A New Day: Men's Healing Program

Evaluation Report

Prepared for:
Department of Justice

Northwest Territories

Prepared by:

proactive
INFORMATION SERVICES INC.

"Helping Clients Make a Difference … since 1984"

November 2016

Table of Contents

Introduction 1
- A. Background 1
- B. Introduction to the Evaluation 2

In Summary 3
- A. Key Findings and Conclusions 3
  - 1. Program Implementation 3
  - 2. Program Monitoring 4
  - 3. Program Effectiveness 5
  - 4. Perceptions of the Program 6
  - 5. Model for Future Delivery 7
- B. Future Directions 8

Methodology 10
- A. Evaluation Questions 10
  - 1. Program Implementation 10
  - 2. Program Monitoring 10
  - 3. Program Effectiveness 10
  - 4. Perceptions of the Program 11
  - 5. Model for Future Delivery 11
- B. Evaluation Approach 11
- C. Methods 11
  - 1. Interviews with Program Staff 11
  - 2. Key Informant Interviews 12
  - 3. Client Interviews 12
  - 4. Program Data 13
- D. Challenges and Limitations 13
  - 1. Engaging Program Clients 13
  - 2. Program Time Frame 13
  - 3. Evaluation Time Frame 14
  - 4. Program Data 14

Discussion of Findings 15
- A. Program Implementation 15
  - 1. Is the Program Operating as Intended? 15
  - 2. What Resources Are Available to the Program? 17
  - 3. What Organizations Refer to the Program? 21
  - 4. What External Supports Are Available and Utilized? 22
  - 5. What Outreach has been Done in the Community? 22
  - 6. What Have Been the Challenges and Supports to Implementation? 23

B. Program Monitoring 27
1. What Is the Most Common Client Profile? 27
C. Program Effectiveness 28
1. What Aspects Are Most Effective in Reducing Reoffending? 28
2. Changes in Participant Behaviour – Program Outcomes 35
3. Other Program Effects 37
D. Perceptions of the Program 38
1. Why Do Men Enter/Leave the Program 38
2. What Do Staff, Clients, Community Groups Believe About the Program? 39
E. Model; and Resources for Future Delivery 40
1. Model 40
2. Funding 41

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-- INTRODUCTION --

A. Background

Family violence comes in many forms. It can be verbal, physical, emotional, financial, spiritual, and sexual. The Northwest Territories has one of the highest rates of domestic violence in Canada, second only to Nunavut.

A New Day is a men's healing program, developed by the GNWT and in partnership with the Coalition Against Family Violence, which is currently being piloted under a contract with the Tree of Peace Friendship Centre[1] which ends December 31, 2016. The program has been in operation under the auspices of the Tree of Peace Friendship Centre since December 2014, following a nine month hiatus.

The program offers free individual and group therapy for men who have used violence in their relationships. The program was designed to begin with individual one-on-one pre-group sessions followed by a 20 week group therapy program for which there is a specified curriculum. Participants may self-refer, be agency referred, or be mandated clients. The program is delivered by a coordinator and facilitator both of whom conduct individual and group sessions. Group sessions are co-facilitated.

As noted by the GNWT Department of Justice, the program's purpose is to:

a. Assist men to take responsibility for stopping their abusive behaviour and for building the relationships they prefer with their partners, children and other men;
b. Reduce spousal violence recidivism rates;
c. Hold people who use violence accountable for their behaviour;
d. Decrease risk to victims;
e. Teach new skills and provide new opportunities;
f. Be culturally responsive, response-based and strength-based delivery.

As stated in the contract: Narrative Therapy: Abuse Intervention "A New Day" Healing Program (SC4444765) *"the expected program outcomes include:*

- *A reduction in intimate partner abuse;*
- *More men who abuse are held accountable for their behaviour; and*
- *Improved safety of partners and children."*

[1] The program first operated at Healing Drum as the Wek'èahkaa Healing Program, moving to Tree of Peace in 2014.

The curriculum for A New Day is based upon Narrative Therapy and consists of four stages each consisting of a number of sessions. As outlined in the curriculum document, the four stages are:

- **Stage 1:** Preparing to Take Responsibility (sessions 1 to 5)
- **Stage 2:** Building a Self-Care Plan; Studying Past Incidents of Abuse (sessions 6 to 8)
- **Stage 3:** Studying the Effects of Abuse (sessions 9 to 12)
- **Stage 4:** Healing and Repairing the Effects of Abuse (sessions 13 to 20)

Clients undergo an intake period (designed to be four sessions) before entering the group.

B. Introduction to the Evaluation

Department of Justice (GNWT) contracted with Proactive Information Services Inc.,[2] a social research and program evaluation company, to evaluate A New Day. The focus of the evaluation was to be on the clients who had begun intake between October 2012 and December 31, 2015.

This evaluation focuses on key questions identified by the Department of Justice. As outlined in the Detailed Evaluation Framework and Work Plan, the areas of inquiry and related questions which address both program implementation and results. It was made clear by the Department of Justice that the evaluation, regardless of the findings, was not intended to make recommendations regarding continuation of the current contract, as the contract is ending December 31, 2016. The evaluation was to focus on the evaluation questions in order to inform the development and implementation of a new long term program.

Proactive's evaluation addressed many of the evaluation questions, while the GNWT Department of Justice utilized internal data/program records to answer the other questions in a companion document. GNWT Department of Justice analyzed quantitative data related to program delivery, participation, attrition and reoffending rates, while Proactive undertook interviews with a variety of key informants.

[2] Based in Western Canada, Proactive Information Services Inc. was established in 1984 specifically to provide research and evaluation services to clients in the public and non-profit sectors. Proactive's clients include government departments, public sector agencies, health authorities, school districts, community organizations, foundations, and other NGOs in Canada and internationally. Proactive scored highest in response to the *Standing Offer for Program Monitoring and Evaluation* issued by the GNWT.

-- IN SUMMARY --

This section will present a summary of the key findings according to the evaluation questions, followed by conclusions relating to the main areas of inquiry. Subsequently, directions for the future are proposed. Supporting evidence is found in the Discussion of Findings.

A. Key Findings and Conclusions

1. Program Implementation

i. How is the program operating? Is it operating as intended?

- The program has been through many changes which has meant that, for a significant proportion of the pilot period, it was unable to operate as intended. However, while there are divergent views about its current state of operation, it appears the program is currently operating according to the contract and using the prescribed curriculum.

ii. What resources are available to the program (e.g., staff qualifications, partnerships)?

- Staff are qualified according to the criteria in the contract and according to the views of clients and referring partners who are positive about the qualities that the staff bring to the program.
- The program has numerous partnerships of various kinds, including partnerships with organizations in Yellowknife and in the Territories that include referrals, information sharing and the provision of training. National partnerships support networking and sharing of effective practices.

iii. Which organizations are referring to the program? How do they determine who should be referred?

- Referrals come from a number of different sources, including self-referrals, Probation Services and the sponsoring agency, among others.
- Probation Services, for example, refers men who are violent offenders over the age of 18 who they believe would respond to the program. Some are mandated to attend counselling and choose to do this by joining A New Day.

iv. What external supports are available and utilized?

- As previously mentioned, networking and information sharing both within and outside the NWT have been helpful.

- The clinical supervisor is a support. While not completely external, the clinical supervisor is not part of the on-site team, nor is s/he highly utilized.
- Being part of the Coalition Against Family Violence has also been advantageous, although the Advisory Group specific to the program has not met since A New Day began operating under the auspices of the Tree of Peace.

v. What outreach has been done in the community?

- Outreach has been done in a variety of ways. The Tree of Peace staff who run A New Day have engaged with numerous community-based agencies, as well as conducting regular sessions at the North Slave Correctional Centre. The connection with men who are incarcerated provides a potential entry point into A New Day post-incarceration.

vi. What have been the challenges and supports to implementation?

- The challenges have been the gap in agency support, the discontinuation of the program and the changes in both the sponsoring NGO and staff, as well as changes in staff at Department of Justice.
- Another challenge is that there are differing perceptions in the community and in government as to the mandate and operation of A New Day. Those in the community and the Tree of Peace staff who deliver A New Day, believe the program includes all activities conducted by the staff, while those in government perceive A New Day as being the curriculum delivered in individual intake sessions, followed by group sessions.
- The supports to implementation include the network of partners and having a sponsoring NGO that has been in place for a significant period of time.

In Conclusion: Program implementation has been challenging due to a variety of factors and circumstances; however, it can be concluded that the program is now operating as intended with the curriculum being the basis for service delivery.

2. Program Monitoring

i. What is the most common client profile? (Who is the program serving and not serving?)

- While the program serves men from all walks of life, a substantial proportion are Aboriginal men who are suffering trauma as a result of impact of Residential Schools on Indigenous communities, as well as those dealing with issues related to poverty.

ii. How many men have participated in the program?

- This is a more complex question that it first appears. The Department of Justice and Tree of Peace staff who deliver A New Day have different

numbers. However, 80 men were identified as having begun intake during the evaluation period. This number does not include those seen as outreach clients in the North Slave Correctional Centre.

iii. How many men have completed the program?

- In total, 12 participants completed all stages of the program after beginning intake during the evaluation period, according to the Department of Justice.

iv. What is the attrition rate through the four stages of the program?

- Attrition rates are difficult to calculate, given the varying patterns of participation. Some men step out for a period of time due to work or personal reasons, and then return. It should also be recognized that there are a variety of work and personal reasons why men discontinue. During the evaluation period, 57 of the 80 (71%) completed fewer than 10 sessions. However, it is important to note that during the pilot the number of sessions did not correlate directly to the stages. Staff use the curriculum as a guide and, depending on the participants, some stages take more or less time to complete.

