



(Organization Logo)

Organization/Program Name

and

The Today Family Violence Help Centre

Linking Protocol

For Facilitated Referrals

Preamble

The purpose of establishing the protocol is to ensure an integrated and seamless referral for clients between Today Centre and _____.. We believe that:

- Collaborative, community partnerships increase the ability of organizations and the community to support those impacted by family violence and meet their needs.
- Coordination of service delivery and facilitated referrals increases the likelihood that needed supports and services will be used by clients.

1.0 Agency Descriptions

Agency

Vision

Mission

Values

The Today Family Violence Help Centre

TODAY Family Violence Help Centre is the result of considerable collaborative planning efforts beginning in 2004 by representatives from Edmonton and area community based organizations, Alberta government, and City of Edmonton. As a result of the concerted, dedicated effort of the collaborative, The Today Family Violence Help Centre began offering services in October 2009.

The Today Family Violence Help Centre provides a safe, integrated and centrally located hub of support in response to the essential needs of those affected by domestic violence. Our goal is to reduce the barriers facing those affected by domestic violence as they attempt to navigate what they often see as a dispersed, overwhelming, and complex system.

Our Vision

A healthy community safe and free of family violence.

Our Mission

To provide inclusive integrated community-wide services for those impacted by family violence.

Our Values

Partnership

- We believe our capacity to achieve our vision and mission depends on working together with community partners and all levels of government.

Diversity and Inclusion

- We support each person's definition of family.

Compassion

- We believe all people have the right to be treated with dignity and respect.

Integrity

- We will deliver services in a timely, client-centered manner.

Self-Determination

- We will honour and respect each person's choices and believe in their capacity to make positive change.

Knowledge and Education

- We will stay current on the latest research about family violence and facilitate sharing this information with our partners.

2.0 Program Descriptions

This linking protocol covers supported/facilitated referrals between the following programs.

AGENCY

Description of program

The Today Family Violence Help Centre

Intake & Assessment includes emotional support, risk assessment, safety planning, psycho-social education, assessment of needs and facilitated referral, provided by Family Violence Specialists. Clients can access service through the phone and/or in-person.

3.0 Goals of this Linking Protocol

- To ensure effective and timely services for clients.
- To collaborate in the best interests of clients.
- To bridge clients between the programs of these two agencies.

4.0 Guiding Principles

The linking protocol is to be conducted within the principles, values, vision and mission of each agency.

In addition the following principles guide our work together.

- We value and respect the contributions of each agency and team member.
- We are committed to working together in good faith, openness and transparency, always with the best interest of the clients we serve.

- We agree to believe in, support and uphold the shared goals as well as positively promote them in the community.

5.0 Definitions

Family violence describes a systematic pattern of abusive behaviours within a relationship that is characterized by intimacy, dependency and/or trust. The abusive behaviours exist within a context where their purpose is to gain power, control and induce fear. Abusive behaviour can take many forms including verbal, emotional, physical, sexual, psychological (e.g. destruction of pets and property), spiritual, and economic, violation of rights, and exploitation through neglect. All forms of abusive behaviour are ways in which one human being is trying to have control and/or exploit or have power over another. (*Community Initiatives Against Family Violence, Adopted October 9, 2001*)

This definition recognizes many perspectives of family violence that include all members of society from children to seniors, in relationships that include dating, cohabitating, marital and child-parent.

Family Violence, Domestic Violence, Domestic Abuse are terms that are used interchangeably.

Client

When talking about clients in abusive relationships, Today Family Violence Help Centre and _____ prefer that the language used, recognizes that people are more than their behaviours and that labels such as “abuser, victim”, etc may be better replaced with alternatives such as “*people who use abusive behaviours*” and “*people who have been abused*”. When the individual identifies themselves with a certain label, that label is honoured but we believe it also presents an opportunity to discuss the significance of the words we choose.

