorities for the Council include:

- completing the funding model and program framework;
- developing a strategic plan for the THP sector; and
- developing a communication plan for sharing information with the broader sector.

With regard to the last bullet, a key success factor for receiving support and buy-in from the sector to any initiative undertaken by the Council will be the development and implementation of a communication plan that includes ways in which the service providers will be consulted.14

It is recommended that the Advisory Council be established shortly after the close of this review.

**Recommendation 12:**
**Partner with BC Society of Transition Houses to develop training materials available through the Internet, and implement a regional train-the-trainer model to deliver on-site training.**

Many Transition Housing Program staff report feeling inadequately trained for the work they do. Training for THP staff was identified in the top ten most pressing issues for the VAW sector (ranked number eight) in the sector wide survey. Areas identified as either requiring updated materials or requiring more training delivered to staff included intersection of violence with mental health and substance use, life skills, intercultural competency and tenancy supports. In addition, training related to Safe Home service is considered out of date as it does not reflect the current model of delivery.

The budget for training also presents a challenge. Transition Housing Program budgets for training tends to be quite low, ranging from $600 to $20,000 and averaging $4,675 per agency. In addition to funding provided directly to agencies, BC Society of Transition Houses (BCSTH) receives annual funding from BC Housing to deliver training to Transition Housing Program staff. While there is only a nominal tuition cost to attend training, agencies are required to cover travel, accommodation and backfill costs for staff attending a training event. BCSTH funding includes a bursary to offset these costs, although costs for rural and remote agencies to access training often exceed funding available to cover the larger cost of getting from remote to more

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14 Costs associated with the Council’s work can be in part reduced by leveraging communication and collaboration technologies such as the video, web and conferencing systems used throughout this review.
urban areas for training (most training is delivered Vancouver). In addition to BCSTH and agency funding, ShelterNet BC and Ending Violence Association (EVA) are also provided some funding to deliver training that can be accessed by THP staff, though there is a greater cost to the agency to access this training.

Delivering training that is designed around knowledge-based modules could be provided effectively using the Internet, and could reduce the current cost of delivery. This would reallocate and reinvest a portion of current training dollars into materials that are accessible from all corners of the province. In addition to cost savings and accessibility, online training would allow staff to access training on demand and reduce the need to backfill for staff attending training.

The skills based component of the training (versus the knowledge based component described above) would still need to be delivered in-person. However, rather than deliver in a single location through a single provider, a train-the-trainer model that is delivered by a trainer within each region could be adopted. This would help ensure that in-person training costs are reduced and that regional training is specific to the communities located within the region. A longer term training contract, with the intent to move towards an online and regional training model within three years, would provide BCSTH with the stability needed to invest in such a model, without requiring additional funding beyond what is currently provided. BCSTH would continue to train the regional trainers, maintain the online training, and keep all training material current.

It is important to note that the Ministry of Public Safety and the Solicitor General (MPSSG), EVA, BC Housing and BCSTH are already working together to create a safety planning course to be delivered online. Building on this work is a natural point on which to begin further development of online and regional training. Also important to note is that any investments in training should take into account the separate roles and specific contributions of agencies such as EVA, ShelterNet and BCSTH to avoid any potential duplication and take advantage of existing knowledge and capabilities.

**Recommendation 13:**
*Update the Priority Placement Program form to address concerns raised by BCSTH and THP providers.*

THP providers have voiced concerns through BCSTH regarding recent changes to the Priority Placement form. This form is used by VAW staff to supplement a woman’s application to the housing registry, documenting that she is fleeing violence. Concern focuses on the level of detail required on the form, including naming the abuser, which is exacerbated by the potential for
this data to be accessed by non-profit agencies through the housing registry. Though BC Housing and BCSTH have met to discuss these concerns and some steps have been taken to mitigate issues, THP providers are not yet confident that BC Housing staff fully appreciates the level of concern with sharing information regarding violence experienced by women accessing THP services.

A recommended first step to further mitigate concerns is to clarify the procedures and processes of the Priority Placement Program, including those regarding access for women fleeing violence who do not end up staying in a transition house. The BC Non Profit Housing Association has been included in a few discussions regarding the form, and should continue to be included as a spokesperson for the non-profit housing sector.

Key to addressing the confidence of the sector in BC Housing is not only the resolution of the issue, but also clear communication to VAW agencies about the process and results. BC Housing has offered to provide training on the form at the BCSTH general meeting. Building on this type of communication with the sector is likely to create further understanding.

**Recommendation 14:**
**Update the BC Government’s Data Entry System (DES) to include outcomes-based reporting and update data entry guidelines to ensure consistent reporting of data provided by agencies.**

Outcomes evaluation is an accepted practice throughout Canada’s social sector, and almost half of THP agencies report using some form of outcome measurement system to monitor the impact of programs and services (e.g. number of women who feel they know more about signs of an abusive relationship). The BC Government Data Entry System (DES) is used by THP service providers to report service statistics, focusing primarily on inputs (e.g. dollars, staff hours), outputs (e.g. number of services provided, number of clients), and some basic demographics of the women and children accessing services (e.g. number of women 55 years and older sheltered). Several agencies have taken it upon themselves to independently implement similar systems for their own internal analysis and reporting purposes, and in some cases, have developed an outcomes-focused monitoring and evaluation tool.\(^\text{15}\)

\(^\text{15}\) Some examples of common outcome measures used by THP service providers upon exit are:
- % of women with a safety plan in place;
- % of women reporting an increased understanding of abuse and its consequences; or,
- % of women reporting increased access to resources that enhance their options (e.g. counseling, housing, health, financial, legal).
Some agencies expressed a feeling of frustration in having to report at an activity level through DES and at an outcomes level through internal tracking systems. Concerns primarily center on the time required to enter data. BC Housing has recently taken steps to address this by moving to a quarterly rather than monthly reporting process, and has planned further changes pending the findings of this review. Notwithstanding concerns regarding the time necessary to report, there is a general consensus that focusing reporting on outcomes – rather than activities - is an improvement over past practices.

In addition to these concerns, several agencies have implemented administrative systems that capture operational data, such as budget and client data. However, there is no mechanism in place to allow data between systems to be exchanged, requiring these agencies to record data twice. There is also no ability within the current system to view information shared with BC Housing, making the DES system essentially a ‘black box’ to service providers.

Analysis of DES data for this review revealed several significant inconsistencies in the data that is reported by service agencies. In several cases, service providers were recording data incorrectly into the system, creating a potential risk for drawing the wrong conclusions from any analysis. This risk has been largely mitigated because the THP program team at BC Housing has a good understanding of the program, and is aware of the potential inconsistencies within the data. However, steps should be taken to assist agencies to understand the different categories of data entered in order to mitigate this risk, and increase the service providers’ confidence in the DES system.

It is recommended that BC Housing continue with its plan to integrate and streamline its DES to capture a balance of key operation and outcome data, aligning with the program key inputs, outputs and measures identified within the program framework. Reporting guidelines and data definitions should also be developed to ensure service providers have a common understanding and properly record data into DES.

These are outcomes which assess the contribution the Transition Housing Program can make to improving the lives of women fleeing abuse. They do not expect THP agencies to discourage women to return to relationships, nor other outcomes which are out of the control of the THP.
**Recommendation 15:**
Support transition houses to move towards best practices in facility design to better meet the needs of the diverse groups of women fleeing violence.

One of the consistent messages heard during this review was that facility design can have a considerable impact on meeting the needs of women who access THP services. Evaluations with women staying in transition houses found, for example, that living communally is the most stressful aspect of staying in transition houses. This stress may be exacerbated by changes in demographics of women fleeing violence, which have increased the need for separate space and small modifications to facilities. Many BC transition houses have developed policies and practices to ensure women do not share sleeping space and while it is more common for transition houses not to ask families to share sleeping space with others, some providers are now extending this practice for single women, especially older women. Transition House staff generally report needing more separate space for women fleeing violence\(^\text{16}\).

Other facility issues raised include: security systems, storage space, space for intake meetings, and accessibility for people with disabilities. The Statistics Canada annual survey of shelters for abused women found that almost one third of BC shelters for women fleeing violence are not properly equipped to support women with physical disabilities. Transition Houses in Australia have explored best practices in facility design, and these findings may be able to be applied, and adjusted if necessary, in BC.

It is recommended that BC Housing work with the BC Society of Transition Houses to review best practices in transition house facility design and adjust these as appropriate for the BC service model. Following this, an assessment should be made of the steps needed to bring THP facilities up to best practices, including identifying priorities and related costs.

### 7.3 EXTERNAL TO BC HOUSING

The following recommendations are outside BC Housing’s control, requiring inter-ministerial partnerships or policy changes. These recommendations are nonetheless important to the successful outcomes for women using the Transition Housing Program, relating to coordination between the THP and other services women fleeing violence may need such as counselling,

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\(^{16}\) Discussions around separate space in facilities point to a need to clarify definitions of a full house (e.g. all beds full, or all bedrooms full). Transition Houses are reporting these statistics inconsistently, and some of those reporting a full house when bedrooms are full are worried that they will be penalized for doing so. However, some feel strongly that it is problematic to ask some women to share rooms.
victim’s services, legal aid, mental health services, substance use treatment, and affordable housing.

**Recommendation E1:**
*Strengthen provincial inter-ministry partnerships and direction for regional and community level operational protocols to improve coordination and integration of services for women.*

There is a clear need to improve coordination amongst Violence Against Women service providers within and across BC communities. Specific coordination gaps identified included information sharing, establishing working partnerships, holding forums to discuss ways to eliminate barriers for clients, and leading community education and awareness work. As in some earlier recommendations, broad coordination of the Violence Against Women sector is a function outside the Transition Housing Program’s mandate, yet essential for its success.

While overall coordination activities are always important, the central missing coordination function for Transition Housing Program agencies appears to be working partnerships with other VAW services. Of greatest concern were the regular reports of THP and other VAW service providers choosing not to work together, not referring to each other’s services and therefore removing choice from women fleeing violence. Where relationships did exist, most agencies described them as informal in nature and highly dependent on personal relationships. This creates a risk of inter-agency relationships being impacted by staff turnover or organizational change. Similar to many other issues in this review, there is quite a range in the nature of existing coordination work across BC. For example, there are few formal relationships between the VAW services and the police in the North and Fraser regions, versus strong relationships of this nature in the Interior and Lower Mainland. This can be attributed in part to geography and community size.

