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Chair

Mrs. Karen Vecchio

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• (1530)

[English]

The Chair (Mrs. Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC)): I call the meeting to order.

Good afternoon, everyone. Welcome to the 122nd Meeting of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women. The meeting is in public today.

Today we will be continuing our study of the system of shelters and transition houses serving women and children affected by violence against women and intimate partner violence.

For this, I am pleased to welcome the panellists for our first section.

We have Eva Kratochvil, Survivor and Front-Line Worker, Hiatus House; Dr. Anita Olsen Harper, Research Consultant, National Aboriginal Circle Against Family Violence; and Dawn Clark, whom you will also see on the screen, by video conference. Welcome all.

Just as a reminder, you each get seven minutes for your opening statements.

I'm passing the floor to Eva.

Ms. Eva Kratochvil (Survivor and Frontline Worker, Hiatus House, As an Individual): Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today from a front-line worker and survivor's perspective.

Each day when VAW shelters across the country are forced to turn away women and children due to capacity issues, those women and children fall into the homelessness stream and shelter systems. Unfortunately, the severe underfunding of the homelessness shelter systems and their functioning from a Housing First model not adapted to working with victims of violence means these women and children never receive the counselling and services they are entitled to and would benefit from.

I would contend that this inability to obtain assistance specific to domestic violence perpetuates the cycle of violence, as there is a lack of intervention and counselling to address the abuse that has taken place. We fool ourselves into believing that women we turn away to the homeless shelters are receiving services when this is often not the case.

For example, they may not meet the eligibility requirements for admission to a homeless shelter. These differ greatly from community to community. Even if they do secure a space within

the homeless shelter systems, these were not constructed to be secure facilities meant to protect women from danger.

When systems fail, often women are the ones who end up owning the blame. I have watched first-hand as women who try to access services are denied due to capacity then spend several weeks bouncing around from place to place, utilizing friends and family as an interim measure. Attempts to access services at a later date may find a woman being told that her situation is no longer an immediate issue of domestic violence but a housing issue.

The other reality is that VAW shelters providing limited stays push women out of the VAW system and into the homelessness stream if they cannot achieve their goal of securing safe, affordable housing in the allotted time. Homeless women have often advised that their homelessness is cause for them to be in abusive relationships, making the decision to select one abuser to live with rather than the many abusers they will face if forced into a position of absolute homelessness and into the streets.

We can no longer pretend there is not a correlation, a definitive overlap between the VAW and homelessness sectors. To do so is to be irresponsible and deny all women the right to adequate services. The funding provisions to the homelessness sector help to create this unnatural divide for fear that the funding could be affected. There should not be a distinction in women so as to treat homeless women as second-class citizens within the shelter systems.

If you need to have a visual of the difference in the level of service, the community of Windsor, Ontario, invites you to witness the distinction between VAW and homelessness for women. Last fiscal year, 146 women and 188 children were turned away from Hiatus House, and this number only continues to rise.

I think it is important for you to know the impacts on workers each day when we pick up the crisis line and do not have a bed to offer women. I want you to know the pain in our throats each time there is a news story of a woman who has been assaulted or lost her life as we wait to find out her name and check our systems to see if it happens to be the one we turned away.

I want you to know the hardship on women and their children when they are unable to find affordable, safe housing within our community through no fault of their own, simply due to the lack of its existence, and they are pressed with the decision to transition to the homeless shelter, return home to the abuse, or settle for substandard housing options.

I want you to know the impacts on the shelter when we bleed our biggest resource, the people we train and have as co-workers that we lose to other employment opportunities due to the non-competitive rate at which shelter workers on the front lines are paid.

When shelter workers are forced into the position of constantly assessing for risk using the high-risk category as the determinant for shelter services by asking questions such as “Have you been physically assaulted? Do you have injuries? Has he choked you, threatened to kill you, abused the children or pets? Does he have weapons, prior charges? Were police involved?” to assign the limited available bed space, we continue to perpetuate society's understanding that abuse is only really abuse if it's physical.