In Conclusion: While the majority of participants between 2013 and 2015 (the designated evaluation period) did not complete the four stages, data are not yet available on those who have participated in 2016, the year in which the program achieved more stability.

3. Program Effectiveness

a. To what extent does the program reduce reoffending rates?

- The program is most effecting in reducing reoffending rates, after 12 months, for those who have completed more than 10 sessions.

b. What aspects of the program are most effective in reducing reoffending?

- The program represents a holistic approach. It is difficult to tease out specific aspects of the curriculum as it is intended as a cumulative journey. Some aspects may be more effective with certain people, given their personal situations and histories. The small sample size does not lend itself to in-depth analysis.

c. How does reoffending correlate to the amount of time spent in groups and the other services offered?

- As previously mentioned, reoffending rates appear to reduce after 12 months for those who have completed more than 10 sessions.

d. What changes are in evidence in participant behaviour at various stages of the program?

- Recidivism rates, as previously noted, tend to decline after 10 sessions. Also, according to the male participants, they now have tools and strategies to control their anger and violent behaviour.

> *"It slowed me down on my drinking. I don't lose my temper so easily. I am all around a nicer guy. I think about actions more before I do things. People have commented – you have changed lately."*
>
> - Client

e. Does the program have other effects?

- According to the male participants, they are on a healing journey. A number of those interviewed indicated that they had stopped drinking and were happier in their lives. Participants reported that other people had noticed positive changes in their behaviours.

f. How does the program contribute to victims' safety?

> *"[A New Day] has kept me away from drugs and alcohol for a year and two months. It has opened some employment options and I have got into training. [A New Day] has influenced me to do something other than get into more trouble with the law.*
>
> - Client

- While client partners and family members were not interviewed as part of this evaluation, there is other evidence to suggest that the program does contribute to victims' safety. The men themselves provide examples of changed behaviour; there is evidence that participants once they complete 10 sessions are less likely to re-offend; and, Probation Officers cite examples of changed client behaviour.

In Conclusion: In terms of recidivism, the program is effective for men who complete at least 10 sessions which is the point where recidivism appears to be reduced. The participants who were interviewed were also able to identify important changes in their own behaviours leading to life changes and increased safety for partners and family members.

4. Perceptions of the Program

a. Why do men enter and leave the program?

- While some men are mandated, the majority are not. They enter the program because of a desire to make positive changes in their lives, specifically a commitment to end violence. The voluntary nature means that someone can seek help before actually being charged with a crime. While the voluntary nature of participation may contribute to the fact that the majority of participants during the evaluation period did not complete, it may also mean that men who attend are those who are willing to make a commitment to change.

- Reasons for leaving are also practical. Some participants work in the mine so they are two weeks in and two weeks out of Yellowknife. Others may be back and forth to their home communities, while others indicate that family and child care responsibilities may interfere with consistent participation.

b. What do staff, clients, victims and community groups believe about the program (e.g., accessibility, usefulness)?

- Almost unanimously, staff, client, victims and community representatives believed that A New Day is addressing an important gap in service in the NWT. The issue of violence is pervasive and, in some communities, represents the norm, making change a long term and challenging endeavour.
- Those interviewed saw the program as accessible, although there was recognition that the need extended beyond Yellowknife and implementation in other communities will be challenging.
- While the program was generally viewed as needed, useful and accessible, there was conflicting understandings about the program's actual mandate and operation.

In Conclusion: Overall, people - particularly but not exclusively clients - were very positive about the program and the fact that it is dealing with an important issue that is not otherwise being dealt with in any significant fashion. Probation Services were particularly emphatic about the usefulness of the program and the importance of having a resource that was otherwise not available. However, it would be helpful to have a consistent message and common understanding regarding the mandate and operation of A New Day.

5. Model for Future Program Delivery

1. What model or format should be considered for future program delivery?

- Generally, those interviewed believed A New Day was working well and providing an important service. However, the model as originally intended (a specific curriculum, implemented through individual one-on-one pre-group intake sessions followed by a 20 week group therapy program) was implemented in a flexible fashion depending on the participants' needs, strengths and degree of readiness. A curriculum is a road-map for program delivery; therefore, a flexible format, using the current curriculum, should be considered for future program delivery.
- For future program delivery, the program should be conceptualized as consisting of four stages rather than 20 weeks.
- Consideration should also be given to the fact that a program is more than a curriculum. Community outreach should be considered a part of any future program.

- There was recognition that roll-out to small communities would require fine-tuning of the model, given the limited capacity in communities outside Yellowknife.

2. What resources need to be available for future program delivery?

- While Department of Justice stated there is dedicated funding for a program for men who use violence in their relationships, many of those interviewed felt that this type of program should be supported by multiple departments. Domestic violence is not only a justice issue.
- There were some suggestions that community governments (e.g., City of Yellowknife) and perhaps even the private sector could make contributions, as it is an issue that affects the whole community.
- Two facilitators are needed to deliver the program, one of whom can act as Program Coordinator. Specific training is needed for the facilitators and, while a graduate degree may be helpful, it should not be a mandatory requirement.
- Regardless of the model to be implemented in communities, clinical supervision will need to be an integral part of the model, along with utilizing Elders and other respected community members as part of individualized community models.

In Conclusion: The current model can provide a basis for future program delivery and appears to be filling a need in Yellowknife. It was suggested that support for the program should come from multiple sources. Roll-out to other communities will require further deliberation, assessment of community capacity, and community consultation.

B. Future Directions

1. A program for men who use violence in their relationships is needed in the NWT. As previously discussed, a flexible format, using the current curriculum, is recommended for future program delivery. As well, the program should be conceptualized as having four stages rather than 20 weeks. It should be recognized that groups may be of different sizes, may need different amounts of time to progress through the four stages, and that some men may not be suited to group participation. In these instances, individual counselling, using the curriculum as a basis, would be appropriate.

2. Given the complex needs of many men who attend A New Day, a holistic approach to health and wellness suggests the need for integrated community wellness approach, making networking and outreach important components of any future program.

3. Two facilitators are needed to deliver the program one of whom can serve as Program Coordinator, along with administrative support and clinical supervision. Having one male and one female facilitator is recommended.

4. While the contractor for A New Day expects the current participants to complete all group sessions before December 31st, the program (as specified in the contract) will end as of that date. It is anticipated that some of these men will need ongoing support which could be provided by Tree of Peace or, possibly, another agency. Attention to ensuring support is available must be considered a priority. In addition, no program will be available for men who use violence in their relationships after December 31st. There will be a gap in service that needs to be promptly addressed.

5. Any future contract for a program designed for men who use violence in their relationships needs to be clear on what the expectations are as to who are deemed to be program clients, what constitutes the program, as well as expectations for program delivery and reporting.

6. If a program is to roll-out into communities outside Yellowknife, thought needs to be given to refining the model given that the human resource capacity of each community will likely be different, as will the cultural and community context.

> *"[Staff who deliver A New Day] are good people very patient and willing to help you. They work with your life. It works, if you are willing to work. It helped me find out who I am today. I am sober because of this program. They couldn't have been more helpful. They helped me cope with people. I am trying to have a good life!"*
>
> - Client

-- METHODOLOGY --

A. Evaluation Questions

The areas of inquiry and related questions address both program implementation and results. The questions upon which Proactive focused are in *italics.* In a companion document, the NWT Department of Justice used internal data/program records to answer the other questions.

1. Program Implementation

i. How is the program operating (e.g., number of groups conducted, size of groups, length of sessions, number of group sessions versus individual sessions)?[3] *Is it operating as intended?*
ii. *What* resources *are available to the program (e.g., staff qualifications, partnerships)?*
iii. *Which organizations* are *referring to the program? How do they determine who should be referred?*
iv. *What external* supports *are available and utilized?*
v. *What outreach has been done in the community? (number and type of events)*
vi. *What have been the challenges and supports to implementation?*

2. Program Monitoring

i. *What is the most common client profile? (Who is the program serving and not serving?)*
ii. How many men have participated in the program?
iii. How many men have completed the program?
iv. What is the attrition rate through the four stages of the program?

3. Program Effectiveness

i. To what extent does the program reduce reoffending rates?
ii. *What aspects of the program are most effective in reducing reoffending?*
iii. *How does reoffending correlate to the amount of time spent in groups and the other services offered?*
iv. *What changes are in evidence in participant behaviour at various stages of the program?*
v. *Does the program have other effects?*
vi. *How does the program contribute to victims' safety?*

[3] Department of Justice provided the quantitative data regarding the number, size and operation of the groups.

4. Perceptions of the Program

i. *Why do men enter and leave the program?*
ii. *What do staff, clients, victims and community groups believe about the program (e.g., accessibility, usefulness)?*

5. Model for Future Program Delivery

i. *What model or format should be considered for future program delivery?*
ii. *What resources need to be available for future program delivery?*

B. Evaluation Approach

As previously indicated Department of Justice analyzed quantitative data, while Proactive undertook interviews with key informants. Methods used in the evaluation conducted by Proactive Information Services Inc. included:

- Interviews with program staff,
- Interviews with representatives of sponsoring agencies,
- Interviews with community key informants,
- Interviews with representatives of Department of Justice (i.e., funder), and
- Interviews with clients and possibly former clients (if available).[4]

The interviews were semi-structured to allow probing and expansion of responses by the interviewees. The interviewers took notes during all interviews conducted for this evaluation. Interviews were not audio-recorded as we have found for one-on-one interviews note-taking is appropriate, less threatening and easily done. A total of 26 interviews, involving 28 people were undertaken.