Provincial direction and support to develop operational protocols between THP and other related agencies at a local or regional level would help to create more consistent relationships between services providers within communities throughout BC. Operational protocols help to bridge staff turnover between agencies and to replicate successful partnerships within other communities. Relationship building requires more than just funding support; it will require the interest and commitment from service providers to work together.

There are approximately 50 active local and regional initiatives working to coordinate and connect Violence Against Women services, including Violence Against Women In Relationships (VAWIR), Community Coordination for Women’s Safety committees, and several inter-agency partnerships. The focus of these coordination initiatives is typically directed towards justice issues and involve justice sector stakeholders. Building on this work would involve
strengthening relationships to the health, housing and social service sector. There are also existing provincial resources supporting VAW service coordination, notably the provincial VAW Steering Team and CCWS Working Group. The function of these two groups and their inter-relationship should be examined and clearly communicated to the VAW sector.

In some communities, there is no group or structure in place to lead coordinating work at the local or regional level. The THP sector would benefit from a recognized lead responsible for local and coordination work. Currently, there is no funding available to support coordination at this level, and for smaller agencies to take on this coordination role would not be feasible. These coordination initiatives usually support information sharing, identifying and seeking to address local barriers to violence against women services, monitoring implementation of the VAWIR policy, and community education and awareness. It may be helpful for the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General to examine the need for local and regional coordination of VAW services and how existing resources to support coordination could be used to replicate successful and cost effective coordination models currently in place in some BC communities.

An increased focus on coordination within the VAW sector should look at how all coordination resources might be improved. In particular, the VAW Steering Team may benefit from working more explicitly with EVA and BCSTH, as well as other orders of government serving women fleeing violence (e.g. CMHC, INAC, First Nations Councils). The CCWS Working Group may benefit from including more social services and housing related partners.

It is recommended that the VAW Steering Team strongly encourage the development of operational protocols between its member ministries and THP agencies. Further, it is recommended that the roles of the VAW Steering Team and CCWS Working Group be clarified.

**Recommendation E2: BC Housing should work with the Ministry of Public Safety and the Solicitor General to review and clarify roles and responsibilities for outreach services for women fleeing violence.**

The need to review and clarify Outreach Service contracts had already been identified by MPSSG prior to this review. Though most outreach services are out of scope for this review, given that there are some outreach functions funded and delivered through the THP as well as through other Violence Against Women services, it is recommended that BC Housing work with MPSSG on that review. Outreach funding is used to support a wide range of activities. Some clarity gained through this review as to the different outreach functions is summarized below, and in more detail in Appendix D.
Through the MPSSG review, and as part of determining where any future Outreach Services are needed, it may be helpful to give consideration to the presence of Safe Home services. Where Safe Home services are present, and Outreach Services have been added to a community, there is some duplication between the two programs. Though Safe Home programs have a substantial residential component, Safe Homes also provide similar referral, advocacy and accompaniment services to women fleeing violence who may choose not to enter the Safe Home. Given the short time of stay, for women who do not go onto transition houses, Safe Homes also deliver extensive post-residency outreach services. Therefore, Outreach Services would be more useful in a community without an existing Safe Home program.

**Recommendation E3:**
**Transfer Community Education and Awareness contracts to the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General**

Currently, community education and awareness related to violence against women is delivered primarily by VAW service providers, though THP agencies also provide these services. Most THP agencies report only a small number of community education hours, though a few agencies
have developed well-regarded programs through schools. Yet the mandate of the Transition Housing Program and its service model does not lend well to this type of outreach.

It is recommended that BC Housing and the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General consider transferring responsibility (and related funding) for community education and awareness services to MPSSG. Agencies with transition houses, safe homes and second stage houses can still deliver the services, but they will be funded through the ministry with a mandate to provide effective protection programs for women and in a position to better integrate and coordinate services within the broader VAW programming.

**Recommendation E4:**
Consult with the broader VAW sector to confirm common principles that guide the design and delivery of women-centred services.

Within the VAW sector, different philosophies regarding a woman’s involvement in service delivery has over time influenced the development of policies and practices amongst service providers. These differences in philosophies primarily relate to who decides what is best for women fleeing violence. In turn, this has impacted how programming is delivered throughout the province, as strong philosophical differences have contributed to the creation of barriers to coordinating services and making referrals across the sector.

Three specific issues identified through this review that can be attributed to differences in philosophical approaches are:

1. Some VAW agencies do not refer women to other needed VAW services because they feel another agency’s philosophy makes their services inappropriate for women fleeing violence.

2. Some VAW agencies are willing to refer to providers with different philosophies but feel it is necessary to accompany women in order to ensure the services are provided appropriately for women fleeing violence.

3. Some women are dissatisfied with the variation in service approach between VAW agencies.

In part, differences that exist today can be partly attributed to the lack of a common language or definitions used to describe services and delivery approaches, although this often does not lead to real differences in the level and type of support provided to women. This philosophical diversity has also created a range of practices and tools within the sector, many of which have been designed to meet the needs of unique communities. Overall, this diversity has been a
positive outcome but in some cases there can be real differences in service, impacting the perceptions and experiences of women accessing services in the sector. For example, some agencies mandate specific services be delivered to women while other agencies believe it is the woman’s choice as to which services she requires.

The absence of common principles to guide future program design and delivery amongst service providers means that service delivery standards will be difficult to implement and monitor, potentially resulting in inconsistent experiences and barriers for women accessing services. Articulating and establishing a common set of principles will help provide a foundation for a strong strategic framework that guides rather than prescribes the future direction to stakeholders. Addressing this issue now is particularly important because there is an interest amongst most stakeholders in adopting an outcomes-based approach to service delivery.

Common principles should reflect the range of philosophical approaches that have led to flexible and innovative service delivery throughout the sector, while ensuring service providers are bound by core values under which all programming decisions are made and measured. The purpose of this recommendation is to move past differences in language, and to begin a conversation within the Violence Against Women sector about the essential elements of women-centred service delivery on which stronger partnerships can be created. In particular, the principles should highlight common values which, if not practiced, would prevent agencies from referring clients to each other’s organizations.

The Steering Committee has taken the first steps towards this goal by drafting the following suggested principles as a starting point for discussions with the broader VAW sector:

- Women have the right to make their own choices based on an informed understanding of their options, needs and goals, and service providers should be mindful and respectful of a woman’s choices.
- Services are welcoming, non-judgmental and should acknowledge and respond to the diversity of women and children fleeing violence.
- Service providers understand the power imbalances in our society which lead to women being exposed to violence. These power imbalances also exist between women fleeing violence and those who provide services to them.
- Services continue to be relevant and current in addressing the dynamics of violence women face.
- Women who have experienced violence, and the people who work to support them through that experience are valued and respected.
Once adopted by the sector, principles should be incorporated into the future service delivery contracts to ensure these principles are communicated and enforced.

7.4 REQUIRING ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The following section includes longer term recommendations to allocate any additional funding, should it become available. Identifying priority areas for adjustments or enhanced services, should funding be provided, was a requested component of the review. While some other recommendations have cost implications, these can be addressed through readjusting existing contracts, such as refocusing training dollars on developing online training. In contrast, the recommendations which follow will likely require new funding.

**Recommendation R1:**
**Increase access to post-transition house supports.**

Providing appropriate supports for women fleeing violence after they leave transition housing was ranked as the third most pressing issue for the THP sector. Most Transition Housing Program services are tied to residency in the house, with the exception of Safe Home services and a small number of Transition Houses with embedded outreach contracts. These THP funded residency based services are complemented by the counseling and outreach services funded through MPSSG. More detail on existing services is provided in Appendix D.

Currently, THP staff report that women who choose not to return to their previous relationship often find themselves without the necessary level of services to support a successful adjustment to independent living. Post-resident supports such as assisting women access housing or providing referrals to community services can help women avoid being left with no option other than unwilling returns to their abusive situation.

It is recommended that BC Housing create a new program to deliver post-transition house supports and issue an RFP for each municipality or regional district. A new program, delivered by one agency in each community, will mean that women likely need to be referred and form new relationships with outreach workers. However, this reflects both the reality that many women leave their community post-transition housing (making referral necessary) and the efficiencies provided by a central community service deliverer.
It is recommended that these services not be combined with the broader MPSSG Outreach Service contracts which serve all women fleeing violence as well as delivering community education services, in order to ensure that women leaving transition houses receive this service which is deemed essential to successfully supporting women’s choices. Similarly, as the service is seen as essential to the success of the Transition Housing Program, it is recommended that it is funded through the Transition Housing Program.

**Recommendation R2:**  
Create a rental subsidy program for women fleeing violence.

THP staff report that women without affordable housing options often return to abusive relationships. Market housing which can be accessed using public rental subsidies is one solution to the limited availability of public and non-profit housing. One advantage of a rental subsidy over social housing is its portability; women can use a subsidy to afford housing in the communities in which they live. Throughout the consultation, many THP staff raised concerns that women fleeing violence were forced to leave their home communities and existing supports in order to access affordable housing. In addition, THP staff estimate that 27% of women leaving their shelters become homeless. In 2008-09, that would have resulted in 2,300 homeless women. Further supports are needed to assist women to access affordable housing options in order to reduce homelessness and unwilling returns to abusive relationships.

Though there are a variety of rental subsidy programs available in BC, many women fleeing violence are not able to access existing subsidies. These subsidies may only be available in some communities, have long processing timelines, be related to disability status, have limits regarding income sources, or have requirements for dependent children to be living with you. THP staff comments in the consultation indicated inconsistent knowledge about these existing rent subsidies. In the interim period before a new rental subsidy program can be created, BC Housing can work with all VAW providers to ensure they have the necessary information about existing subsidies. Though these subsidies do not meet the needs of many women fleeing violence, more women fleeing violence appear to be eligible for these subsidies than are accessing them.

It is recommended that a new subsidy program be created for women fleeing violence which is not limited by income source or presence of dependent children. Further, it is recommended that the new rental subsidy program be administered similarly to the Homeless Outreach Program, which works through community-based agencies to deliver a rent supplement. This program administration appears to allow for a fast approval process, which supports women fleeing violence to make decisions about rent within a short time frame. Also, BC Housing may
wish to consider providing some minimal funding to cover costs associated with administration of the rental subsidies, if the number of rental subsidies processed by each agency is substantial.\textsuperscript{17} Finally, it is recommended that the program not be limited to women fleeing violence who use the Transition Housing Program; rather it should follow the Priority Placement Program model of being available to all women fleeing violence.\textsuperscript{18}

**Recommendation R3:**
Increase the allowable length of stay in safe homes from “typically no more 5 days” to “typically no more than 10 days”.