● (1535)

My work has changed over the years. There was a time that I would say to a woman that she did not have to wait until the abuse became physical. Now I try to strategize as to which woman's situation is the most severe to entitle her to one of the last beds available.

We can talk all we want about preventive measures and education initiatives that teach women the red flags of abusive relationships so that they are aware early on if they are at risk. However, if they are not able to get the help, then it feels rather pointless.

The solutions are not simple, and there is no one fix that will solve this issue. Women need to see a way out. They need to have support, financial resources, access to child care, counselling, and ultimately safe, affordable housing in which to re-establish effectively. A woman needs to have a sense of optimism that things will get better if she leaves, that she need not fear that by leaving she will lose everything—her children, her job, credibility, and any semblance of normalcy.

Shelters are able to provide a lot of what is needed, but they cannot provide everything. There need to be adequate shelter beds available to meet the demand. The issue is that shelters need to have operational dollars to function. It's not so simple as just building the structure; it's how you keep it staffed and running.

Shelters are being placed in the position of having to make decisions that compromise the services they are able to deliver. For example, Hiatus House had to cut the number of child and youth workers from five to one and a half so that midnights would no longer be single-staffed, as it was becoming a safety issue with the shelter constantly running at over 100% capacity.

Making these kinds of sacrifices has consequences. I watch as the one full-time worker and one part-time worker stretch themselves thin to meet the needs of an average of 20 to 25 children daily, and to help moms as they try to help their children adjust, find new ways of parenting, regain the parental role in chaotic times, or just provide them with a few moments of alone time or time to complete the tasks they desperately need to attend to. It's really an impossible feat.

I wonder how we teach women about healthy expectations when we ourselves function in an unhealthy environment based on the sheer levels of stress, overwork, and endlessly tapped-out resources, yet I feel guilty complaining about the circumstances of workers, as I know we are not the most important people in this: it is the women and children who are most important. However, I am reminded that

they are impacted by everything we do. We are capable of so much better, if we were only equipped to be able to do so.

There is no set standard of services provided by shelters. We all struggle along to do the best we can, based on the circumstances of whatever location we happen to be in across this vast country, but there is no consistency, and women and their children should not be at the mercy of the government of the day. Shouldn't all women across the country be entitled to the same number of days of leave if they suffer from domestic violence or sexual assault? I should think so. We all know that the only way to make this happen would be for the federal government to take the leadership on this issue. Please consider implementing a national action plan that would address these gaps.

You need to strengthen what is offered by shelters. One of the greatest ways to create a connection of shelters is to put support in place for the provincial shelter associations, so that all shelters can be members and use these as hubs of expertise, training, and best practices. However, as long as shelter associations depend on membership fees for their existence, they will not be a strong collective, because the smallest and most remote shelters cannot possibly afford to belong. Please consider new funding formulas for provincial associations to do the work they do as leaders.

Most importantly, meaningful survivor inclusion is essential—putting survivors back in the forefront of the movement—so that credibility is restored, stigma is reduced, and nothing is created for us without us. Create, support and fund survivor work involvement and initiatives.

● (1540)

The Chair: Eva, you've gone a little over seven minutes. I know you still have your summary.

Ms. Eva Kratochvil: I have the summary, and that's it.

The Chair: Yes, but your summary is going to be about a minute and a bit.

I'll make sure that during the rounds of questions we focus on that as well. We have more to go through.

Ms. Eva Kratochvil: I totally understand. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you so much, Eva. I really appreciate it.

Anita, the floor is yours for seven minutes.

Dr. Anita Olsen Harper (Research Consultant, National Aboriginal Circle Against Family Violence, As an Individual): Thank you. *Meegwetch.*

My name is Anita Olsen Harper. I'm an Anishinabe from Namekoosipiing, or Trout Lake, in northwestern Ontario. My Ph. D. is in education. My dissertation was on domestic violence and resilience in first nations communities.

I'm a researcher for the National Aboriginal Circle Against Family Violence, or NACAFV. We are a non-profit. We work with most on-reserve women's shelters, but there are several off reserve as well. We provide as many necessary supports as we possibly can so that shelter directors can help their clientele. These are the women and children who need a place to stay because of violence in the home.