The Proactive consultants drafted the interview instruments, conducted the interviews and were responsible for analyzing the qualitative data, interpreting the data, and drafting the Progress and Final Reports.

C. Methods

1. Interviews with Program Staff

Interviews with program staff (coordinator and facilitator) were undertaken twice during the course of the evaluation, in May and in September 2016. Interviews were semi-structured and undertaken in person. In May, the two program staff were interviewed separately, while in September they were interviewed together.

[4] No partners were identified for interviews.

The initial interviews focused on understanding the context, implementation and operation of A New Day, while the second interviews were more in-depth and had a greater emphasis on program effectiveness and lessons learned.

Two interviews were also conducted with the Clinical Supervisor in May and in September, both in person. In May, the Chair of the Board from the sponsoring NGO was interviewed by telephone. In September, the Executive Director of the sponsoring NGO was also interviewed in person.

2. Key Informant Interviews

A variety of people were identified as key informants, including:

- Three members of the Coalition Against Family Violence;
- Two Department of Justice representatives who have responsibility for the program;
- One Department of Justice representative having familiarity with A New Day;
- Two Probation Officers;
- Two other key informants within the GNWT who had familiarity with the program;
- The Executive Director of the John Howard Society; and,
- Two individuals who had worked with the original sponsoring NGO.

Interviews were semi-structured and conducted by consultants from Proactive. All interviews, with the exception of one of government key informant, were conducted in person.

3. Client Interviews

In September interviews undertaken with seven A New Day clients who had been identified by the Department of Justice as having:

- Begun intake during the review period;
- Consented to release information to evaluators on file;
- ODARA score completed; and,
- Completed more than 10 sessions in total including; group, individual, or a combination of both.

Sixteen clients fitted this profile and had client files which included current contact information. Six of the seven interviews were conducted in person while the seventh was conducted by telephone with a former client now living outside the NWT.

Each client, when interviewed, received $30 from Proactive as reimbursement of expenses associated with participating in this study (i.e. child care, transportation). Participants signed a receipt for the $30.

4. Program Data

The program data were compiled by representatives from the Department of Justice and forwarded to Proactive for inclusion in this report. As noted earlier, the data were included for those individuals beginning intake between October 2012 and December 31 2015. This included 12 Client Evaluation Forms and Probation officers' feedback forms.

D. Challenges and Limitations

This section addresses the challenges, cautions and limitations inherent in this project.

1. Engaging Program Clients

Sixteen clients were identified as possible interviewees for the evaluation.[5] Of the 16 identified, seven were interviewed which is viewed as positive, given that many of the clients are transient and do not have telephones or stable housing. However, it was not possible to undertake interviews with partners or family members.

2. Program Time Frame

The challenges encountered in implementing A New Day need to be recognized as having an influence on program implementation and, ultimately, program outcomes. Healing Drum hired the first facilitator and trained her/him in November – December 2012. Another (the second facilitator) was hired in February 2013; s/he left in May 2013. Furthermore, the Family Violence Analyst position was vacant from April 2013 until November 2013. In September 2013, the second facilitator was hired. January 2014 saw the start of group sessions; however, the A New Day staff were terminated in March 2014 and the contract with the sponsoring NGO was terminated in April 2014.

The new and current sponsoring NGO – Tree of Peace - signed a two-year contract in December 2014. There were no counselling sessions provided as part of A New Day programming between March 2014 and January 2015. Furthermore, between November 2014 and July 2015 the Family Violence Analyst position was vacant. Additionally, the Tree of Peace parted ways with their Executive Director in April 2015.

[5] Clients needed to meet certain criteria, such as having completed 10 sessions and having consent forms on file at the GNWT.

The first group session in the contract with the Tree of Peace was held in April 2015 followed by the second group in July 2015. The Clinical Supervisor was replaced in September 2015 and the third group session took place. The sponsoring NGO – Tree of Peace - hired a new Executive Director in November 2015.

During 2013, 28[6] clients were accepted into the program and until March 2014, prior to the program being discontinued, an additional 13 individuals had been accepted into the program. During 2015, 47 individuals, of whom 10 were from the previous program, were admitted into the program. Of this number, 16 joined A New Day groups.

While the program appears to span three and a quarter years (39 months), October 2012 to December 2015, in actuality, programming has been delivered on an inconsistent basis for approximately two years (25 months). It appears that the current NGO has provided stability to the program which was lacking during initial implementation and, as such, appears to be functioning as originally intended.

3. Evaluation Time Frame

The focus of this evaluation was on program operation between October 2012 and December 31, 2015. The consultants were retained in May 2016 with the final report due the end of October 2016. In order to accommodate this time frame, it was agreed that the Department of Justice would undertake the analysis of program-related data and provide them to Proactive for inclusion in this report.

4. Program Data

There are inconsistencies in the program data provided by the Department of Justice and Tree of Peace staff who deliver A New Day. This may be a result of changes to reporting requirements as the program evolved, who constitutes a program participant, differing definitions of what constitutes completion, and/or differing views of the sequential nature of the program. Regardless of the reasons, there are wide variations in the client numbers provided to the evaluators.[7]

6 Numbers and timeline in this section were provided by the Department of Justice.
7 As stated by the Department of Justice, the GNWT counts the number of clients who joined the groups the contractor was contracted to run.

-- DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS --

A. Program Implementation

1. Is the Program Operating as Intended?

There are conflicting views as to whether the program is operating as intended. While some argued there should be more of an emphasis on group sessions and fewer individual one-on-one sessions, others stated that the program curriculum calls for both. While groups sessions did not start until 2014 this may have been a result of having only one facilitator for an extended period during 2013. The *Wek'èahkaa Healing Program* contract, while not calling specifically for two facilitators per group, does discuss group "co-facilitators." The A New Day contract specifically states under operational requirements that A New Day is to *"provide a minimum of two facilitators for each group."* This may have resulted in the early one-on-one work to begin program work and to keep in compliance with the contract.

One individual, believed a challenge facing the staff who deliver A New Day is they are trying to do too many things; *"the lack of boundaries … you can't just do it because you think it's right. There needs to be a framework."* This perception was reinforced by another individual who believed the *"key reason for the program should be domestic violence; not homelessness, not food security. It sounds like they are becoming a catch all."*

Others who were interviewed stated that the program is appropriately providing both one-on-one sessions as well as group sessions. As noted by one individual, *"the groups only work if there are individual sessions first."* Another individual made the point that staff are providing both individual sessions as well as group sessions, as outlined in the Program Manual and contract. As stated in the contract;

> *the focus of this program is to be centered in group therapy; however, when dealing with clients with varying levels of motivation or cognitive ability, some may not be appropriate for or committed to participate in a group setting. … it is recognized that some would be better suited to individual sessions. In these cases, it will be acceptable to provide services for clients on an individual basis, as narrative therapy could still be beneficial to the client and his future relationships* (Appendix A.1 page 15).

As noted in the Executive Summary January 1st 2015 to March 31st 2015 prepared by A New Day staff;

> *the curriculum is working well for both facilitators and clients. Some of the wording must be modified at times with clients for whom English is a second language, but this does not seem to present barriers to either the therapeutic alliance, or the overall efficacy of the material.*

"They [staff] let you talk and at the end of the day they ask you a question ... answering the question makes you feel good and helps you understand what they are trying to tell you."
- Client

According to staff, the delivery of the program has evolved in that *"we have displayed more confidence in dealing with clients … our understanding has expanded in how much healing men want and need. The program hasn't changed; we are just more flexible."* At the time of the last interview, the sixth group had finished and more people and organizations were now referring to the program. *"The hospital is now referring to us;"* resulting from outreach/training A New Day staff had undertaken.

One individual questioned whether the program is running as intended; rather than a 20 week program s/he suggested that in actuality it has become a 13 week program which has helped a small number of clients. This individual went on to say *"we have the bones of a program that works, how do we steer people into it?"* Conversely, the Tree of Peace staff who deliver A New Day suggest using the four stages as a reference point rather than 20 weeks, allows the program to have the flexibility needed to meet the diverse needs of the clients. If the goal is to differentiate program pacing to better suit the needs of the group, the program, in some instances, will be shorter than 20 weeks. In other instances, and for some individuals, depending on their needs, it may be longer than 20 weeks.

"All the questions are super helpful … the way the questions are structured you always end on a value-based positive [note]."
- Staff

This flexibility was evident in the responses of the clients interviewed. All seven former clients indicated having completed the program and reported having received their certificate. While four individuals reported having attended both one-on-one and group counselling sessions, three indicated having attended only one-on-one counselling sessions. The number of sessions attended ranged from 12 to 30.

There also were questions as to whether the clients should or should not be mandated to attend group sessions. One individual was under the impression that the original intent was to have mandated clients. Another believed that *"individuals*

will not show up consistently, unless they are mandated." It was noted that for mandating to happen increased cooperation will be required from Department of Justice. Another individual mentioned that *"without mandated clients it's difficult to get this [A New Day] going."* However, s/he made the point that clients are mandated to go to counselling and are not mandated to groups; therefore, *"it's great they even got some groups going!"* Another individual suggested having a drop-in component, enables individuals to seek help before *"actually breaking the law."* However, if the original intent is still to expand this program into communities throughout the NWT, it was suggested that a drop-in program will present challenges given the small populations in the communities. Yellowknife has a much larger population to draw from and this individual believed *"you would have a problem having people participate if it was a drop-in program in small communities."*

"I had anxiety when I first came here; a man that hit a woman! I was afraid they would want to fight me but the ground rules were established at the front."
- Client

A New Day is operating out of a satellite office and concerns were expressed regarding the safety of staff and the lack of administrative support. While not part of the evaluation period, it was noted that in 2016 A New Day became a placement for practicum students from Aurora College which was viewed as a positive development.