Contracts with Safe Homes indicate that the length of “typical” stay for a woman fleeing violence is limited to five days. Some Safe Home providers have incorrectly interpreted this to mean that all stays, regardless of the situation, must be limited to five days. While clarifying the intent of the contract language should be straightforward, there is a more important issue to be addressed: the length of the currently defined “typical” Safe Home stay is not sufficient in many cases to assist a woman move to either a transition house or alternative shelter.

Safe Home providers contacted during this review (approximately 25\% of all Safe Homes in BC) identified an increase in allowable length of stay as their number one priority for change. Where Safe Homes understand that women can stay longer than five days, their DES data reports that, on average, two in five women stay for more than five days. In contrast, DES data show that one in three Safe Homes have not sheltered a woman for more than five days in the past several years. This may reflect anecdotal evidence that some safe home providers believe that their contract prevents them from extending stays beyond the typical five days. There is also anecdotal evidence that Safe Home providers who believe they are not able to shelter women for more than five days but do so in rare cases, are not accurately reporting the actual length of stay to BC Housing.

One issue of particular importance is with respect to the time required for women with no resources to access public assistance. Safe Home providers report that many of the women they serve apply for income assistance, however, the application process often requires seven

\textsuperscript{17} At this time, the 49 partner agencies who administer the HOP subsidies receive no funding for the time it takes to do so.

\textsuperscript{18} There are some outstanding concerns about the application process for the Priority Placement Program which resulted from the program’s expansion to serve all women fleeing abuse, including women who did not use THP services. These have been identified separately in this review, and their expected resolution can be applied to this new subsidy process.
to ten days before funds are made available.\textsuperscript{19} As a result, some women leaving the Safe Home before five days are leaving before they have sufficient funds to pay rent.

Increasing the length of typical stay from five to ten days would have budget implications. For Safe Homes that primarily shelter women in an apartment owned by the Safe Home, costs are typically limited to food. Safe Homes that use other forms of shelter such as motels would likely experience increases in shelter costs. Safe Homes that solely use private residences for shelter (an estimated two of 26 programs) would be unlikely to shelter women longer, as many Safe Home providers note that it is difficult for women fleeing violence to stay in another person’s home for longer than three to five days. For one agency, which currently provides mandatory overnight staff accompaniment, there could also be an impact on hours. Most Safe Homes continue to provide advocacy and accompaniment services for ex-residents for a short period of time after they leave the Safe Home, and extending the length of stay would not impact their staff hours.

These differences in Safe Home delivery models illustrate the challenge in providing an accurate cost for increasing the length of stay in the Safe Home program. Based on cost data captured through DES, the anticipated increase would be around $72,000 for the program. The following table provides a breakdown of this cost.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of women sheltered in BC Safe Homes (2008/09)</th>
<th>Estimate likely to stay more than 5 days (40%)</th>
<th>Estimated increase in shelter costs\textsuperscript{20}</th>
<th>Estimated increase in food / program costs\textsuperscript{21}</th>
<th>Estimated total increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>322 women</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>$21,660</td>
<td>$50,310</td>
<td>$71,970</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textbf{Figure 21: Estimated annual cost to increase typical length of stay in Safe Homes}

\textbf{Recommendation R4:}
Support transition houses to appropriately place women fleeing violence who seek shelter and are turned away due to insufficient space.

On average, Transition Houses across the province report being at capacity 100 nights each year, and a small number of houses report being at capacity two of every three nights each year. While Transition Houses are usually able to accommodate the women who present for

\textsuperscript{19} Staff responses the sector-wide survey show that 65% of women served by Safe Homes apply for income assistance.

\textsuperscript{20} Average daily shelter cost from DES stats ($73) \times 46\% \text{ of number of women likely to stay more than 5 days (46\% of SH own apartments and would have no shelter cost increase)} \times 5 \text{ days}

\textsuperscript{21} Average daily client program costs from DES stats ($78) \times \text{ number of women likely to stay more than 5 days} \times 5 \text{ days}
service, DES statistics show that in 2008/09 there were 6,091 women who were referred elsewhere because the beds were full, or because there was insufficient room for their family. When they are turned away, women are referred to other local transition houses or emergency shelters. The figure below illustrates where women are referred to if they cannot be provided with shelter immediately.

Referrals cause concern amongst staff as women who are turned away are often slow to return, or worse, do not return at all. Less than 2% of women who were turned away because of insufficient space were later admitted from a waitlist. Almost half (43%) of those admitted from a waitlist were only on the waitlist for one to three days, but one quarter (26%) were on for 15 days or more.

Staff also expressed concern about the appropriateness of referring women fleeing violence to emergency shelters, particularly where the shelters are co-ed. During busy times when the transition house has limited coverage, staff sometimes do not have time to provide a ‘proactive referral’ (that is, ensuring that the woman has secured shelter in another facility). With limited coverage, staff is often limited to providing the woman with several options and phone numbers to contact to seek shelter.

It is recommended that women who are referred to alternative shelters be provided with access to Transition House services. For example, women could be referred to a Safe Home, providing her with the security of having immediate and secure shelter. Since the Safe Home may not provide services that are available through transition houses, she could receive services from Transition House staff either on site or through outreach. This would allow for services such as emotional support and linking to professional service to begin, despite not being a resident in a

![Figure 22: Where women are referred, if not sheltered immediately](image-url)
transition house that delivers services. It is further recommended that BC Housing give consideration to how it can assist THP agencies or BCSTH to develop partnerships with hotels / motels, in order to increase shelter options for women fleeing violence when there is no space in a THP agency.

Further clarification is needed as to what funding would be necessary to implement this recommendation. Costs would include increases to core service budgets for:

- transportation costs for women to travel to and from alternate temporary shelter;
- short term hotel costs; and,
- additional time required from staff to proactively refer and temporarily serve non-residents as they wait for a space.

**Recommendation R5:**
**Address regional disparity in access to second stage supports for women.**

Many women face a delay in accessing safe and affordable housing once leaving the transition house. Barriers can include a lack of financial resources or references, or lack of appropriate housing for women and any children. THP staff identified the need to provide women leaving the transition house with better access to long term housing as a high priority. Given the shortage of long term affordable housing, many THP staff reported a need for second stage housing as a temporary bridge and homelessness prevention strategy.

Second stage housing provides longer term shelter to women leaving shorter-term stays at transition houses. Transition houses provide a range of support services, in addition to a safe and secure place for relief from abusive situations. Second stage homes across the province are delivered using a range of models, often as a result of the specific resources available in and around the community. The range of services varies dramatically, with some agencies funded to provide supports on-site while others provide minimal or no supports directly. More than half of the second stage housing facilities in BC receive no funding through the Transition Housing Program, and provide very limited support services beyond a safe and affordable home.

Although second stage housing offers one solution to bridge the wait for long term safe and affordable housing, most women needing a housing bridge do not need the full suite of supports provided in THP-funded second stage houses. There is also far too little stock for second stage housing to serve as the primary bridge for women leaving transition houses. In 2009, only 4% of women using THP services across BC were able to access THP funded second stage housing. THP staff noted that requiring women to move from transition houses, to second
stage houses in the hopes they might later be able to access affordable housing increases the instability women fleeing violence experience.

Despite the fact that some women do need the level of supports provided in THP funded second stage (particularly women with intersecting issues such as substance use, mental health challenges and violence), the Transition Housing Program does not provide operating funding to second stage housing in all regions of BC. In particular, Northern BC has no THP funded second stage housing and the Fraser and Interior regions have only one house each. However, in these regions there are second stage houses which are not funded through the THP, most of which receive no government operating funding at all.

Over time, if access to safe and affordable housing can be improved so women fleeing violence can move directly from safe homes and transition houses to affordable housing and access required supports in their respective communities, most would not need second stage housing. The Steering Committee strongly suggested that the focus of future housing investment for women fleeing violence should be supports to enable women to access long term affordable housing, not in the development of new second stage housing facilities.

It is recommended that BC Housing first develop a complete provincial inventory of non-THP funded second stage housing. A preliminary inventory is included in Appendix E. BC Housing can then determine where operational funding for residential support may be needed, with a likely priority on Northern BC. This operational funding may look different than the current model of THP funded second stage as it may be more appropriate to share staff across several agencies in one region, increasing the numbers of women who receive second stage support as well as housing.

Recommendation R6: Continue to invest in permanent social housing, as part of the suite of affordable housing solutions.

Communities across BC continue to report a shortage of private and public rental housing. BC Housing is responding to this need with a multi-pronged plan, including investing in new permanent social housing. The primary benefit of permanent social housing is its cost effectiveness over the long term, as some studies have shown that permanent social housing is more cost effective over the long term than rent subsidies\textsuperscript{22}. Other benefits of publicly owned social housing include government funded supports delivered on site, and more control over prioritizing wait-listed applicants based on specific needs.
It is recommended that BC Housing continue to invest in safe, affordable housing in order to provide women with long term housing. More than 40% of THP staff report access to housing after leaving transition housing services as the number one issue facing women fleeing violence, and, as stated above, the lack of housing is believed to be a significant factor in women returning to abusive relationships. In many cases, women have no other option than to leave their communities and established supports (including violence related supports) to secure affordable housing. For some, leaving their community also means leaving their children behind.

**Recommendation R7:**
**Develop a case management tool to improve intake, information sharing and referral requirements.**

Women using Transition Housing Program services typically experience very different intake information sharing and referral processes, depending on the house or service provider. THP staff report challenges with referrals due to sometimes inconsistent staff knowledge of other community resources. Within agencies, women report frustration at having to retell their stories multiple times to staff with different roles. In addition, THP staff expressed concern over the volume of required paperwork and the time commitment necessary to enter data into electronic systems. These issues highlight that there is very little use of information technologies within the sector, or common tools in place to assist support workers to collect and share information.

As women leave Transition Housing Program services to access other services, internal challenges around referral are exacerbated. Transition Houses have differing policies on what, if any, information they will share with other Violence Against Women services. Typically, women-centred service delivery would require the informed permission of a woman to share her information with other service providers. A better understanding of a woman’s experience and services received may help VAW staff appropriately provide referral options for women to choose from. However, many Transition Housing Program agencies have significant concerns about sharing data, given the potential security issues for the women they serve. These concerns have been echoed in research regarding case management systems for transition houses. One solution being implemented in the United States is the practice of giving each woman a paper copy of her file as she leaves a transition house, which she can give to the next agency(ies) she accesses, saving her time in telling and retelling her story. Through this

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consultation, THP agencies raised concerns about who would own case management files, how they will be stored and who would have access to the information.