For the purposes of my talk, just to be clear, I'll be using the word "shelter". By this I mean a housing or residential complex. It has rooms, such as kitchens, bathrooms and bedrooms, for the women and children. It is a place of temporary protection and support for those having to flee from domestic violence. Some use such terms as "transition house", but I will use the word "shelter".

Through the family violence initiative, or FVI, Indigenous Services Canada, or ISC, funds and oversees on-reserve women's shelters. Other family violence programs, such as outreach programs to indigenous families, are also funded by ISC through its family violence prevention program, or FVPP. Currently there are 40 shelters funded and controlled by ISC that also belong to NACAFV's membership.

The most pressing issue that on-reserve women's shelters face is insufficient financial funding from ISC. The funding that on-reserve shelters receive ranges anywhere from about half to three-quarters of what provincially funded or mainstream women's shelters receive from the province in which they are located. This is unequal funding for on-reserve shelters. This is despite their higher needs.

As well, when first nations women—women who have Indian status and normally live on reserve—access women's shelters off reserve, ISC reimburses that provincially funded shelter at the provincial rate, a rate that is higher than what it pays the first nation to provide these services on the reserve, when these services are available. This is actually discriminatory.

There is also inequitable funding. In particular, ISC's funding structure is based on population and the presumption that the indigenous clientele is identical to the mainstream clientele rather than its actual needs. ISC fails to take into account the historical circumstances and the increased needs of a population that has lived through Indian residential schools, ongoing colonialism, and intergenerational trauma. It also fails to consider the heightened cost to deliver services in rural and remote communities, including on reserve.

Reserves are known for their limited health, housing, educational, and social services. These are essential to provide support and to complement shelters' programs and services. This unequal and inequitable funding of on-reserve women's shelters results in at least the following four consequences.

The first is regular burnout, high staff turnover rates, feelings of isolation by staff who are underpaid, and difficulty in recruiting and retaining professionals for women's and children's actual needs.

The second is lack of indigenous-appropriate resources and programs for shelter clients.

The third is poor infrastructure, with limited and inefficient spaces for both children and adults. Often there is a dire need for renovations and also expansions. Therefore, there is little by way of complying with health and safety standards.

The fourth consequence is that shelters cannot provide second-stage housing, by which I mean longer-term residence complete with programming.

Indigenous women fleeing or at risk of experiencing domestic violence do not have access to the same quality of shelters as other

women in Canada. Some cannot access these services at all. Currently, Canada does not provide indigenous women access to equal, equitable and culturally appropriate protection from domestic violence.

• (1545)

Finally, as a remedy and as a very specific recommendation, Canada must fund and provide equal, equitable and culturally appropriate shelter services and programming. This would be for the indigenous women and their children who are fleeing or at risk of experiencing domestic violence. This means that services and programs must be tailored to the unique geographical, cultural and historical circumstances of women who are accessing the 40 ISC-funded shelters in Canada.

Meegwetch. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Dr. Olsen Harper. I really appreciate that.

Now we have Dawn Clark from the Haven Society.

Dawn, you have seven minutes.

Ms. Dawn Clark (Acting Executive Director, Haven Society): Good afternoon. Thank you for inviting me to appear before this committee. My name is Dawn Clark. I'm the programs director at Haven Society in Nanaimo.

The Haven Society was incorporated as a non-profit society and registered charity on December 22, 1978. This year marks our 40th year of providing shelter services to women and children fleeing violence and abuse. In Nanaimo, we operate a 17-bed transition house and, in 2013, in partnership with the Society of Organized Services, we expanded our shelter services to include an eight-bed safe house in the Oceanside area.

Our mission is to promote the integrity and safety of women, children, youth and families and the development of a respectful and healthy community. Haven has a strong reputation in our community and in B.C. as a leading anti-violence organization and a respected leader, trainer and collaborator. We endeavour to provide a continuum of services, public education and advocacy.

I'm sure most of us have heard these statistics before, but I believe they're worth repeating, as these are the women we see daily.