During the interviews questions were raised as to why Narrative Therapy was the approach chosen and whether it is 'best practice'. Another individual suggested that there is a need for *"a scan of what else is out there particularly in northern jurisdictions. Maybe there is a different approach."* However, another individual made the point, *"Narrative Therapy is a great way to bring out the best!"* This perception was supported by a number of others interviewed.

2. What Resources Are Available to the Program?

a. Staff Qualifications

The qualifications required as outlined in the GNWT RFP were as follows:

- Treatment Providers will recruit workers with a background in some form of counselling and/or group work, an awareness of the range of community services and options available to partners and children, and an ability to communicate effectively – orally and in writing, with individuals and groups.

  The knowledge, skills, and abilities of staff recruited are typically acquired through the completion of a degree or diploma program in the social sciences, or two years' experience in trauma and/or family violence counselling or a related area. Give consideration to combinations of education and experience.

- The lead facilitator should have a degree or diploma in the social sciences, or two years' experience in trauma and/or family violence counselling.

- Facilitators require well-developed skills in group work, demonstrated by skill and confidence to manage conflict, difficult group dynamics, or difficult behaviour. They need to be able to plan and conduct group sessions that engage and motivate participants and are respectful of them. They remain current, demonstrated through regular participation in professional development opportunities.

There currently are two staff members who coordinate, facilitate sessions and conduct outreach for A New Day. One individual has a Master of Arts Degree in Counselling Psychology as well as having a Registered Professional Counsellor Diploma which is achieved upon meeting competency-based criteria. As well, this individual has experience providing support to a variety of not-for-profit and private agencies. Her trainings have included;

- Response-Based Practice training - November 2012
- ODARA training – December 2012
- Two days of curriculum implementation training with the developer of the curriculum - December 2012
- Level 1 training on Motivational Interviewing for Domestic Violence - January 2013.
- Training on the administration, scoring and clinical interpretation of the Substance Abuse Subtle Screening Inventory (SASSI) - March 2013.

The second individual is Gwich'in born in Aklavik NWT. He is an award-winning journalist who began playing flute in 2009 as part of his healing journey. He has participated in many spiritual ceremonies and gatherings. He has facilitated healing circles with men, which he has done over a number of years.

Both individuals completed Applied Intervention Suicide Skills Training (ASIST). In addition, both attended specialized training on Attachment and Violence and Trauma Informed Practices. Furthermore, both facilitators have been trained in Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (LS/CMI) which is an assessment that measures the risk and need factors of late adolescent and adult offenders. In early 2014 they attended three days of training at Bridges Institute to prepare for facilitating the group sessions. The *Wek'èahkaa Healing Program* was suspended shortly after this training.

During the interviews, one individual made the point that *"a level of clinical training is important in order to be flexible enough to adapt the program."* However, this individual went on to say that if the program is to be expanded into the communities *"few people in the communities have a Master's degree.*" However, s/he believes that people in the community have the best understanding of the client's' context.

b. Partnerships

A New Day has had partnerships with various organizations locally and nationally. It was explained that these organizations *"frequently refer clients to the program, serve as referral agencies for clients who need further assistance, and deliver training in their expertise to assist us in improving our services."* Organizations have partnered in a variety of ways. For example, *"the NWT Literacy Council presented their tri-territorial research findings on social determinants of health in Indigenous Northern men … their extensive research made numerous recommendations for programming to address the issues facing Northern Indigenous men, nearly all of which are followed by A New Day."*

Another example of a fruitful partnership has been with the counsellors at New Start and Bridges in Nova Scotia. *"We regularly consult with one another about best practices in working with men and women who have used and experienced abuse. We have edited papers and delivered conference presentations with them along with receiving numerous training sessions."*

As noted by one interviewee:

> *They [staff who deliver A New Day] are very connected with every organization in Yellowknife and surrounding communities. They are aware of the program. They have a good relationship with the Salvation Army and they sit on the Coalition.*

According to A New Day documentation, partnerships have been established with a number of Territorial and National partnerships (Table 1, following page).

Table1
A New Day Partnerships*

Territorial	*National*
Aurora College Social Work Program	B.C Assoc. of Counsellors of Abusive Men
Beaufort Delta Probation Services	Bridges Institute – Nova Scotia
Beaufort Delta Victim Services	Government of Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Justice and Public Safety
Baily House	Haida Gwaii Healing Circle – B.C.
Centre for Northern Families	Hinks-Dellcrest Institute – Ontario
Dehchoko Friendship Centre	New Start – Dartmouth Nova Scotia
Child and Family Services Yellowknife Health and Social services Authority	Kahnawa'ke Men's Group - Quebec
John Howard Society	Slave Lake Social services – Alberta
Native Women's Association	University of Toronto - Ontario
North Slave Correctional Centre	Warriors Against Violence Society – B.C.
NWT Law Society	
NWT Literacy Council	
Parole	
Probation Services	
100 Men Who Give A Dam - Yellowknife	
RCMP	
Safe Harbour Day Shelter	
Salvation Army	
Status of Women	
Tree of Peace Friendship Centre – Community Wellness Division	
Vision of Hope	
Wellness Court	
Withdrawal Management Services	
Yellowknife Association for Community Living	
YK 1 District School Board	
Yellowknives Dene First Nation Wellness Division	

* Source: A New Day January 2015-December 31 2015 – The First Year and A New Day Coordinator

3. What Organizations Refer to the Program?

According to program records provided by the A New Day Coordinator, there were 39 individuals referred to A New Day in 2013, 13 in 2014 and 79 in 2015. The referral sources varied by year (Table 2). Given the program shut down in 2014, it is not surprising that there were fewer referrals in 2014. However, as the program re-started in 2015, self-referrals and Tree of Peace became the most frequent referral sources. Disregarding 2014, self-referrals, Tree of Peace and Probation were the most frequent referral sources.

Table 2
Number of Referrals* by Year+

Referral Source	*2013 (n=39)*	*2014 (n=13)*	*2015 (n=79)*
Self	9	3	30
Tree of Peace	1	0	13
Healing Drum	11	1	0
Probation	3	0	11
Parole	2	0	3
Wellness Court	0	0	5
Bailey House	4	0	2
Victim Services	0	0	2
Salvation Army	2	1	0
NSCC	2	5	1
RCMP	0	0	1
Child Protection	3	3	1
Other	2	0	10

* Source: A New Day program statistics – A New Day Coordinator.
\+ Unknown category has been excluded as it includes women.

Of the seven clients interviewed, two were referred through the Wellness Court, two were referred by their social workers, one was referred by the Tree of Peace, one was referred by his lawyer, and one was referred by Probation. Two indicated they were mandated to attend A New Day.

Individuals referring to A New Day did so for a number of reasons. As noted by one individual, *"I am a huge fan of [staff names] approach to people. I believe it makes sense in the context of the North. Their approach is respectful and caring. It makes people want to come back."* This was reinforced by another individual who had referred a client to A New Day. S/he chose A New Day because she had been in a presentation provided by A New Day staff and *"you could tell it was client-based*

therapy. They definitely care about what they are doing." Another individual mentioned that A New Day is *"the only service that targets domestic violence. They are both very capable counsellors to address not only violence, but also other issues."*

4. What External Supports Are Available and Utilized?

In addition to partnerships, A New Day has received support from the Coalition Against Family Violence, individuals in the community, the Department of Justice, members of the Legislative Assembly and the Minister of Justice. It was noted by A New Day staff that *"the Coalition Against Family Violence, comprised of numerous government and non-government departments have been instrumental in researching violence cessation programs and advocating for a community-based program."*

However, it was mentioned during one interview that the A New Day Advisory Committee has not met since Tree of Peace became the sponsoring NGO. As noted by one individual *"after the demise of the Healing Drum, the Department of Justice did not recall the oversight group. [It is] not functioning which is unfortunate."* This led to questioning *"how committed Justice is to the program because they also have the shorter co-ed program and [I am] not sure Justice has bought into the program for higher risk men."* It was believed the Advisory Group could have played an important role throughout the implementation of A New Day. It was also mentioned that the program received supports from many individuals *"who lobbied government to re-establish the pilot."*

5. What Outreach Has Been Done in The Community?

In early 2014 the *Wek'èahkaa Healing Program* staff provided five presentations to organizations in Yellowknife including sessions at the NWT Wellness Conference. They also collaborated with the Withdrawal Management Services at the Salvation Army. In addition, they started monthly peer supervision sessions with other service providers to instruct interested professionals in the Narrative Therapy, solutions-focused method being used at *Wek'èahkaa Healing Program*. The program was discontinued in early 2014.

In 2015 as part of community outreach *"over 80 meetings were conducted with various partnering organizations. … [and] over 90 presentations and workshops were delivered."*[8] These included presentations to community organizations regarding the model being utilized by A New Day. Staff attended community meetings with a variety of organizations including; the Coalition Against Family Violence, RCMP Community Outreach, Restorative Justice Committees and the Wellness Court. Staff were also involved in the Walking with Our Sisters Campaign

[8] Source: A New Day January 2015-December 31st 2015 – The First Year.

for missing and murdered Indigenous women. In addition, regularly scheduled meetings were held at various community based organizations, such as the Bailey House. They held regular monthly and bimonthly meetings at the Bailey House, Salvation Army, Tree of Peace Friendship Centre, as well as the North Slave Correctional Centre. Staff also participated in the Moosehide Campaign and the National Fast to End Violence against Indigenous Women and Girls. Staff also promoted their Men Choose Respect campaign.