A well designed case management tool would support safe, consensual information sharing as well as consistent service referral. Some houses may choose to implement this tool electronically, while others may continue to use a paper version. Regardless, the tool should address data security concerns, which are particularly significant in services for women fleeing violence. The initial focus of a case management tool should be on providing internal supports within agencies to better support women receiving the services they need.

BC Housing and the THP sector should continue conversations about how case management processes can support better information sharing and referral for women fleeing violence amongst VAW and related services. BC Housing has recently invested in a web-based case management system that could be configured to meet the business, technical and security requirements of THP services providers and BC Housing program staff. Additional benefits are likely to include streamlining the data collection process for clients, new opportunities for information sharing and collaboration and cost reductions for the sector in adopting a common set of case management tools for front-line staff and managers.

**Recommendation R8:**
**Undertake a Strategic Planning process for the Transition Housing Program, building on the findings of the review process.**

The Canadian transition housing model has not been significantly altered since its development nearly 30 years ago. During this time, however, the needs of women fleeing violence have changed, as have the services provided to women to address the nature of violence in BC communities. Through this review, THP agencies noted the need to work, think and talk about the Transition Housing Program service model and identify ways in which VAW sector could respond to better meet the needs of women fleeing violence.

It is recommended that the Advisory Council be tasked to work with the THP sector to build a common set of goals and strategies that will help to unite and align service providers in their work across BC. This plan should involve, or at least take into account, the strategic direction of the broader VAW sector. In particular, planning work should involve representatives from the Ministry of Public Safety and the Solicitor General and Ending Violence Association.
Consolidated Report: Review of Women's Transition Housing and Supports Programs

Through this review process, as part of developing the elements of a program framework, the Steering Committee prepared a proposed vision, mission and working principles, which can be used as a starting point in the Strategic Planning process.

8.0 NEXT STEPS

In April 2010, the Steering Committee came together for three days in Vancouver to discuss the key elements of a program framework that will guide the future development of the THP, allocation of resources, and evaluation of client outcomes. As part of these discussions, the Steering Committee discussed ways in which to sustain and build upon the recommendations put forward through this review. The following priorities were identified to leverage the positive working relationship between BC Housing and service providers and build capacity throughout the sector to achieve the changes required to assist women and children to cope with violence:

- complete the funding model, including details regarding the formula, for allocating contract dollars;
- complete the program framework, building on the vision, mandate, principle and outcomes discussed at the April meetings;
- establish an Advisory council to oversee and participate in the implementation of the review’s recommendations and priorities for change;
- advocate for the development of a Violence Against Women sector strategic plan that will help to align and coordinate the efforts of stakeholders, funders and service providers in BC concerned with reducing violence against women;
- develop a strategic plan for the THP sector that identifies the goals, strategies and required actions to achieve the desired program outcomes and clarify the direction and role for all THP sector stakeholders;
- implement a ‘clearinghouse’ for service providers to share best practices and tools;
- establish service standards to ensure the program is delivered in a consistent and client-focused manner across the province; and
- implement case management tools to support front-line delivery of services and reduce administration costs.

These priorities were ranked by the Steering Committee on the following three key dimensions in order to identify the relative importance and timeframe for pursing each priority: the collective ability of service providers and BC Housing to ‘take on’ the priority; the likelihood that
the work required within each priority could be completed within one year; the importance of the priority relative to the other identified priorities.

The top three priorities to build on the work and findings of this review are:

1. Establish an Advisory Council to guide the development of the Transition Housing Program Framework and Funding Model. Terms of Reference for the Advisory Council need to be established, including mandate, membership, accountability, workplan and timeline.

2. Complete the Transition Housing Program framework, including a completed logic model, clarified roles and responsibilities and service standards. The development of the Program Framework should be done in consultation with the sector.

3. Complete the development of the Funding Model, including establishing clear criteria for each what costs are included in each section. This will also require a definition of the time required to deliver core services, as well as tools and processes to apply for community adjustment funds.
## Appendix A: Consultation participants

### Steering Committee
All Steering Committee members participated in a one hour unstructured interview, as well as providing ongoing input through the committee process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suzi Kennedy</td>
<td>Atira Women's Resource Society</td>
<td>Surrey/Vancouver/New Westminster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joan Cowderoy</td>
<td>Chimo Crisis Services</td>
<td>Richmond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim Bauer</td>
<td>Elkford Women's Task Force Society</td>
<td>Elkford/Sparwood/Fernie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerry Dyble</td>
<td>Hope &amp; Area Transition Society</td>
<td>Hope &amp; Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deara Dirk</td>
<td>Options Surrey Community Services Society</td>
<td>Surrey/Newton/Whalley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharon Hurd</td>
<td>Phoenix Transition Society</td>
<td>Prince George &amp; Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deanna Sudnik</td>
<td>South Peace Community Resources Society</td>
<td>Dawson Creek/Chetwynd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carol Metz Murray</td>
<td>Tri-City Women's Resource Society</td>
<td>Coquitlam/Port Coquitlam/Port Moody &amp; Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debby Hamilton</td>
<td>Vernon Women's Transition House Society</td>
<td>Vernon &amp; Area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carolyn Fast</td>
<td>Victoria Women's Transition House Society</td>
<td>Greater Victoria/South Island</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shabna Ali</td>
<td>BC Society of Transition Houses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda Angus</td>
<td>BC Housing, Manager, Supportive Housing</td>
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<td>Sairoz Sekhon</td>
<td>BC Housing, Manager, Women’s Transition Housing</td>
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<td>Bruk Melles</td>
<td>BC Housing, Manager, Program Planning</td>
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<td>Susanne Dahlin</td>
<td>Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General</td>
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### Safe Home conference call participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<th>Community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth deVries</td>
<td>McBride Safe Home</td>
<td>McBride</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barb Johnson</td>
<td>Port Hardy Safe Home</td>
<td>Port Hardy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan T.</td>
<td>Gold River Safe Home</td>
<td>Gold River</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheryl Wittcombe</td>
<td>South Peace Community Resources</td>
<td>Chetwynd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim Bauer</td>
<td>Elkford Women’s Task Force Society</td>
<td>Elkford/Sparwood/Fernie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sairoz Sekhon</td>
<td>BC Housing</td>
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### Second Stage House conference call participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Community</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suzi Kennedy</td>
<td>Atira Women’s Resource Society</td>
<td>Surrey/Newton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthur Mills &amp; Lisa Rupert</td>
<td>Young Women’s Christian Association</td>
<td>Vancouver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marlene Goley</td>
<td>Cridge Centre for the Family</td>
<td>Victoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barb Johnson</td>
<td>Port Hardy Safe Home</td>
<td>Port Hardy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melanie Smart</td>
<td>Margaret Laurence House</td>
<td>Victoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keely Howard</td>
<td>Sunshine Coast Community Services</td>
<td>Sechelt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sairoz Sekhon</td>
<td>BC Housing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim Bauer</td>
<td>Elkford Women’s Task Force Society</td>
<td>Elkford/Sparwood/Fernie</td>
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### Site visit and focus group with staff from Smithers
- Individual interviews with 4 past and current house residents
- Individual interview with Carol Sawchuk, Executive Director
- Focus group with 5 staff, including outreach workers
- Individual interview with Alan Doll, Ministry of Children and Families

**Site visit and focus group with staff from Nanaimo**
- Focus group with 5 current house residents
- Focus group with 10 transition house staff

**Vancouver Island focus group participants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anne Graboski</td>
<td>Alberni Community and Women’s Services Society</td>
<td>Port Alberni</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anne Davis</td>
<td>Comox Valley Transition Society</td>
<td>Courtenay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theresa Gerritsen</td>
<td>Cowichan Women Against Violence Society</td>
<td>Duncan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne Spilker</td>
<td>Haven Society</td>
<td>Nanaimo</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sooke Transition House Society</td>
<td>Sooke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meghan Backus</td>
<td>Victoria Women’s Transition House</td>
<td>Victoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kate Burns</td>
<td>Westcoast Transition House</td>
<td>Ucluelet</td>
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**External consultations**

**Completed**

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<tr>
<td>Melissa Linteris</td>
<td>BC Housing</td>
<td>Priority Placement Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lori Dennis</td>
<td>BC Housing</td>
<td>Homeless Outreach Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jill Cory and Alexxa Abi-Jaoude</td>
<td>BC Women’s Hospital</td>
<td>Women with mental health and/or addictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nancy Poole</td>
<td>BC Women’s Hospital</td>
<td>Women with addictions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marlene Goley</td>
<td>Cridge Centre for the Family</td>
<td>Second Stage Housing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robina Thomas</td>
<td>UVIC</td>
<td>Aboriginal services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karen Stone</td>
<td>BC Non Profit Housing Association</td>
<td>Housing continuum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rob Watts</td>
<td>Community Corrections &amp; Corporate Programs</td>
<td>Men’s treatment programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracy Porteous</td>
<td>Ending Violence Association</td>
<td>Violence Against Women services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Linda Ashdown</td>
<td>Fort Nelson Aboriginal Friendship Society</td>
<td>Mental Health and Addictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheryl Meyers</td>
<td>Victim Assistance and Emergency Social Services, New Westminster</td>
<td>Police Victim’s Services</td>
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Appendix B:

- Transition Housing Program Agency Survey Instrument
- Transition Housing Program Agency Summary of Survey Results
- Violence Against Women Sector Survey Instrument
- Violence Against Women Sector Summary of Survey Results
**Transition Housing Program Agency Survey Results**

The survey had a response rate of 48% with completions from 38 of a possible 79 agencies. Results are reported below for each question asked.

1. **In what region are you located?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Response</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fraser</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Island</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Mainland</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interior</td>
<td>26%</td>
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</table>

2. **What type of Violence Against Women services does your agency provide?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safe Home</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition House</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Stage Housing</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children Who Witness Abuse</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stopping the Violence</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Based Victim's Services</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>55%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: Multiple responses possible, sum of percentages will be greater than 100%.