According to the most recently published Canadian Women's Foundation fact sheet of August 2016, women are four times more likely than men to be victims of intimate partner homicide; indigenous women are 2.5 times more likely to be victims of violence than non-indigenous women; approximately every six days a woman in Canada is killed by her intimate partner; aboriginal women are killed at six times the rate of non-aboriginal women; and, 70% of spousal violence is never reported to the police.

Also, on any given night in Canada, close to 6,000 women and children sleep in shelters because their safety at home is at risk and nearly 300 women and children are turned away because the shelters are full. Women who identify as lesbian or transgender and experience spousal violence are less likely to access shelter services; women are at greater risk of experiencing elder abuse from a family member; and leaving an abusive relationship may involve a choice between remaining with an abuser or falling into poverty and risking homelessness.

As well, cyber-violence, which includes online threats, harassment, physical threats and stalking, is quickly emerging as an extension of violence against women; women with mental health and behavioural disabilities and chronic or debilitating medical conditions experience personal victimization at a rate four times that of women who have none; and substance use and mental health problems often co-occur among women, as many women identify substance use as a way to cope with gender-based abuse and trauma.

Many of the women who come to our transition house or safe home are dealing with complex traumas, various mandated services, health concerns, poverty-related issues and an unknown future. Their children may show a range of behaviours directly related to the violence these kids are exposed to, and many have difficulty living in a communal living environment with strangers and new rules and may isolate and become overly protective or exhibit aggression. Also, women with poor health, mental health concerns or alcohol or substance use may not disclose these concerns at intake for fear they may be turned away.

These intersecting barriers have made it necessary for our staff at our transition house and the safe home to be Jills of all trades, able to manage a crisis at any given moment and provide women with emotional support and safety while addressing immediate and future needs.

The heart of our work at Haven is to offer a safe place where victims of violence are heard, believed and supported. Foundational to the relationships we build with each woman is the belief that she is her own expert. Our intention is to provide a constellation of equitable services, and we presume that each woman and child is entitled to supports that address individual needs and are culturally sensitive and uphold their dignity.

•(1550)

To ensure a complete service to the women and children we serve, we believe the following recommendations are necessary to implement.

First, ensure that women's shelters and transition houses are fully funded and have professional capacity and the staffing numbers to provide appropriate emotional support and manage crises while safeguarding the well-being of all in the shelter or transition house;

As well, continue to advocate for increased second-stage housing that allows women the time to transition from a violent relationship to a safer place; provide housing options that enable women to preserve or re-establish their relationships with their children, with subsidized child care and family services; increase funding to trauma-informed programs, such as Stopping the Violence and children's programming, to address wait-lists and allow more women

and children access to expanded counselling and clinical services; and expand education and agency development around women-centred approaches, trauma-informed practice and mental health and addictions.

In addition, increase community-based follow-up for individual and innovative support services, such as opportunities for women to provide feedback and input regarding program designs and influence service delivery; develop voluntary and mandatory programming for perpetrators of violence; and provide funding to develop and strengthen partnerships across sectors that support women.

Work with government agencies and community partners to promote a better understanding of the systemic barriers that many women face when fleeing violence, and implement ways to reduce barriers, including economic stability, and increase access to safe and affordable housing, support services, increased assistance rates, and culturally sensitive services, to name a few.

Provide mandatory school curriculum that includes Violence is Preventable programming for children at all levels in our school systems.

Research best practices and develop and implement innovative approaches of service delivery for women fleeing violence that have been successful elsewhere; examine current capacity in some key areas of women's services in order to gain a better understanding of the service shortages among agencies; and provide funding to address these gaps.

In closing, I would like to add that domestic violence will not be eradicated by interventions solely focused on women or survivors of domestic violence. We need to promote systemic interventions that circumvent domestic violence, and include measures directed not only at perpetrators of domestic violence but at the wider society as well.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Dawn.

We're now going to start with our first round of questioning, and each round is seven minutes.

We're going to start with Eva Nassif. You have seven minutes.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Eva Nassif (Vimy, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'd like to thank all three witnesses for their extremely compelling presentations.