The Public Health Agency of Canada included A New Day in the Best Practices portal: "Aboriginal Ways Tried and True." As noted in the Executive Summary 4th Quarter October – December 2015;

> *the GNWT recognized A New Day as part of their initiative to meet the Calls to Action Recommendations put forward by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Indian Residential Schools in Canada. A New Day was also included in the Status of Women's "16 Days of Activism to End Violence".*

Another example of community outreach were the two trainings hosted by A New Day. *"Nearly all of the Stanton Hospital Psychiatry Nurses attended training we hosted for Defusing Hostility and Using Accelerated Experiential Dynamic Psychotherapy as a way of healing historical trauma."*

One individual, who refers clients to A New Day, mentioned being aware of the outreach Tree of Peace staff who deliver A New Day engage in by going to North Slave Corrections Centre. This individual believed engaging clients prior to being released was an effective approach; *"It's easier for them [individuals] to stay in counselling if they are already committed to the counsellors and have made some progress."*

6. What Have Been the Challenges and Supports to Implementation?

a. Challenges

During the interviews, it became apparent there have been a number of challenges related to program implementation. First, the termination of the staff and the original NGO, the nine month interval before contracting with the current NGO, the Tree of Peace, changes within the Tree of Peace, the perceived lack of administrative support from the Tree of Peace Friendship Centre, as well as vacancies in the Family Violence Analyst position, all presented challenges to program implementation. As noted by one individual and supported by others, *"they [A New Day] need an organization where they will receive support … funding should provide the supports. This is a Tree of Peace issue rather than a Justice issue."* This individual went on to say that the lack of support results in staff who deliver A New Day being *"stressed with too much to do."*

Another individual believed the program staff are overburdened and the Program Coordinator should not have to deal with *"the political issues"*, such as relations with the Department of Justice. According to this individual, these issues should be dealt with *"by the Executive Director of the NGO."* It was suggested that this would allow the Program Coordinator to spend more time working with clients. There is a perceived need for The Tree of Peace to become more active organizationally in supporting A New Day, whether it is through the providing more administrative support, advocating for A New Day and/or interfacing with the Department of Justice.

One individual believed there is *"a lack of cooperation between the program and Justice."* This individual went on to say Department of Justice has had multiple program officers which resulted in confusion for both program and Justice staff. This perspective was reinforced by others, with one individual suggesting *"there has been a lack of support from the Department; they were constantly changing [program officers]."* There is a perception that the relationship between Department of Justice and the program staff needs to improve. This goes two ways and will take an effort from both. As one individual stated, *"there needs to be a conversation between the Program Coordinator and the Department of Justice."* It was also mentioned that the process in which Department of Justice removes client files from a New Day *"is undermining"* the work of staff who deliver A New Day. It was suggested that it is inappropriate for Department of Justice to remove client files as clinical files they should remain on site and be securely stored.[9]

"There has been a total breakdown in continuity of the program and in communication between A New Day and Justice."

- Community Member

An ongoing challenge, according to one individual, is that *"everybody has a different idea of what it [A New Day] is. Is it following the contract? Is it following the curriculum?"* According to staff *"that is what we are doing, we are following the terms outlined in the RFP."* A number of those interviewed held the perception that the guidelines for the program and reporting criteria have been changed by Department of Justice throughout the implementation process.

It was suggested that compliance with the contract has been an ongoing challenge. One of the reasons being "*this division is not used to overseeing contracts, [traditionally] it has been contribution agreements ... contracts have different requirements than contribution agreements."* Another individual supported this perception. It was also mentioned that the program was to be implemented as *"a group program but a significant number of people went through as one-on-one. We didn't understand how many would go through as one-on-one."* This individual went on to say that the initial four one-on-one sessions were intended to be a screen prior to entering the group; *"We have*

[9] It should be noted that Department of Justice is required by legislation to remove the files.

found that men complete the four sessions but don't go into group … so is the group model appropriate or is the model flawed?" Others mentioned that there is a lack of understanding among many of the stakeholders as to what the program is supposed to be doing.

As noted previously, some individuals believe clients need to be mandated to attend A New Day; a stated by one*, "[A New Day] needs buy-in from Corrections to mandate clients."* This view was supported by some of those interviewed, while others believed the *"lack of access to the courts"* is a source of frustration to program staff. However, as noted earlier, it was explained that for Probation Officers *"it is difficult to mandate men to attend the group sessions."*

There also is a perception the Department of Justice is in competition with A New Day as it implemented a similar program. One individual suggested that staff who deliver A New Day *"have two concerns; the program will stop and there will be a gap before it starts again."* Others agreed, with one individual stating the uncertainty about what will happen after December 31st is *"creating anxiety with staff. Will they have jobs? What will happen to the men they help?"*

Furthermore, there is a view that pilot projects, such as this, take time to achieve effective implementation. The disruption in service was seen as working against effective implementation. This concern was supported by another individual who believed one of the biggest challenges to implementation has been "*the infrastructure for the program. It has been a shame to have ongoing issues in the middle of a pilot. I am not sure if we got a good test [of the program] and I am not sure how invested either agency was in the program."*

b. Supports

Staff who deliver A New Day explained that they have received much support locally, nationally and internationally.

> *We've received a lot of support both locally, nationally, and internationally. Our supporters are invested in advocating for programming that engages (particularly Indigenous) men to end violence against women and they view A New Day as a leader in this field. In addition to advocacy, these agencies frequently contact us to consult about their work, attend our training events, and ask us to present on our work. Supporters also offer valuable insights about the directions that the local and national community see the work progressing.*

Local and territorial supporters include: the Coalition Against Family Violence in Yellowknife, Native Women's Association of the NWT, Status of Women of the NWT, Stanton Hospital Psychiatry Nursing Department, NWT Housing Corporation, Yellowknife Dene First Nation Division of Justice and Wellness, Victim Services throughout the territory, Vision of Hope, Centre for Northern Families, Safe Harbour Day Shelter, Withdrawal Management Services, Dehchoko Friendship Centre, Yellowknife Department of Health and Social services Community Mental Health and Adult Services, Aurora College Nursing and Social Work Departments, Military Family Resource Centre, Dene Wellness Warriors, Yellowknife Health and Social services Authority Home and Community Care Nursing, NWT Senior's Society, Side Door Youth Ministry, Hope's Haven Transitional Home for Youth, Institute for Circumpolar Health, Aboriginal Health & Community Wellness Department of Health and Social services Government of the Northwest Territories, numerous MLAs and Ministers in the Government of the Northwest Territories.

National Supporters include:

- *Public Health Agency of Canada declared "A New Day" an Aboriginal Best Practices Program*
- *Policy and Strategic Planning in the Department of Justice and Public Safety of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador*
- *Department of Social services, Slave Lake, Alberta*
- *Moosehide Campaign, National Campaign based in British Columbia*
- *Iridia Medical, Vancouver BC (focuses on health outcomes for men)*
- *B.C. Association of Counsellors of Abusive Men*
- *Hinks-Dellcrest Institute, Toronto Ontario*
- *Kahnawà'ke Men's Group, Quebec*
- *Good Medicine Media, Vancouver, BC*
- *Department of Community Justice Government of Nova Scotia*
- *Nova Scotia Restorative Justice Program*

Staff suggested that their biggest supports have been;

the guys that keep coming in and the support we receive from Probation, Wellness Court and Child Protection. They see the difference and the guys and their partners see the difference. People keep referring. The international community has been a support as well.

B. Program Monitoring

1. What Is the Most Common Client Profile? (Serving, Not Serving)

There were varied perceptions as to whom A New Day is serving. The client population was described by one individual as being diverse, including *"politicians, teachers, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal clients."* This was supported by another individual who stated that base on her/his experiences the program serves *"people from all walks of life, from different cultures and ethnicities."* Clients were described as *"struggling in many areas including poverty … usually it is not their first time charged."* Of the seven clients interviewed, three were employed and four were not currently employed.