**SURVEY RESULTS:**

This next series of questions is designed to capture a detailed picture of the services provided through the Transition Housing Program, including Safe Homes and Second Stage Housing. Many organizations provide services to women and children staying in their houses above and beyond those they are contractually required by BC Housing to provide. This question seeks to capture the full picture of service provision for women in safe homes, drawing a more complete picture of the work of the Transition Housing Program and how those services are funded.

- Please check boxes in the first column for all services your organization provides for women in your Safe Home / Transition House / Second Stage House using BC Housing funding.
- Please check boxes in the second column check boxes for all services you provide to women in your Safe Home / Transition House / Second Stage House using funding from the Ministry of Public Safety and the Solicitor General.
- Please check boxes in third column for all services you provide to women in your Safe Home / Transition House / Second Stage House using funding from other sources.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Provided</th>
<th>THP funding</th>
<th>MPSSG funding</th>
<th>Other funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shelter in a secure and confidential setting</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crisis intervention</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immediate hygiene needs</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referral to Mental Health counselling</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop and maintain relationships with related services</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navigating housing applications</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance locating accommodation for pets</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety planning</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help with obtaining food, clothing, identification, healthcare and daycare</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food to prepare meals</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support to assist residents in understanding and coping with the effects of abusive cycles and family violence</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community education and awareness on domestic violence</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information on and/or referrals to community and provincial resources</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accompaniment to appointments</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referral to Addictions support</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive counselling</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laundry facilities</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services for former residents</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk assessment</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal advocacy</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff able to respond to multi-cultural service needs</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>33%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Market rental housing listings</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parenting support</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crisis line supportive counselling</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>22%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conflict resolution</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child support work</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structured play / educational programs for resident children</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accommodation / space for pets</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child care</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>11%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Respite services for resident parents</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addictions support</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health counselling</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter for women not fleeing abuse as a primary issue</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>11%</td>
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</table>
Several respondents commented on the difficulty of identifying who funded each service, and so results should be interpreted with caution.

<table>
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<th>TRANSITION HOUSE SERVICES</th>
<th>Service Provided</th>
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<th>Other funding</th>
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<td>Information on and/or referrals to community and provincial resources</td>
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<td>100%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>47%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laundry facilities</td>
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<td>3%</td>
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<td>30%</td>
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<td>Crisis intervention</td>
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<td>100%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>33%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Support to assist resident parents and children in understanding and coping with the effects of abusive cycles and family violence</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>27%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>93%</td>
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<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accompaniment to appointments</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food to prepare meals</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<td>Immediate Hygiene needs (toiletries, bedding, towels)</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<td>Develop and maintain relationships with related services</td>
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<td>97%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Safety planning</td>
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<td>93%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive counselling (individual or group)</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>47%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child support work</td>
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<td>93%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>Community education and awareness on domestic violence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Referral to Addictions support</td>
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<td>Practical assistance and help with obtaining food, clothing, identification, healthcare and daycare</td>
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<td>33%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Navigating housing applications</td>
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<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Risk assessment</td>
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<td>83%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
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<td>83%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>23%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conflict resolution</td>
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<td>Market rental housing listings</td>
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<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff who are able to respond to diverse needs of women requiring multi-cultural services</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>27%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistance locating accommodation for pets</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child care</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structured play/ educational programs for resident children</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legal advocacy</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respite services for resident parents</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shelter for women not fleeing abuse as a primary issue</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<td>19%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>93%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>43%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mental health counselling</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation / space for pets</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services for former residents</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>53%</td>
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### SECOND STAGE SERVICES

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<th>Other funding</th>
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<tr>
<td>Shelter in a secure and confidential setting</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laundry facilities</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Safety planning</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop and maintain relationships with related services</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information on and/or referrals to community and provincial resources</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accompaniment to appointments</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive counselling (individual or group)</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referral to Mental Health counselling</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help with obtaining food, clothing, identification, healthcare and daycare</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referral to Addictions support</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk assessment</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crisis intervention</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff able to respond to multi-cultural service needs</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navigating housing applications</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal advocacy</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict resolution</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parenting support</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support to assist residents in understanding and coping with the effects of abusive cycles and family violence</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community education and awareness on domestic violence</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services for former residents</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market rental housing listings</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immediate Hygiene needs</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation / space for pets</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crisis line supportive counselling</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance locating accommodation for pets</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child support work</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structured play/educational programs for resident children</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food to prepare meals</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child care</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addictions support</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health counselling</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter for women not fleeing abuse as a primary issue</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respite services for resident parents</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Several respondents commented on the difficulty of identifying who funded each service, and so results should be interpreted.
3. What other services (if any) are you contractually required by BC Housing to provide through your Safe Home program?
   • None reported.

4. What other services (if any) do you provide through your Safe Home program in addition to those you are required to?
   • Education support and recognition to safe home providers
   • Holistic healing modes such as weekly yoga.
   • Establish and maintain a network of safe home providers.
   • Provide training and support for safe home providers.
   • Assistance navigating social assistance.

5. What other services (if any) are you contractually required by BC Housing to provide through your Transition House program?
   • None reported.

6. What other services (if any) do you provide through your Transition House in addition to those you are required to?
   • Serving women with concurrent disorders (if manageable)
   • Serving women with concurrent safety and housing needs
   • Child care
   • Unfunded transition house beds
   • Support for past residents
   • Community Education through presentations, workshops & events
   • Coordination / participation in VAW committees
   • Outreach
   • Donations of small household items, blankets, and clean clothes, etc.
   • Support for job search
   • Housing outreach
   • Translation services
   • Children's program
   • Emergency funds for women and children
   • Helping women to navigate family court system;
   • Supervision of MCFD mandated visits
   • Sexual assault accompaniment to hospital
   • Accommodate women in a hotel for one night stays if not funded by Emergency Services
   • Provide start up supplies and link with furniture provided by community supporters facilitate costs of moving through donated services
   • Self-care and relaxation techniques and activities
   • Cultural activities
   • Violence prevention & awareness program
   • Life skills coaching
   • Safety plans for non residents or former residents
   • Education and workshops for professionals and other service providers
7. What other services (if any) are you contractually required by BC Housing to provide through your Second Stage program?
   - encourage independence and maintain the program participant's moral and emotional well-being and general care
   - initial placement assistance, referral and support
   - public information regarding the services provided

8. To complement the services which the Transition Housing Program provides, which of these Violence Against Women related services are you aware of being available in your community:
9. **Tell us about any types of partnerships related to domestic abuse services you have with the following groups (check all that apply):**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Informal</th>
<th>Formal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Nation</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non Profit Housing</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Justice</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police / RCMP</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCFD</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Authority</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. **What is your organization’s approach or policy on housing women with severe mental health issues?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach to sheltering women with severe mental health issues</th>
<th>% of agencies reporting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Described sheltering women with severe mental health issues if, as assessed on a case by case basis, they were stable, able to live communally and care for themselves and any children. There were varying definitions of stable, including requirements to take medication.</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Described providing temporary shelter if necessary, but refer as quickly as possible to local mental health services.</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Described typically not sheltering women with severe mental health issues, citing staff capacity and safety concerns for other residents.</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. **What is your organization’s approach or policy on housing women with drug or alcohol addiction issues?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach to sheltering women with substance use issues</th>
<th>% of agencies reporting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Described using harm reduction approaches, though removing women for problematic behaviour, and most had rules about using onsite.</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Described requiring women to abstain while staying in the house.</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Described requiring abstention and women to be clean for up to 30 days before entering.</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reported that serving women with addictions was outside their mandate.</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12. **What is your organization’s approach or policy in accepting teenaged sons?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maximum age typically accepted</th>
<th>% of agencies reporting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 years old</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 years old</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 years old</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 years old</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 years old</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 years old</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 years old</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Several EDs noted they assess on a case by case basis, so reported ages are only guidelines.

13. **Please describe your Safe Home.** [Safe Home providers only]

14. **Which of the following staffing do you provide through the safe home program?** [Safe Home providers only]

15. **How many hours of direct service per week do you provide through the Safe Home program?** [Safe Home providers only]

Safe Home direct service hours varied considerably. Some agencies did not feel able to provide an estimate, as the hours depended on if someone was using the Safe Home. Hours reported ranged from 4 to 28 hours per week, with an average of 14 hours per week.
16. **Please describe your Second Stage Housing units.** [Second Stage Housing providers only]

![Bar chart showing percentages of separate units, separate bedrooms but communal living spaces, and both communal living and separate units.]

17. **Are you contracted by BC Housing to provide Second or Third Stage Housing?** [Second Stage Housing providers only]

![Pie chart showing percentages of contractors and non-contractors.]

18. **If not, what are your primary funding sources?** [Second Stage Housing providers only]

![Bar chart showing percentages of fundraising, other government programs, and rent.]

Note: Multiple responses possible, sum of percentages will equal more than 100%.

19. **What is the minimum number of staff in your transition house typically providing services to residents at different times of the day?** [Transition House providers only]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimum Number of Women Support Workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overnight</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Daytime</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evening</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weekends</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ratio of Number of Women Support Workers to Number of Beds, by Agency

Minimum Number of Child Support Workers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overnight</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daytime</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekends</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Several agencies (13%) specified that they had only part time Child Support Workers. These agencies are counted in the column with 1 worker, as it was not clear from the survey data how many had full time vs. part time staff in this position.

Ratio of Number of Child Support Workers to Number of Beds, by Agency
20. **Do you use an outcomes based evaluation model e.g. one that tracks “What has changed as a result of our work?” rather than one that tracks “What have we done with our resources?”**

![Pie chart showing 46% for Yes and 54% for No.]

21. **Do you have any comments about the use of outcomes based evaluation within the transition housing sector?**

Slightly more respondents were in favour of outcome measures than opposed, and several suggested issues to be considered in implementation. The themes of comments are summarized below with bracketed numbers beside each comment showing how many people made a similar statement.