Victim, Survivor (person who has been abused)

The term victim recognizes the victimization that occurs in family violence and acknowledges the pain that is inflicted by violence. Another term that is used is “survivor” and this typically describes a person who has survived a relationship where family violence occurred. “Survivor” recognizes the strength required to live with, live through, and recover from family violence. The terms “abused person” or “person who is abused” serves to acknowledge the person beyond their experience with abuse.

Offender, Abusive Person, Perpetrator (person who uses abusive behaviours)

All of these terms are used interchangeably. Different terms are associated with different service providers. The person who uses power and control to abuse another would be considered the “offender, abuser, or perpetrator”. The terms “person who uses abusive behaviours” or “abusive person” serves to acknowledge the person beyond their experience with abuse.

6.0 Referral Process

6.1 Today Centre to _____

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-

6.2 _____ to Today Centre

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-
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Expectations of Both Parties

- To remain client-centered, being guided always by the wishes of the client
- To stay informed of each program area and provide clients with accurate information
- To provide timely information to each program of any material changes to staff, programming, availability, wait lists.
- To develop a working relationship among professionals in each program

7.0 Information Sharing & Data Collection

_____ and The Today Family Violence Help Centre are bound by the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, and the Health Professions Act. Professional staff are accountable to their professional associations as well.

All sharing of information will be with the client's consent unless there is an immediate safety risk to the client, a child, or a third party. Each agency has a Release of Information Form they commonly use. When completing the Release of information forms it is expected that the staff member will inform the client of their rights in terms of determining the information to be shared, with whom, and under what circumstances.

Sharing this type of information is vital to providing consistent and coordinated service delivery to clients and the opportunity to address possible client safety issues. Each agency will keep and share statistics including the number of referrals made to each program, to enable program evaluation and planning.

8.0 Ethical Dilemmas and Legal Issues

Both The Today Family Violence Help Centre and _____ operate within their respective code of ethics and would be required to look at those guidelines if an ethical or legal issue arises. In the case of legal issue, each agency would contact their legal representative.

9.0 Protocol Review and Termination

The protocol will be reviewed and revised as necessary, but not less than once a year.

Both the _____ and The Today Family Violence Help Centre Edmonton agree that either party may cancel this agreement with a written notice of 30 days.

10.0 Orientation & Training

Training of new staff hired after the implementation of the protocol will be accomplished through direct training by their own agency staff. Whenever possible the new staff member will visit the respective agency and meet the program staff.

On an on-going basis, when either agency is hosting a training event or workshop that may be of interest to the other, an invitation may be extended to the other agency to facilitate the development and maintenance of strong working relationships among the staff of both agencies.

11.0 Conflict Resolution

Client Conflict

A client may express dissatisfaction or concern about the service received from the partnering agency. Firstly the staff receiving the complaint will encourage the client to speak directly to the other agency about their concerns. Secondly, the staff receiving the complaint may join with the client to speak directly to the other agency. If neither is appropriate for the situation, the team lead/supervisor will contact their peer at the other agency and discuss the matter, with the goals of any attaining any needed resolution for the client and improving service to clients.

Staff Conflict

The following guidelines will be used when staff of either agency experiences a conflict:

1. The individuals involved are encouraged to attempt to work the situation between them in a professional manner.
2. If unable to resolve the issue in the first step, the supervisors and persons involved may decide to meet to see if it is possible to resolve the conflict.
3. If still unresolved then the managers for those program areas may become involved.
4. If still unresolved then the Executive Director, or equivalent, may become involved and try to resolve the issue with the other agency's equivalent.

12.0 Sign off by management

_____ and The Today Family Violence Help Centre Edmonton approve this document and commit to utilizing the protocol, making revisions as necessary and training staff on the use of the protocol.

This protocol is developed and agreed upon by:

AGENCY

THE TODAY FAMILY VIOLENCE HELP CENTRE

_____, Executive Director

Cindy Furlong, Executive Director

Date

Date