A number of individuals believed that many clients have been affected by the Residential School experience, either directly or indirectly. Some have *"witnessed or experienced abuse as a child … [are] not currently in a relationship, are dealing with addictions and most are homeless or invisibly homeless. They have a spotty work history and low education."* Another individual believed the program serves *"mostly street people with a lot of substance abuse. Many are marginalized without jobs."* One individual indicated that *"my sense is that these are men who may not at the moment be partnered. Aboriginal men who have experienced trauma and violence."*

One individual questioned whether the program is set up to serve individuals with intergenerational trauma as a result of Residential School experiences. *"I don't think A New Day deals with this and I would be interested in seeing what happens in the long term. Does their experiences in A New Day result in a healthier life?"* Another individual believed given that individuals self-refer *"it makes me think that some of the men who need it most aren't there. I see same males with new partners; some of the toughest won't seek it."* In contrast, during another interview, it was stated that *"even if we refer lower and medium risk we are filling a gap we have had for years."*

Another individual believed that *"the very high risk offenders with a long history of violence are struggling with the program."* This individual suggests these individuals have been *"so institutionalized maybe no community-based program will work for them."* This, as s/he explained, *"is no fault of A New Day."*

C. Program Effectiveness

1. What Aspects Are Most Effective in Reducing Reoffending?[10]

a. Time Spent in Groups: Relationship to Reoffending[11]

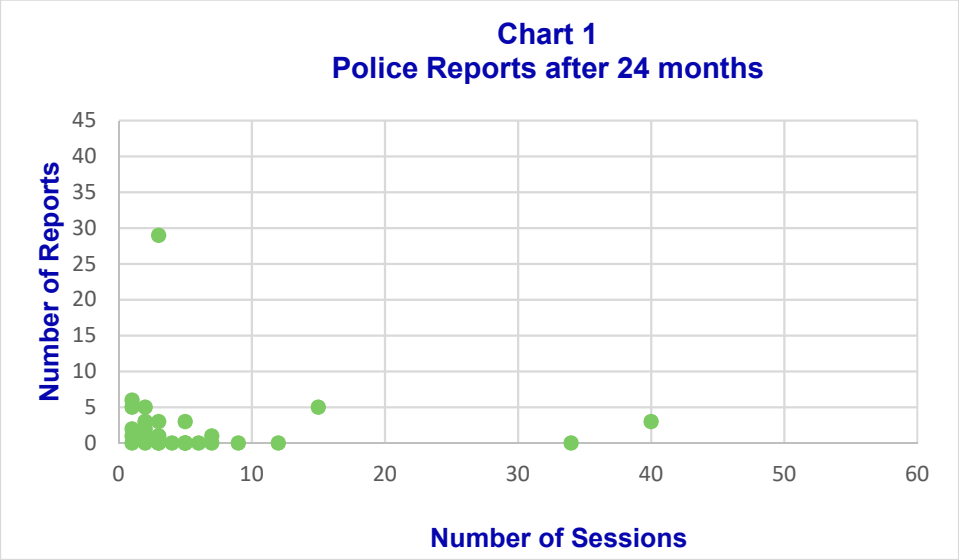
Eighty clients are included in the evaluation period (2013-2015). The program is designed to be completed in four stages which consist of 20 to 24 sessions, but since most clients during this time period were not joining groups, they were moving through at different rates. Twenty-three of the 80 clients completed 10 or more sessions, which is the point where there is a noticeable drop-off in multiple reoffending.

Table 3
Number Clients Attending Sessions (Groups and/or Individual) by Number of Sessions Attended*

Number of sessions	*# clients*
1-9	57
10-19	13
20-29 (program design: 20-24 weeks)	6
30-39	1
40-49	3
* Source - Department of Justice GNWT	

The data appear to show that there is a noticeable difference in multiple reoffending after 24 months for clients who completed more than 10 sessions (Chart 1, following page). Ten sessions roughly correspond to four individual intake sessions plus the five sessions in Stage 1. This pattern continues over time, but is not obvious at six months. This is relevant because there is no data past six months for 17 of the 80 clients. Another thing to bear in mind is that clients self-select the number of sessions they complete; they are not randomly assigned to complete more or fewer sessions. It may be that the same set of circumstances that leads a client to complete many sessions also leads him to choose not to re-offend.

[10] This section deals with the questions i, ii and iii as they relate to programme effectiveness.
[11] The analysis and numbers discussed in this section have been provided by the Department of Justice.



Source: - Department of Justice GNWT

Of the clients who began the program during the evaluation period and have now completed, four had interactions with police after beginning sessions.

- 2 after 6 months
- 1 after 12 months
- 1 after 18 months

A New Day uses the Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment Tool (ODARA) to assess clients. The assessment provides an indication of how likely the man is to assault his partner within five years. Scores over seven are considered the highest risk of reoffending within five years. Of the four former clients who have had interactions with the police; according to ODARA,[12] one individual had an assessment score of 7+, while two had scores of 9+. An assessment score was not provided for the fourth individual. Of the six who have not reoffended and for which scores were provided, one had a score of 7, four had scores of 7+ and one had a score of 9+.

All clients who have completed the program did it within roughly the same timeline once they finished Stage 1. The timeline is highly variable for clients who complete it one-on-one.

[12] Source: Department of Justice

Table 4 Number of Weeks to Complete Group Sessions by Stage* (Groups Only)				
NGO	**Stage 1** (5 sessions)	**Stage 2** (3 sessions)	**Stage 3** (4 sessions)	**Stage 4** (5 sessions)
Healing Drum	8 weeks			
ToP Group 1	4 weeks	2 weeks	3 weeks	5 weeks
ToP Group 2	16 weeks (group collapsed)			
ToP Group 3	9 weeks	2 weeks	3 weeks	6 weeks
ToP Group 4	4 weeks	3 weeks	3 weeks	3 weeks
* Source - Department of Justice GNWT				

The majority of the attrition takes place in Stage 1. A client who completes Stage 1 in the group is likely to complete the program.

Some clients completed intake during the review period and then joined groups later, so there are a total of five groups: one at Healing Drum, four at Tree of Peace including one that began in 2016 with clients who completed intake in 2015. A total of 16 men joined the five groups, not 21 as it might appear from the table. Twelve men began intake during the review period finished the program – seven after joining groups and five one-on-one.

The program design is for four individual sessions followed by 20 group sessions in 20 weeks. None of the groups have progressed in this way, nor have any clients completed all sessions individually on this timeframe. Sessions in the later stages are being combined in order to move through the material more quickly. Sessions 6-8, 9-12, 16-17 and 18-20 are often combined. This trend is also apparent with clients who complete the program one-on-one, but it is more difficult to track because progress is inconsistent for these clients.

Table 5 Client Attrition by Stage* (Groups Only)				
NGO	**Stage 1** (5 sessions)	**Stage 2** (3 sessions)	**Stage 3** (4 sessions)	**Stage 4** (8 sessions)
Healing Drum	3 started 3 completed			
ToP Group 1	5 started 3 completed	2 completed	2 completed	2 completed
ToP Group 2	5 started 1 completed	1 started 0 completed		
ToP Group 3	3 started 1 completed	1 completed	1 completed	1 completed
ToP Group 4	5 started 4 completed	4 completed	4 completed	4 completed
* Source - Department of Justice GNWT				

Healing Drum Group: January 29 – March 26, 2014

The first-ever group started with three clients who progressed through the program together. After nine group sessions, the contract with the Healing Drum Society was ended. The group file does not indicate the progress through the curriculum.

ToP Group 1: April 7 – July 21, 2015 - Two clients completed

The first group through the Tree of Peace started with five clients. Three completed Stage 1 and two completed the program together.

Clients 1 & 2 attended regularly and completed all sessions in 15 weeks. They completed sessions in order, mostly at the rate of one week per session, with the following modifications to the program schedule:

- Sessions 6-8 were completed together in two weeks;
- Sessions 9-12 were completed together in two weeks;
- Session 13 was dropped;
- Sessions 14 and 15 were completed together in one week;
- Sessions 16 and 17 were completed together in one week; and
- Session 19 and 20 were completed together in one week.

ToP Group 2: July 15 – October 28, 2015

This group started with five clients. Attendance was inconsistent: usually one or two members would come to the scheduled session so progress was at the individual's pace rather than as expected in a group. Client progress was as follows:

1. Completed up to Session 5 after attending for 7 weeks. Sessions were completed out of order.
2. Completed up to Session 4 after attending for 5 weeks.
3. Completed up to Session 4 after attending for 3 weeks. Did not complete Session 3.
4. Completed up to Session 7 after attending for 7 weeks. Sessions were completed out of order.
5. Completed Session 2 in one week. Did not complete Session 1.

All clients eventually stopped attending the weekly scheduled group sessions. Four of the five clients continued to come to sessions either individually or in groups.

ToP Group 3: September 29, 2015 – February 15, 2016 - One client completed

This "group" started with a single participant who attended five sessions, then quit. The next week, a group of three men (one from Group 2, one new client, one previous grad) started Session 1. The client who had previously dropped out of Group 2 progressed through the program in 11 weeks, with the other two men occasionally joining him. He completed sessions in order with the following modifications to the program schedule:

- Sessions 3-5 were dropped;
- Session 8 was dropped;
- Sessions 9-12 were completed together in one week;
- Session 15 was completed in two weeks;
- Sessions 16 and 17 were completed together in one week; and
- Sessions 18-20 were completed together in one week.

ToP Group 4: January 20 – May 4, 2016 Four clients completed

This group had a core group of four participants who progressed through the program together over 14 weeks. A previous client who had dropped out of Group 3 occasionally attended meetings in the early weeks. The group file does not indicate the progress of the group through the curriculum but individual client files show sessions completed in order with the following modifications to the program schedule:

"it [A New Day] is something for us to access. We work together with other people who know how to do the treatment. I get an email about whether someone attends or not and that's it. It's perfect!"
- Community Member

- Sessions 6-8 completed together in 5 weeks
- Files show three additional sessions and then note that participants had completed the program. There are no references to completing sessions past #8. (As described above, the other groups also show relatively quick progress through Sessions 9-20.)

Individual sessions with intake during review period. Four clients completed.