**Support**
- Believe outcome measures are more effective than current tracking, citing usefulness as feedback point for staff and better understanding and reflection of women’s needs. (7)

**Concerns**
- Difficult to find valid outcome measures for crisis services. (3)
- Concern that cost of time needed to collect data outweighs potential benefits. (2)
- Concern that service providers will be held accountable for abusers continuing to abuse and potential pressure on staff to discourage woman to return to relationship (instead of respecting informed choices) in order to meet outcomes. (1)

**Implementation**
- Requires a way to reach past clients. (3)
- Moving towards outcome measures complex and time consuming and requires support. (2)
- Availability of service is an outcome. (1)
- Valid outcome measures need to be tied to women’s individual goals. (1)
- Measures must be designed collaboratively with frontline employees. (1)
- Funding should not be linked to outcomes. (1)
22. Is your organization a member of any of the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Membership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BC Society of Transition Houses</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ending Violence Association of BC</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ShelterNet BC</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC Non-Profit Housing Association</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

22. What is your organization’s wage range for a typical women support worker? (excluding benefits)

Starting Wage: $10, $12, $14, $16, $18, $20, $22, $24, $26, $28, $30
Maximum Wage: $12, $14, $16, $18, $20, $22, $24, $26, $28, $30

23. Is any of the housing you provide in need of repairs?

- Major repairs e.g. corroded pipes, damaged wiring, damp walls and ceilings, rotting porches
- Minor repairs e.g. small cracks in walls, leaking sinks, peeling paint, cracked windows

24. What, if any, changes would you make to your physical space to better meet the needs of women fleeing abuse?

- Accessibility (6)
- Security (cameras, secure parking) (5)
- Office / counseling space (4)
- Play area for children (4)
- Client storage (3)
- Larger facility (3)
• Smaller / more bedrooms (3)
• Garden / outdoor space (2)
• More common area (quiet space) (2)
• More bathroom facilities (2)
• Other minor renovations and maintenance (2)
• Own facility needed (safe home) (1)
• Energy and water conservation measures (1)
• Better location (1)

25. **What is the length of stay (days) which your contract states your clients would typically not exceed?**
   - Almost all Safe Homes reported their contract stated a 5 day stay, though one reported a 3 to 5 day stay.
   - Almost all Transition Houses reported their contracts stated 30 days, though one reported a 90 day stay.
   - The greatest variability in contracted length of stay was in Second Stage Houses. Most reported their contract specified a one year stay, but two reported their contract stated stays would typically not exceed 180 and 270 days respectively.

26. **What is the longest length of stay (days) you have accommodated a woman?**
   - The longest reported extensions in Safe Homes were no more than 3 days.
   - Transition Houses reported longest extensions ranging from 1 day to 180 days, but most reported longest extensions to a 3 month stay.
   - One Second Stage House reported up to a two and a half year stay, though most had a longest stay of two years.

27. **How common is it that your agency allows women to stay longer than the typical length of stay in the contract?**

![Bar Chart](chart.png)
Violence Against Women Sector Survey Results

There were 670 responses to the Violence Against Women sector wide survey.

1. What type of Violence Against Women services does your agency provide?

- Transition House: 44%
- Children Who Witness Abuse: 42%
- Outreach: 42%
- Stopping the Violence: 41%
- Community Based Victim Services: 25%
- Safe Home: 19%
- Second or Third Stage Housing: 19%
- Police Based Victim Services: 5%
- Other: 20%

2. What is your role within the agency?

- Manager/Coordinator: 20%
- Transition House staff: 16%
- Children Who Witness Abuse staff: 8%
- Outreach (related to violence against...): 8%
- Executive Director: 7%
- Stopping the Violence staff: 6%
- Safe Home staff: 4%
- Community Based Victim's Services staff: 4%
- Board of Directors member: 4%
- Second or Third Stage Housing staff: 2%
- Other (please specify): 8%

3. In what region are you located?

[Pie chart showing distribution of regions]
Demographics of Need

For ease of reporting, the next three questions are reported by demographic group, rather than by question.

4. **Of the women who access your program, please estimate what percentage are in the following categories (categories not mutually exclusive).**

5. **Does your program have any Violence Against Women related services which are specialized or targeted to any of these groups of women?**

6. **Do any of these groups of women typically have unique service needs which prevent you from serving them?**

Some questions were not asked of all demographic groups.

A. Older women (45+)

i. **Estimated % of older women served and % of agencies with targeted services, by type of program**

![Graph showing estimated % served and targeted services for Transition Housing Program and Other Violence Against Women.]

ii. **Estimated % of older women served and % of agencies with targeted services, by region**

![Graph showing estimated % served and targeted program for different regions.]

Vancouver Island, North, Interior, Fraser, Lower Mainland
iii. Percent of staff who report unserved unique needs for older women, by type of program

B. Women under 19
i. Estimated % of young women served and % of agencies with targeted services, by type of program

ii. Estimated % of young women served and % of agencies with targeted services, by region
iii. Percent of staff who report unserved unique needs for young women, by type of program

C. Aboriginal women

i. Estimated % of Aboriginal women served and % of agencies with targeted services, by type of program

ii. Estimated % of Aboriginal women served and % of agencies with targeted services, by region
iii. Percent of staff who report unserved unique needs for Aboriginal women, by type of program

D. Immigrant, refugee and non-status women

i. Estimated % of immigrant women served and % of agencies with targeted services, by type of program
ii. Estimated % of immigrant women served and % of agencies with targeted services, by region

![Graph showing percentages for different regions]

iii. Percent of staff who report unserved unique needs for immigrant women, by type of program

![Graph showing percentages for different programs]

E. Pregnant women

i. Estimated % of pregnant women served and % of agencies with targeted services, by type of program

![Graph showing percentages for different programs]
ii. Estimated % of pregnant women served and % of agencies with targeted services, by region

![Bar chart showing estimated % served and targeted service by region for pregnant women.]

- Vancouver Island: 12% (10% served, 28% targeted)
- North: 13% (13% served, 22% targeted)
- Interior: 9% (13% served, 11% targeted)
- Fraser: 15% (28% served, 11% targeted)
- Lower Mainland: 11% (11% served, 22% targeted)

iii. Percent of staff who report unserved unique needs for pregnant women, by type of program

![Bar chart showing percent of staff reporting unserved needs for pregnant women.]

- Transition Housing Program: 7%
- Other Violence Against Women: 3%

F. Women with disabilities

i. Estimated % of women with disabilities served and % of agencies with targeted services, by type of program

![Bar chart showing estimated % served and targeted service for women with disabilities.]

- Transition Housing Program: 17% (13% served, 14% targeted)
- Other Violence Against Women: 6% (14% served, 6% targeted)
ii. Estimated % of women with disabilities served and % of agencies with targeted services, by region

iii. Percent of staff who report unserved unique needs for women with disabilities, by type of program

G. Women with children living with them

i. Estimated % of women with children served and % of agencies with targeted services, by type of program
ii. Estimated % of women with children served and % of agencies with targeted services, by region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Estimated % served</th>
<th>Targeted service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vancouver Island</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interior</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraser</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Mainland</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

iii. Percent of staff who report unserved unique needs for women with children, by type of program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>% of Staff Reporting Unmet Needs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transition Housing Program</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Violence Against Women</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

H. Women with teenage boys living with them
i. Estimated % of women with teenage boys served and % of agencies with targeted services, by type of program

![Graph showing estimated % served versus targeted service by program type.]

ii. Estimated % of women with teenage boys served and % of agencies with targeted services, by region

![Graph showing estimated % served versus targeted service by region.]

iii. Percent of staff who report unserved unique needs for women with teenage boys, by type of program

![Graph showing percent of staff unserved by program type.]

I. Women with children living with partners
i. Estimated % of women with children living with partners served and % of agencies with targeted services, by type of program

![Bar Chart](chart1)

ii. Estimated % of women with children living with partners served and % of agencies with targeted services, by region

![Bar Chart](chart2)

iii. Percent of staff who report unserved unique needs for women with children living with partners, by type of program

![Bar Chart](chart3)
J. Women with children living in care of the Ministry of Children and Family Development

i. Estimated % of women with children living in care served and % of agencies with targeted services, by type of program

![Chart showing estimated % served and targeted service by type of program](image)

ii. Estimated % of women with children living in care served and % of agencies with targeted services, by region

![Chart showing estimated % served and targeted service by region](image)

iii. Percent of staff who report unserved unique needs for women with children living in care, by type of program

![Chart showing percent of staff who report unserved unique needs](image)

K. Lesbian / bi-sexual / queer / two-spirit women
i. Estimated % of gay women served and % of agencies with targeted services, by type of program

- Transition Housing Program: 5% served, 11% targeted services
- Other Violence Against Women: 5% served, 5% targeted services

ii. Estimated % of gay women served and % of agencies with targeted services, by region

- Vancouver Island: 6% served, 8% targeted services
- North: 7% served, 11% targeted services
- Interior: 3% served, 5% targeted services
- Fraser: 5% served, 4% targeted services
- Lower Mainland: 6% served, 19% targeted services

iii. Percent of staff who report unserved unique needs for gay women, by type of program

- Transition Housing Program: 7%
- Other Violence Against Women: 2%

L. Transgendered / transsexual women
i. Estimated % of transgendered women served and % of agencies with targeted services, by type of program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Estimated % served</th>
<th>Targeted service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transition Housing Program</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Violence Against Women</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ii. Estimated % of transgendered women served and % of agencies with targeted services, by region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Estimated % served</th>
<th>Targeted service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vancouver Island</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interior</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraser</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Mainland</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

iii. Percent of staff who report unserved unique needs for transgendered women, by type of program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transition Housing Program</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Violence Against Women</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

M. Homeless women (abuse still primary issue)
i. **Estimated % of homeless women served and % of agencies with targeted services, by type of program**

![Bar chart showing estimated % served and targeted services by type of program.]

- Transition Housing Program: Estimated 24%, Targeted 18%
- Other Violence Against Women: Estimated 16%, Targeted 7%

ii. **Estimated % of homeless women served and % of agencies with targeted services, by region**

![Bar chart showing estimated % served and targeted services by region.]

- Vancouver Island: Estimated 20%, Targeted 13%
- North: Estimated 29%, Targeted 17%
- Interior: Estimated 14%, Targeted 9%
- Fraser: Estimated 25%, Targeted 22%
- Lower Mainland: Estimated 24%, Targeted 19%

iii. **Percent of staff who report unserved unique needs for homeless women, by type of program**

![Bar chart showing percent of staff who report unserved unique needs.]