I will start with Ms. Kratochvil.

Ms. Kratochvil, I was quite moved by your remarks. Could you tell us more about your story?

[English]

How were you able to help yourself as a victim of violence, and other women seeking help in your shelter? How does your courage and experience help other women come forward and seek help in the shelter where you're working?

Ms. Eva Kratochvil: I think my story personally—

Mrs. Eva Nassif: The translation is not working.

The Chair: Eva understands some, but we are going to extend it a little more, so if there are any questions—

Mrs. Eva Nassif: No problem. I can go on in English.

• (1555)

[Translation]

Ms. Eva Kratochvil: I understood the question.

In light of what I went through, what I try to do in my work is find a way to make the system work better. It helps because I provide services to women, and I'm a survivor, as you know.

[English]

I think being a survivor providing services allows women to see that there's potential to escape the violence. They can see for themselves that there's hope.

The truth of the story is that it was not the shelter system that allowed me to escape the situation I was in. In fact, it was friends whom I had to turn to. I was employed by a shelter at the time I went through the situation I was in, so that compromised a lot of possibilities.

I think that speaks to the stigma that women face when they're in a situation of domestic violence and where it is that they turn. The reality is that I think it's less than 11% of abused women who turn to shelters specifically to flee violence.

It's a much greater question than just shelter services. The biggest question is on how these women can be assisted to get back on their feet and ensure that by leaving violence, they're not looking at a future in poverty, especially when they're with children. It's so much more complex than the shelters alone.

However, being there as a survivor on the front lines, at least for the women I meet with and have the opportunity to touch base with, has been impactful for them. I truly come from a place of understanding and caring, and they appreciate that.

To have survivors on the front lines.... As we professionalize the shelter systems, we've kind of removed the survivors. We need to reinstate that.

That's why I think it was so important to be here at this table. When I looked at your list—it was one of the comments that I forwarded to the clerk—I realized how many upper-level individuals you were hearing from. You weren't hearing from the front lines and the women who are impacted. I really appreciate being here for that.

[Translation]

Mrs. Eva Nassif: You said that being a mother was a barrier for women that prevented them from seeking help.

Other than that, what are the main barriers that prevent women from leaving abusive relationships?

[English]

Ms. Eva Kratochvil: Are you asking what the options are for women?

Mrs. Eva Nassif: I don't mean options. I'm talking about the obstacles, other than being a mother.

Ms. Eva Kratochvil: The biggest is throwing a person into poverty, not being able to see a way out, and a lack of safe, affordable housing. There's housing, but it's substandard. There is no child care to be able to take care of children if they are trying to continue in their employment. People can find themselves in financial ruin.

There are so many different layers. There are a million reasons a woman will stay and not enough reasons to leave, often because there just isn't a place to go. That's probably the biggest obstacle. When I look at women in my community, there is no place to go. That's what keeps them there.

[Translation]

Mrs. Eva Nassif: What motivated you to do something? What gave you the courage to get out of your relationship and ask for help, other than the encouragement of your friends?

[English]

Ms. Eva Kratochvil: Do you mean what kept me going to get me out of my situation?

Mrs. Eva Nassif: How many years did you stay in the relationship?

Ms. Eva Kratochvil: In my university years, there were so many reasons as to why it happened in the first place. What got me out was the ability to create space apart, distance, and I was able to re-establish in another community entirely, based on the ability to have a friend's parent's house to stay at. I had co-workers who noticed that I was one of the "hidden homeless" who had my wardrobe on the back of my office door. They crossed boundaries or professional criteria that they were supposed to have followed, and they gave me an out and allowed me to.... A manager of a non-profit building said, "I'm going to take this common area, and this is your space, and I'm going to give you a key to it, because you're going to get on your feet, and I'm going to help you to get there."

It's people who broke the rules that I can most appreciate, because if it weren't for them, where would I be?

[Translation]

Mrs. Eva Nassif: If I understand correctly, then, you went to a shelter.