These four clients progressed through the curriculum separately:

1. 15 sessions, at least some on the phone from jail;
2. 15 sessions, had previously dropped out of Groups 3 & 4;
3. 13 sessions; and
4. 21 sessions – of these, the file makes no reference to stages of the curriculum for the first 13 sessions, then the client began Session 6 and progressed through the program with the following modifications to the schedule;

- Sessions 6-8 were completed together in two weeks.
- Sessions 9-12 were completed together in 2 weeks.
- Sessions 13-14 were completed together in one week.
- Sessions 17-20 were completed together in one week.

b. Effective Program Aspects

Staff Who Deliver A New Day: According to staff, the pacing of the program stages is adapted depending upon the dynamics of the group and where individuals are personally. This aspect of the program, this flexibility, is an effective aspect of the program. The initial stages take more time as *"you have to build trust and you want to make sure the guys are safe."* It was noted that this is particularly true in the group

setting *"we don't move on until [the group] is ready to move on."* Time is taken in the initial stages to provide the foundation for the stages to follow. While the pacing of the sessions is adapted to better meet the realities of the clients, it was emphasized that the content of the curriculum is not. This perception was reinforced by another individual, who believed *"they are following the curriculum. … in many conversations they refer to the curriculum."*

"I learned about other people's feelings and how my actions could be hurting them. It was an eye opener!"
- Client

According to staff, the curriculum is being implemented as agreed upon and as outlined in the curriculum guide. As noted by one staff member;

> *It flows and we work at their speed. The way we work is we try to slow down their behaviour. We go through it [curriculum] all and we use it all. [if we did not] the guys might close up. We need all stages and all of the curricula.*

Furthermore, *"the way we welcome people into the program"* and the connections with the community also were mentioned as being effective aspects of the program.

Community Members: One individual believed that a strength of A New Day is *"the philosophy and approach. It is respectful, genuine, open, honest and respectful of confidentiality. I have to be able to tell them [client] when I refer that I won't know what you are talking about in there. … It speaks to their [staff] professionalism."*

A number of individuals interviewed mentioned the Tree of Peace staff who deliver A New Day as an important aspect of the program. One individual believed the strength of the program is the staff who have *"stayed with the program. It is now visible and it is working!"* This perception was reinforced a number of times during the interviews. Another individual made the point that s/he is *"a huge fan of [name] and [name] approach to people."* This individual believes it is important to have a female and male facilitator working together with clients which was supported by another individual who stated, *"the facilitators are a great pair and work well together. [Name] is from the North and is Aboriginal and he knows the limits people have faced growing up here."* This individual went on to say that *"I think it is effective and accessible now. … they are able to get clients in quickly which is important for our clients."*

Another individual reported that the program is effective because of "*its strength-based approach and respectful behaviour."* This person believed that *"it is very important to have a male and female facilitator; it models respectful behaviour."* According to her/him this approach results in *"a high level of trust in the men; they feel valued."* It was also pointed out during the interviews that the male facilitator is a local, Indigenous, spiritual, healthy and respected member of the community.

The location of A New Day was also seen as contributing to the effectiveness of the program. As described by one community member, *"It is off site, you can walk up and go in and it's their program … it is easily accessible."* This was reinforced during the interviews by other individuals. It was also mentioned that being located close to the John Howard Society was a positive aspect of the program.

One individual suggested that the voluntary nature of the program is a positive aspect *"because those who go voluntarily go because they want to learn how to treat their partner. Those that are mandated go because they have to."*

Clients: All clients interviewed were positive about their experiences with A New Day. As noted by one former *client "it covered a lot of bases. It got me to open my eyes, slow down and think about what I'm doing; so many times, it sunk in."* Another former client mentioned the most helpful service was helping him "*to understand myself and understand others."* For this individual the best thing about coming to A New Day was *"learning that violence is not the answer. Verbal abuse is just as bad as physical abuse. Love is the right answer, not hate and anger."*

The space used by A New Day made clients feel welcome and comfortable; *"the moment I walked in I smelled sweet grass. It reminded me of home and immediately I felt like I can talk and open up."* The comfortable setting was reflected in a discussion with another former client. He made the point that *"not once have I ever lied. I knew at the first session I should come out with the truth and that is what I have been doing since my first day."*

The size of Yellowknife was mentioned by a client as being a positive aspect of the program as there is a level of anonymity that does not exist in smaller communities. He suggested that in smaller communities there is an issue of confidentiality, information gets out and *"in small communities they hold it against you."*

One former client made the point that, while he participated in both one-on-one counselling as well as the group, he believes that it is important to have individual counselling as an option because *"individual counselling is good for deeper issues and it's timely."*

Information provided by the client evaluation forms supported what clients said during the interviews. The facilitators, the friendliness and the warm atmosphere created a respectful and safe environment. The creation of a relapse prevention plan was seen as being very important to these individuals; an effective aspect of the program.

2. Changes in Participant Behaviour – Program Outcomes[13]

Staff talked about changes in clients and mentioned one client who *"started lifting his head up, started taking better care of himself; he exercises and takes care of his child."* It was stated that this individual came to the realization that *"I put her [his partner] through a lot; not just physical."* It was also mentioned that spouses come in and thank staff for the program. For the client, it is *"a new world, they feel better about themselves. They have dealt with anger and violence."*

> *"[Without A New Day] I would feel lost, helpless [with] no tools. A New Day is more than the flavor of the day; it is essential!"*
> - Client

One individual mentioned speaking with former clients who have changed their lives and s/he attributes it to the help they received at A New Day. Another interviewee believed *"there has been a turnaround in the program since January."* A number of individuals interviewed were positive as to how the program is now functioning.

An individual who refers to A New Day described the positive changes her client went through. He *"talked of what he learned and how its helped his relationship. The different tactics he can now use. He continues to go back when he is in stressful situations."* Like many of the clients attending A New Day, this individual is facing complex challenges. It was mentioned that A New Day staff will point out when a client's needs are not being met. In this instance, while A New Day staff believed he needs to attend A New Day, it was felt he needed to deal with his addiction issues first. *"He agreed with them and says he will go to A New Day later."*

> *"It slowed me down on my drinking. I don't lose my temper so easily. I am all around a nicer guy. I think about actions more before I do things. People have commented – you have changed lately."*
> - Client

Another individual who refers to A New Day, when talking about a client, said *"there has been a huge change in him. He has been offending for 15 years and this time it seems as if he has gotten it. He did the group work and individual counselling. He doesn't minimize; he takes responsibility."* As a result of his participation in A New Day: "*he brought his non-contact order to the judge to change the order … he explained to the judge how he has changed. He addressed his issues and brought a letter from [A New Day staff] but spoke for himself. The victim also provided a letter saying she felt safe. He spoke for himself and had the condition changed. The judge saw fit to change it!"*

Four individuals completed the Referral Agent Feedback Form. Everyone indicated that A New Day was very accessible, supportive and provided prompt feedback. and provided a quick response. They have noticed changes in their clients'

[13] This section deals with questions iv and vi under program effectiveness.

behaviour and attitudes. One reported *"[client's] behaviour has improved dramatically."* A New Day reports were viewed as being prompt and useful and they did not believe improvements were needed to the program. All four would refer to A New Day again because, as noted by one Probation officer, *"I would, and have, continued to refer clients since it is a great program - an asset to our community."*

During the interviews, former clients described the changes they have gone through as a result of their participation in A New Day. They talked about how A New Day has helped them to better understand themselves *"finding out who I am."* They mentioned the strategies that they have acquired through A New Day which helps them cope. As noted by one former client, "*I can see if an argument is coming and I have ways around it. I found little tools to avoid arguing."* Another client mentioned how he has learned *"about relationships, the context of marriage, how to resolve conflict, strategies on how to manage rage and how to take care of myself and focus on personal wellness."* This person went on to talk about how being in A New Day has given him an *"outlook of hope,"* as well as an understanding of how his *"relationship could work better."* He has come to the realization that *"I am not a bad person. I made a bad choice."*

In describing the impact participation has had on him, one client said he is *"emotionally not always mad at myself, I don't turn to alcohol … I find positive ways to deal with it."* According to this individual, having gone through A New Day *"has kept me away from drugs and alcohol for a year and two months. It has opened some employment options and I have got into training. [A New Day] has influenced me to do something other than get into more trouble with the law."*

One former client discussed how A New Day provided him with *"a clearer vision of myself, of my lows, of my strengths. I am responsible for my own emotions and not the emotions of others. I am controlling my life and not the life of others."* He went on to explain that he is "*less reacting, less complaining, less angry about himself."* He talked about how he continues to work on himself and how A New Day gave him the tools to deal with things in life.

In describing what A New Day has done for him this former client talked about forgiveness, *"forgiving myself for what I did in my past and forgiving others. Communication used to be one sided; my way. My attitude has changed. The anger is still there but a lot less. I think things through instead of jumping into it. I am realizing that people weren't my enemy, I was my own enemy."*

According to another former client A New Day helped him *"to find out who I really was. I am a better person. I am kind, honest, loyal and loving. It is better than anger and jealousy."* This individual talked about how happy he now is and believes he was sent to A New Day *"to renew myself. I see myself as a brand-new person."* He mentioned how others now see him *"as a good honest person."*

Clients completing the A New Day evaluation form indicated they feel better about themselves. Participation in A New Day enabled them to realize what they did was wrong and how to correct their behaviour. A New Day has helped them to become more patient, become more trusting, and more generally lead a more positive life. For those participating in a group, doing so made them feel not alone. They were most proud of completing the sessions and generally felt they were happier people who have learned to cope with their anger.

3. Other Program Effects

Many of the former clients indicated they would still be dealing with a number of issues if A New Day did not exist. According to one former client A New Day gave him *"the confidence to talk to my Band and to go on a hunting trip; that really helped. [Name] influenced me to do that."* He believes the hunting trip was important as it re-introduced him to spirituality and *"it showed me things I can do to help other people. It helped to build up my confidence."* Another client speculated that, without A New Day, *"I actually might have lost my job and then I would lose my apartment and then I would end up back on the streets like I was in the past."*

> *"A New Day touches something that wasn't touched before. It is a link in a chain, it supports and deals with violence and anger management. You understand yourself; if you continue to hurt yourself then you are hurting others."*
>
> - Client

Another client explained how A New Day has helped him come to terms with being discriminated against and realize that he was also discriminating against others.