- Transition Housing Program: 12%
- Other Violence Against Women: 6%

N. Women with severe mental health challenges
i. Estimated % of older women served and % of agencies with targeted services, by type of program

![Bar chart comparing estimated % served and targeted service by type of program]

Transition Housing Program: 19% served, 15% targeted services
Other Violence Against Women: 17% served, 6% targeted services

ii. Estimated % of older women served and % of agencies with targeted services, by region

- Vancouver Island: 19% served, 7% targeted services
- North: 17% served, 11% targeted services
- Interior: 18% served, 11% targeted services
- Fraser: 23% served, 10% targeted services
- Lower Mainland: 21% served, 19% targeted services

iii. Percent of staff who report unserved unique needs for older women, by type of program

- Transition Housing Program: 34% unserved
- Other Violence Against Women: 9% unserved

O. Women with drug or alcohol addictions
i. Estimated % of women with addictions served and % of agencies with targeted services, by type of program

- Transition Housing Program: Estimated 40% served, 28% targeted services.
- Other Violence Against Women: Estimated 32% served, 7% targeted services.

ii. Estimated % of women with addictions served and % of agencies with targeted services, by region

- Vancouver Island: Estimated 42%, Targeted 21%.
- North: Estimated 49%, Targeted 24%.
- Interior: Estimated 33%, Targeted 17%.
- Fraser: Estimated 41%, Targeted 24%.
- Lower Mainland: Estimated 39%, Targeted 23%.

iii. Percent of staff who report unserved unique needs for women with addictions, by type of program

- Transition Housing Program: 32%.
- Other Violence Against Women: 5%.

P. Women leaving sex work
i. Estimated % of women leaving sex work served and % of agencies with targeted services, by type of program

![Bar chart showing estimated served and targeted service percentages by program type.]

ii. Estimated % of women leaving sex work served and % of agencies with targeted services, by region

![Bar chart showing estimated served and targeted service percentages by region.]

iii. Percent of staff who report unserved unique needs for women leaving sex work, by type of program

![Bar chart showing percent of staff reporting unserved needs by program type.]

Q. Women leaving gangs
i. Estimated % of women leaving gangs served and % of agencies with targeted services, by type of program

![Bar chart showing estimated % served and targeted service by type of program.]

ii. Estimated % of women leaving gangs served and % of agencies with targeted services, by region

![Bar chart showing estimated % served and targeted service by region.]

iii. Percent of staff who report unserved unique needs for women leaving gangs, by type of program

![Bar chart showing percent of staff reporting unserved unique needs.]

R. Women working in paid employment
i. Estimated % of women in paid employment served by type of program

- Transition Housing Program: 27%
- Other Violence Against Women: 43%

ii. Estimated % of women in paid employment served by region

- Vancouver Island: 30%
- North: 32%
- Interior: 30%
- Fraser: 32%
- Lower Mainland: 31%

Note: no questions were asked about targeted services or unique needs for this group

S. Women receiving and / or applying for income assistance

i. Estimated % of women receiving income assistance served, by type of program

- Transition Housing Program: 64%
- Other Violence Against Women: 45%

ii. Estimated % of women receiving income assistance served, by region
Note: no questions were asked about targeted services or unique needs for this group

7. Think of all the women who access all aspects of Violence Against Women programming that you are familiar with. Over the past 10 years, has there been a change in numbers of women accessing these services in your community?
8. When women who have sought shelter with your agency leave the housing you provide, what percent would you estimate move on to:

- Another Transition House: 13%
- Second Stage: 9%
- Homeless / Family & Friends: 27%
- Affordable Housing: 37%
- Previous Address: 30%

9. What, if any, specific Violence Against Women services are women commonly required to wait or are turned away from? (coded open ended responses)

- Stopping the Violence counselling: 26%
- Children Who Witness Abuse counselling: 21%
- Counselling (general): 19%
- Transition House: 14%
- Second stage: 8%
- Affordable housing: 5%
- Outreach: 4%
- Legal Aid: 4%
- Addiction treatment: 3%
- Mental health treatment: 2%
- Victim Services: 2%
- Family Guidance: 1%
- Other: 4%

In addition, 5% of respondents made comments here that women with substance use or mental health issues are frequently turned away from many VAW services.

10. Please describe women fleeing abuse who typically do not access transition houses and what you understand as the reasons that they do not access these services.

- Concern for lack of confidentiality / stigma: 15%
- Afraid of other clients: 13%
- Have other options (family / financial resources): 11%
- Substance abuse limits access: 10%
- Unaware of supports: 9%
• Reluctant to live communally 7%
• Have to leave community 7%
• Discouragement from religious / cultural community 7%
• Unwilling to uproot children 6%
• Transition House services not culturally appropriate 5%
• Afraid of ramifications from partner 5%
• Mental health issues limits access 4%
• Concerned about Transition House rules 4%
• Concerned about Transition House staff judgement 4%
• No space for pets / farm animals 4%
• Do not believe abuse is “bad enough” 4%
• Need language other than English 3%
• Fear poverty post-transition house 3%
• No room in Transition House in time of crisis 3%
• Cannot bring dependent parents / extended family 3%
• Negative past experience 3%
• Lack of affordable housing post-transition house 3%
• Cannot bring teenage sons 3%
• Length of stay too short to address issues 3%
• Gay, believe services not welcoming 2%
• Transgendered, believe services not welcoming 2%
• Lack of transportation to Transition House 2%
• Afraid to leave belongings 2%

Other reasons included houses not being physically accessible, sex workers feeling unwelcome, immigrants fearing deportation and gang-involved women fearing endangering other TH residents.

11. Please rank the following key issues in order of priority for the Transition Housing Sector, which includes Safe Homes, Transition Houses and Second / Third Stage Housing.

1. Access to housing after leaving transition housing services
2. Services for women with mental health and / or addictions issues
3. Outreach services for women fleeing abuse after leaving transition houses
4. Women’s ability to become financially independent from abusers
5. Women in need not accessing Violence Against Women services
6. Wages for Violence Against Women staff
7. Inconsistent funding model
8. Training for Violence Against Women staff
9. Services for women needing shelter for whom abuse is not the primary issue
10. Defined core services for all safe homes, transition houses and second stage houses
11. Provincial Coordination of Violence Against Women services
12. Regional Coordination of Violence Against Women services
13. Outcome measure evaluation framework which is valid for transition housing program
14. Physical layout or condition of transition housing
12. Please identify other key issues. *(coded open ended responses)*

- Legal aid 15%
- Education and awareness raising around violence against women 13%
- Amount / uncertainty of funding for VAW services 9%
- More affordable housing 9%
- Counselling for abusive partners 7%
- Services for mental health / substance use 7%
- Poverty 7%
- More second stage housing 6%
- More transition houses / safe homes 6%
- Child care 4%
- Access to other VAW services 4%
- Police understanding of VAW issues 4%
- Support for transitions between parents 2%
- Partnerships between VAW services 2%
- Supports for culturally appropriate services 2%
- More Aboriginal managed VAW services 2%
- Services for older women 2%

13. What recommendations for change would you make to address the key issues you see for the Transition Housing Sector? *(coded open ended responses)*

- Maintain or increase funding for Violence Against Women issues 8%
- More affordable housing 8%
- More services for women with mental health or substance use issues 7%
- Increased collaboration / coordination of VAW services 7%
- Training for VAW staff 7%
- More second stage housing 6%
- Increase access to STV / CWWA 4%
- More Safe Homes / Transition Houses (or more beds) 4%
- Increased awareness of Violence Against Women issues 3%
- Outreach services for women fleeing abuse 3%
- Legal aid 3%
- Higher wages for VAW staff 3%
- Life skills / Employment training for women fleeing abuse 2%
- More culturally appropriate services 2%
- Increase staffing levels 2%
- Improve police understanding of VAW issues 2%
- Services for abusers 1%
- In House clinical counselling / nurse staff for Transition Houses 1%
- Transition House accessible for women / children with disabilities 1%
- Outcomes measures for VAW services 1%
- Services for women with teenage children 1%
- Pet accommodation 1%
- Longer stays 1%
- Domestic Violence court 1%
14. Within the broader Transition Housing Program, there are safe homes, transition houses and second and third stage housing. Each program type has its own set of goals and related services.

[Transition Housing Program staff were asked]
- Please check all services you feel women in Safe Homes / Transition Houses / Second Stage Houses need.
- Which are the top 10 most important Safe Home / Transition House / Second Stage services?

[other Violence Against Women staff were asked]
- Please check all services you believe are provided by all Safe Homes / Transition Houses / Second Stage Houses.

### SAFE HOME SERVICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>THP say women need</th>
<th>THP rank in top 10</th>
<th>other VAW believes is provided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shelter in a secure and confidential setting</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crisis intervention</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety planning</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immediate hygiene needs</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help with obtaining food, clothing, identification, healthcare and daycare</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information on and/or referrals to community and provincial resources</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food to prepare meals</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk assessment</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referral to Mental Health counselling</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive counselling</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parenting support</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop and maintain relationships with related services</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support to assist residents in understanding and coping with the effects of abusive cycles and family violence</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>10 (tie)</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community education and awareness on domestic violence</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>10 (tie)</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff able to respond to multi-cultural service needs</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>10 (tie)</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laundry facilities</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>10 (tie)</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navigating housing applications</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>10 (tie)</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referral to Addictions support</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>10 (tie)</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health counselling</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>10 (tie)</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>THP say women need</td>
<td>THP rank in top 10</td>
<td>VAW believes is provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance locating accommodation for pets</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td></td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navigating social assistance applications</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td></td>
<td>53%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accompaniment to appointments</td>
<td>85%</td>
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<td>42%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crisis line supportive counselling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td></td>
<td>71%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accommodation / space for pets</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td></td>
<td>3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legal advocacy</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>10 (tie)</td>
<td>28%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child support work</td>
<td>83%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child care</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td></td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services for former residents</td>
<td>75%</td>
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<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict resolution</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td></td>
<td>32%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Respite services for resident parents</td>
<td>72%</td>
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<td>3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Structured play/educational programs for resident children</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td></td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addictions support</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td></td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market rental housing listings</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td></td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter for women not fleeing abuse as a primary issue</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td></td>
<td>32%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**TRANSFER HOUSE SERVICES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>THP say women need</th>
<th>THP rank in top 10</th>
<th>VAW believes is provided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safety planning</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food to prepare meals</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information on and/or referrals to community and provincial resources</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laundry facilities</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td></td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support to assist resident parents and children in understanding and coping with the effects of abusive cycles and family violence</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>73%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Immediate Hygiene needs (essential toiletries, bedding, towels)</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter in a secure and confidential setting</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive counselling (individual or group)</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parenting support</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td></td>
<td>49%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop and maintain relationships with related services</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td></td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical assistance and help with obtaining food, clothing, identification, healthcare and daycare</td>
<td>96%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crisis intervention</td>
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<td>Transportation</td>
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<td>Child support work</td>
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<td>Community education and awareness on domestic violence</td>
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<td>73%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Referral to Addictions support</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td></td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navigation social assistance</td>
<td>95%</td>
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<td>84%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Referral to Mental Health counselling</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td></td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff who are able to respond to diverse needs of women requiring multi-cultural services</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td></td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>THP say women need</td>
<td>THP rank in top 10</td>
<td>VAW believes is provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal advocacy</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td></td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td></td>
<td>76%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Navigating housing applications</td>
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<td>Child care</td>
<td>92%</td>
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<td>Accompaniment to appointments</td>
<td>92%</td>
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<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk assessment</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td></td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict resolution</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td></td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market rental housing listings</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td></td>
<td>65%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistance locating accommodation for pets</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td></td>
<td>37%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crisis line supportive counselling</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services for former residents</td>
<td>87%</td>
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<td>39%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Structured play/educational programs for resident children</td>
<td>86%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Respite services for resident parents</td>
<td>80%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>16%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accommodation / space for pets</td>
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<td>Mental health counselling</td>
<td>68%</td>
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<td>14%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shelter for women not fleeing abuse as a primary issue</td>
<td>65%</td>
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<td>27%</td>
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</table>

