



**Minister's Response to the  
Family Violence Death Review Committee's  
Fifth Case Review Report**

**May 2018**

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## Background

The Family Violence Death Review Committee (FVDRC) is a multi-disciplinary, expert body, composed of individuals who have extensive knowledge or experience in the area of family violence. The FVDRC was established under the *Protection Against Family Violence Act* (PAFVA). Under section 16 of PAFVA, its role is to:

- (a) review incidents of family violence resulting in deaths; and
- (b) provide advice and recommendations to the Minister respecting the prevention and reduction of family violence.

The FVDRC's fifth public case review was of a case from 2014 where a woman died in her family home as a result of blunt force trauma. The woman's husband was arrested and charged with second-degree murder and possession of an offensive weapon. A court-ordered psychiatric evaluation determined the husband was medically unfit to stand trial due to permanent dementia. The criminal charges were stayed.

## Responses to the Recommendations

Our thoughts are with the family and loved ones of the victim. We value the Committee's work and accept its important recommendation.

Alberta Health Services has begun the work of implementing family violence screening at all Emergency Departments and Urgent Care Centres across Alberta Health Services. Training and education is being provided to staff to ensure effective screening and referral.

As part of the *Valuing Mental Health: Next Steps*, training sessions for the Mental Health First Aid for Seniors Program have been offered across Alberta since Fall 2017.

The Alberta Dementia Strategy and Action Plan was released in 2017. Information-sharing, awareness building and enhanced access to resources are critical components of this work. While ensuring information is easily available to families and caregivers is a necessary step, more work must be done to make these resources effective, including: cultural factors and cultural-specific training; plain-language materials that can be easily understood; and translation. Further opportunities to enhance access to information and resources will be explored in collaboration with partners like Alberta Health Services, professional colleges, and community agencies to identify opportunities to increase the awareness among health care providers of family violence as it relates to the provision of care for patients.

Seniors and Housing continues multiple initiatives to prevent and bring awareness to elder abuse. These include supporting the activities of the Alberta Elder Abuse Awareness Council, organizing and participating in the FACE IT: Elder Abuse Happens – Taking Action Conference and training over 1,000 service providers throughout Alberta to recognize, refer, respond and reconnect with people impacted by elder abuse.

The Coordinated Community Response program awarded 31 grants totalling more than \$3.6 million to seniors groups, community organizations and municipalities across the province to develop or enhance co-ordinated community response models that address and prevent elder abuse at the local level.