> *It helped me accept and understand the roles I have passed through, discrimination included. It also opened my eyes to my discrimination against others. I have a better understanding. The rejection of my ethnicity, myself; I didn't accept the unbalance I was upset and passed that to others.*

Again, a client mentioned that without A New Day *"I would probably be the same person I was living that life."* However, this person mentioned that *"I am thankfully today a different person. I have been sober for one year, one month and three days. That is what I wanted. People see I am a changed person. People see it!"*

One person mentioned that, although he had taken the Matrix Program, *"it didn't deal with my violent tendencies. When [name] forgave me for uttering death threats that was a turning point for me. I learned how to deal with people in a group setting."*

Like other former clients this individual believed *"I would be back at square one."* He went on to talk about what being in A New Day has meant to him personally.

> *It has helped me tremendously. It gave me a moment in my life to reflect on the choices I made and opened my eyes in terms of my own wellness. … It made me realize there are other ways than violence and abusive control over another person.*

D. Perceptions of The Program

1. Why Do Men Enter/Leave the Program?

Men enter the program to reduce their violent, abusive behaviours. Men 18 years and older enter the program if *"they are behaving abusively and want to stop."* However, it was mentioned that A New Day is now starting to receive requests from youth. As noted by one individual, *"in the beginning I thought they would only do domestic violence but they have evolved, so they are now dealing with more things such as trauma."*

There are a number of reasons that some men do not complete the program. A number of the individuals mentioned that men leave the program because 20 weeks is too long. Men working at the mine are "*two weeks in and two weeks out."* As well, the transient nature of the clients was posited as a possible reason for men not completing the program. As noted by one individual, *"the logistics don't work! People go in and one-on-one is a very important piece, but Justice doesn't see it. It should be shorter and more intense with some one-on-one."* As mentioned earlier, mandating men to attend group sessions was suggested as a way to increase attendance and participation in group sessions.

One individual who refers to A New Day mentioned that s/he recently referred an individual *"on bail who refused to participate in the group. He felt he was better than everyone else. He just couldn't. He said 'it felt like an AA meeting'."* However, he did engage in individual counselling provided by Tree of Peace staff who deliver A New Day.

When discussing with former clients why people do not complete the program, they provided a number of possible reasons. One former client suggested some individuals leave the program because *"some can't accept change; their way is the right way."* Another believed that *"[some men] don't really come out with what they are feeling inside so they are not getting the help they need."* Another former client suggested *"it is home issues. Men naturally want to take care of everybody and [have to deal with] home issues."* It was also noted that program success "*depends on the individual himself. For some it is very hard to go to the end. The frame of the program itself works but this population has faced so much abuse, so strong are the feelings that they have to get out."*

It was also noted that men with addictions issues have to leave the Territory for residential treatment. The lack of child care and men returning to their home communities were also provided as reasons why men do not complete. However, the point was also made that, while men drop-out, many of them *"come back after just a few sessions."*

2. What Do Staff, Clients, Community Groups Believe About the Program?

Individuals think it is important to have a program like this in the NWT. One community member believed there is definitely a need for this program, as A New Day provides a program that can serve individuals leaving incarceration. This individual went on to say *"the program must continue. If it doesn't it will be a total failure. What will happen to the clients? Will they go back to their old ways?"* S/he went on to say *"it doesn't make sense to spend so much money and then shut it down at the end of the year. It's the clients that will suffer most!"*

As noted by the staff who deliver A New Day, *"the NWT has the second highest rates of domestic violence in Canada; nine times the national average. There is an epidemic of violence in the Territory. This program is serving men for whom violence in normalized. The legacy of trauma and violence must end so people can be safe. … Jail doesn't help people learn to do things differently."*

Another person suggested there is absolutely a need to have a program like this in the community. However, this person went on to say, while the voluntary aspect of the program *"has value"* in that an individual does not have to be charged, clients can *"drop-out at any time."* It was believed that mandating clients would prevent this from happening. It was noted during the interviews that *"we cannot keep the level of funding for 12 graduates. This funding model is not sustainable."* This person went on to say *"we need to be realistic about what we have. Do we have something we can fine tune and roll out?"*

> *"A lot of people have problems with relationships. You need a program like this to learn how to be a good person."*
>
> - Client

Individuals referring to A New Day believe it is important to have A New Day continue. As suggested by one individual, *"we don't have anything else except for expensive contracted services for those moderate violent offenders."* This perception was supported by others. During another interview, it was suggested that A New Day has filled *"a gap we have had for years and years*." This person believed this program *"should be in every community"* and expressed gratitude for its existence in Yellowknife. S/he went on to say *"I hope it stays permanently, not year*

to year worrying about funding. The program is needed … I hope they get the funding [for the future] they need and deserve."

Another individual argued that *"it is important to have something for men across the NWT to help men change their behaviour. There are whole communities where people don't understand what not having violence would look like."* S/he went on to say *"I would hate to see them throw out the baby with the bath water. [We] need to continue to try to help men and potentially their family. If the model is lukewarm, then we need to find another one. You can't ignore the problem!"*

> *"If they didn't have the program, people would turn to alcohol or drugs rather than something positive. That would have probably happed to me if I had not been referred by the courts."*
>
> - Client

All the former clients interviewed were positive in their opinions regarding A New Day and agreed on the importance of having A New Day in the community. For example, one former client made the point *"it is essential not only important!"* Another agreed stating *"for me it sure worked. It is a good way to get things across. It got me to realize things."* Another former client agreed on the importance of having A New Day *"has been a stepping stone to other counselling."*

E. Model and Resources for Future Delivery

1. Model

While many of the individuals interviewed would not change the way the program is operating, there were a number of suggestions regarding what a model for future delivery might look like. In addition to a perceived need for increased publicity and more interactive activities, there were a number of substantive suggestions.

One individual mentioned how s/he would *"like to see it rolled out as one-on-one; branched out to every community. One-on-one or groups, and have more mandated clients from Justice and the courts."* S/he believed that the curriculum can be easily adapted to suit both configurations and suggested that while there will be a need for training for facilitators; a Master's degree should not be a pre-requisite. However, s/he had a concern regarding capacity issues in the communities and suggested that given Aurora College has satellites throughout the NWT, they provide ideal locations in which to house the community based programs. This individual stated, *"there is a need for a holistic approach to family violence in NWT."* This would include accessing services "*through the Tree of Peace, appointments with Mental Health and Addictions, counselling for those affected by Residential Schools, the Salvation Army, Baily House and private counselling."* S/he wondered if the model might possibly be a mobile team.

Another individual mentioned the model would benefit by *"having a knowledgeable clinical team. The program would benefit from good clinical supervision and regular meetings."* This individual suggested any program moving forward has to have an understanding of the impact of trauma by clinicians delivering the program. *"[There is a] need to understand the impact of trauma on the brain and this has to be incorporated into the program. It has to be a 'trauma informed' program! … A more activist role is needed; people have to start challenging issues at the community level."* A former client supported this suggestion saying *"build upon this program and look at innovative ways to address Residential School survivors. … Incarceration rates are predominately Aboriginal men. This model could be enhanced and brought to the community level with Elders and counsellors who speak their language at the community level."* This individual and a number of others interviewed suggested there is a need for a program to also incorporate the partners. "*There should be a women's part of the program."* A community member supported this saying *"it would be co-ed, reflect the needs of the North, flexible enough to implement in smaller communities."* S/he went on to say the funding would not go to one organization but rather to communities for training *"to empower individual communities."*

A former client suggested making the group size smaller. He felt that having the two facilitators, a student and five *clients "at times there was too much information floating around amongst the five of us."* He suggested having a group size of three clients. He also suggested that *"I would continue with this model and add in addictions counselling as part of it. Where there are addictions there is usually violence."*

Two individuals thought that given the frequency of violence in the NWT programming should be in the schools. As noted by a community member, *"ideally we would have things happening in the schools. Do programming with youth who witness violence. Have information on healthy relationships."* A former client went on to state, *"put this program in the high schools and you would change the world! The tools are so important to anyone, anywhere, anyplace."*

2. Funding

There were a number of funding scenarios proposed during the interviews. While there was recognition that the Department of Justice should be a key funder, a number of suggestions dealt with the need for multi-departmental funding. As stated by on individual, *"[funding] has to be a broader scope. [Clients] have health and mental health issues and justice as well. It is very limiting to think of it as a 'justice' issue, it is also health and economic related. Compartmentalizing it isn't the answer."* This was supported by another individual who suggested that this program could have a multi-disciplinary team with individuals provided from a variety of departments with each department funding their representative on the team. Yet another individual recommended that "*all departments take some responsibility for funding."*

Others suggested that the complex nature of the issues with which these individuals are dealing, hold implications not only for Department of Justice, but also the City of Yellowknife; as such, it was suggested that the city should also contribute to a program for men who use violence in their relationships, given *"it is a community problem."*

A former client suggested that both government and the private sector should be funding this program. He suggested that *"the RCMP rather than dealing with anger management issues could be dealing with something else."* He believes these issues affect the community and, as such, *"there is a need for funds to provide better supports for those in the community to have a chance at a better life. Parts of the community have a responsibility; it can't only be government!"*