**SECOND STAGE SERVICES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>THP say women need</th>
<th>THP rank in top 10</th>
<th>VAW believes is provided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supportive counselling (individual or group)</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laundry facilities</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal advocacy</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information on and/or referrals to community and provincial resources</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff able to respond to multi-cultural service needs</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td></td>
<td>48%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop and maintain relationships with related services</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referral to Mental Health counselling</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td></td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter in a secure and confidential setting</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety planning</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support to assist residents in understanding and coping with the effects of abusive cycles and family violence</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help with obtaining food, clothing, identification, healthcare and daycare</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referral to Addictions support</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td></td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parenting support</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navigating housing applications</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict resolution</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td></td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child support work</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navigating social assistance</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk assessment</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td></td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services for former residents</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td></td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Consolidated Report: Review of Women’s Transition Housing and Supports Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Safe Homes</th>
<th>Safe Homes (none listed)</th>
<th>Transition Houses</th>
<th>Second Stage Houses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Addictions support</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>Life skills development</td>
<td>Life skills development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community education and awareness on domestic violence</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>Healthy relationship coaching</td>
<td>Healthy relationship coaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market rental housing listings</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>Child counselling</td>
<td>Child counselling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structured play/educational programs for resident children</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>Services for women and children with disabilities</td>
<td>Services for women and children with disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health counselling</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Self care initiatives</td>
<td>Self care initiatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accompaniment to appointments</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>Recreation activities</td>
<td>Recreation activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crisis intervention</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>Shelter for women not fleeing abuse as a primary issue</td>
<td>Shelter for women not fleeing abuse as a primary issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>Assistance locating accommodation for pets</td>
<td>Assistance locating accommodation for pets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation / space for pets</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child care</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respite services for resident parents</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immediate Hygiene needs</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crisis line supportive counselling</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food to prepare meals</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15. Please list any other services women in Safe Homes / Transition Houses / Second Stage Houses need, if any.

Safe Homes
(none listed)

Transition Houses
- Life skills development
- Healthy relationship coaching
- Child counselling
- Services for women and children with disabilities
- Self care initiatives
- Recreation activities

Second Stage Houses
- Life skills development
- Recreation activities
Appendix C: Funding Model Bed Cutoff

It is recommended that the new funding model should account for the economies of scale realized by larger facilities by allowing for a larger cost per bed for smaller facilities. The suggested cutoff for Transition Houses is up to and including 10 beds.

In order to assess any potential economies of scale, DES staff hours data for each Transition House was analyzed in comparison to the number of funded beds per house. The first focus was on the number of direct service staff hours used per bed, therefore administrative hours were excluded. Included were women support workers, child support workers, relief workers, program coordinators, outreach workers, and (if appropriate) program managers and Executive Directors. Some houses reported Manager or Executive Director hours as administration, others as program hours. Some of the inconsistencies in reporting may be differences in understanding of the reporting form but in many cases these inconsistencies simply reflect differences in how services are delivered. In some small agencies, for example, the Executive Director does provide direct service.

The chart below shows that hours per bed are generally higher for agencies with fewer beds. Therefore, moving to a per bed funding model may require consideration of a different cost per bed for agencies with fewer beds.

Comparison of direct service hours per bed by number of beds / house
When examining the types of direct service staff hours, there is a marked increase in support/cleaning hours beginning at fourteen beds, where most of this work was managed previously by Women Support Workers. However, there is also a small reduction in Women Support Worker hours/bed. Overall, hours per bed are similar as for all agencies with more than 10 beds, even as the number of beds increases.

Administration hours per bed are less clear, as shown in the chart below, though there is a general trend of reduced admin hours per number of beds. The divergence in how agencies interpret “administration” when reporting with the DES form further limits conclusions from this data.

The rationale for the 10 bed cut off is based on existing service delivery, which will change in many agencies as the core service recommendation is implemented. It is expected that the efficiencies of scale will remain. However, this should be assessed again as the number of hours required to deliver core services is determined through the development of the funding model.
Appendix D: Outreach services for women fleeing violence

Outreach funding is used to support a wide range of activities. Some clarity gained through this review as to the different outreach functions is summarized below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THP residents</th>
<th>Non-residents</th>
<th>Community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pre-resident Outreach</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information on options</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funder: MPSSG &amp; THP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivered by:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• VictimLink</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Outreach Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Safe Homes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• TH Crisis Lines</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• TH Outreach worker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resident Outreach</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>= Referral, Transportation, Advocacy, Accompaniment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agency Outreach</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>= Maintain relationships with related services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funder: THP (Core services)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivered by: THP agencies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Post-resident Supports</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referral, Point of contact, Support, Housing placement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funder: THP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivered by:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Any VAW agency, incl. agencies with THP svrcs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• BC Housing Priority Placement Coordinator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Safe Homes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overlap</th>
<th>Non-resident Outreach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information on options, Understanding abuse, Emotional support, Referral, Transportation, Advocacy, Accompaniment, Point of contact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funder: MPSSG (ORS)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivered by: VictimLink, Any VAW agency (including agencies with THP services)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Community Education and Awareness  |
| Abuse prevention, Information on effects of violence and resources (incl. multi-cultural programs)  |
| Funder: MPSSG (ORS)  |
| Delivered by: Any VAW agency (including agencies with THP services)  |

**Outreach Services for women fleeing violence**

**Pre-resident Outreach:** Regardless of which initial point of contact is delivering pre-resident outreach, either agencies with THP services and other VAW services, it is important that these services provide information on all the options available to women. Most pre-resident outreach is funded by MPSSG. Safe Homes offer pre/non/post resident outreach. Transition Houses deliver a limited amount of pre-resident outreach through crisis lines (only in some agencies, typically not THP funded) or outreach workers who travel to places where women gather who might not contact transition houses directly (e.g. remote First Nations reserves).

**Resident Outreach:** Though some THP agencies refer to resident outreach, the services they describe are also captured in the following core services: “referral”, “transportation”, “support”, “housing placement”.  

| **Agency Outreach**  |
| = Maintain relationships with related services  |
| Funder: THP (Core services)  |
| Delivered by: THP agencies  |

| **Community Outreach**  |
| = Maintain relationships with related services  |
| Funder: THP (Core services)  |
| Delivered by: THP agencies  |
“advocacy” and “accompaniment”. For clarity, it is recommended that these terms be used instead.

**Agency Outreach:** Though some THP agencies refer to the work they do in networking and sharing information with other VAW agencies as agency outreach, these services are also captured in the core service: “maintain relationships with related services”. For clarity, it is recommended that this term be used instead.

**Post-resident Supports:** Many women leaving transition houses are not able to access these supports, which is addressed through Recommendation R1. These supports for women post-transition house are delivered in five ways:

1. Transition Houses are funded to deliver post-resident supports as part of a series of special THP contracts with BC Housing with embedded outreach services. The embedded outreach contracts include a number of additional deliverables, and this review found that most Transition Houses have focused resources on deliverables other than post-transition house supports.

2. Safe Homes, funded through their BC Housing contract, provide pre/non/post resident outreach to women fleeing violence in the communities served by Safe Homes.

3. Some Transition Houses, funded through donations and other fundraising, connect annually with any ex-residents they can find through a Christmas hamper.

4. VAW service providers, including some agencies which also provide THP services, deliver Outreach Services under contract with the Ministry of Public Safety and the Solicitor General. Women leaving transition houses do access these outreach services. However, there is a great demand for outreach services and substantial variation by community as to what type of outreach services are provided. Therefore, many women fleeing violence, including those leaving transition houses, are not able to access direct outreach services. In addition, outreach supports for women leaving transition houses may require greater emphasis on securing housing and setting up new lives than are currently provided.

5. BC Housing’s Priority Placement Coordinator serves women on the Lower Mainland. This program is limited by geography and staffing, serving 98 women in 2009.

**Non-resident Outreach:** MPSSG currently funds outreach programs in at least 56 communities, whose two objectives include ensuring women who have experienced violence have access to required support and intervention services and community education and awareness in violence
prevention (see below). These services are currently funded by the MPSSG and are noted as
context for outreach services within the Transition Housing Program. The two functions are
separated here for clarity.

**Community Education and Awareness**: These services are primarily delivered through the
MPSSG Outreach Services contracts, including multi-cultural outreach. There are a small
number of THP funded community education and awareness programs, and these are
addressed under Recommendation E3.

Many THP and VAW staff feel strongly about which type of agency is best suited to deliver
outreach services, but the review found a blended model of service providers appears to be
successful.
Appendix E: Preliminary List of Second Stage Houses not funded through Transition Housing Program

Ann Davis Transition Society, Chilliwack
Cythera Transition House Society, Maple Ridge
Elk Valley Family Society, Fernie
Hope & Area Transition Society, Hope
Kelowna Women's Shelter, Kelowna
North Shore Crisis Services Society, North Vancouver
Northern Society for Domestic Peace, Smithers
Omineca Safe Home Society, Vanderhoof
Vernon Women's Transition House Society, Vernon
Victoria Women's Transition House Society, Victoria
Women in Need Gaining Strength, New Westminster
Women's Resource Society of the Fraser Valley, Mission
Xolhemet Society, Chilliwack
Appendix F: References


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Residents of Canada’s shelters for abused women