[English]

Ms. Eva Kratochvil: I was not able to go to a shelter at the time that I was going through my situation, much like many women in this country. They don't have a shelter to turn to. Often, through the severe isolation and everything else that happens, they don't have friends or family to turn to. They're without anything. You're shoving them into the homelessness stream. I've already spoken to you about what happens there, when you shove them into the homelessness stream.

•(1600)

[Translation]

Mrs. Eva Nassif: Thank you very much.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We're going to now move over to Mike Lake.

Mike, you have seven minutes.

Hon. Mike Lake (Edmonton—Wetaskiwin, CPC): Thank you.

I'm filling in on the committee today, so it's my first opportunity to sit on this particular committee. So many of the issues that you talk about are familiar to me because of other work that I do on mental health. I have a son with autism, and I've talked with many families who are living with autism who, at their most desperate point, have nowhere to turn either. They talk of almost the identical things you talk of.

Eva, you used the “nothing about us without us” line that is so prevalent in so many of the areas that we talk about.

I'm going to start with Anita, if I could.

Anita, on first nations, from my experience of visiting women's shelters, one of the things that is really important is the secret nature of the location. Oftentimes a woman will go to a shelter somewhere that is different from where she lives because of the nature of the violence. It seems to me, from hearing you speak, as though that would be a bit more of a challenge in some first nations communities where you might have a small community and someone might want to stay within the first nation community. How much of an issue would that be?

Dr. Anita Olsen Harper: That's a huge issue, and thank you for bringing that up. When you say that it's the secret nature of the location, everybody really does know. It's a small community. A lot of first nations have fewer than 1,000 in population, and it's isolated and way off somewhere. The issue of confidentiality is huge.

The idea of secrecy of location is really a myth. There are some things that can be done prior to a shelter being constructed. One would be to really carefully consider the location of the construction, such as maybe having it close by the RCMP detachment or the health department, because some security is provided just by proximity with the RCMP, for example. A lot of women and children who access shelters on reserve also need medical attention.

There are ways to limit that a little bit, such as having security cameras and so on for security, but it is a big issue.

Hon. Mike Lake: I'm going to turn to Dawn. In my committee experience, often the person on the video screen is largely ignored in favour of the people at the table.

Dawn, as I think about an issue like the one we're talking about today.... When you talk to MPs from all parties, you would have tremendous sympathy and tremendous agreement about the importance of what we're talking about. We might have different ways of dealing with those things, but all of us, if we're in government, have restrictions on resources. We're always dealing with multiple priorities. Thinking about vulnerable populations in

our world, we deal with everything from mental health to seniors' issues to our veterans to people with disabilities, as I mentioned, to name just a few.

What is being done to create less need for those resources? Are you seeing a difference in your experience, for example, in terms of the attitudes of society—men in particular—that is leading to, or will be leading to, a reduction in the need for shelters, hopefully, at some point, or is it the opposite? I don't have very much experience in this area. What does your experience or your expertise tell you?

Ms. Dawn Clark: Actually, we're seeing increased need, quite honestly.

I also want to say that there are a great many men who act as our allies and are in support of the work we're doing, but even with that in place—and we do—our numbers are increased. We're consistently full, at capacity, and we have longer stays. By “longer stays”, I mean that generally there is a 30-day stay for women coming into the shelter, but that's unrealistic because of the lack of safe and affordable housing. In our community in particular, the rents are off the chart. A lot of people don't want to rent to single moms on income assistance when they can rent to somebody who is able to afford more rent, is employed, isn't bringing kids along with them, and doesn't have a history that could impact the physicality and well-being of their investment, which is the rental.

Is that answering your question?

•(1605)

Hon. Mike Lake: Yes.

I have another question that is related to that. In the worlds I've worked in, one of the things that I've found makes an impact, whatever the given amount of resources is.... We could make the argument for more resources, but whatever that level of resources is, we've found that common ground in an environment where we're sharing the very best practices—it's been spoken about in this meeting—really makes a difference.

To what extent, within the community across the country, is there a network-building aspect, a sharing of resources, a desire to find common ground? In just about every area we deal with, I imagine there are different views on what works and doesn't work, but often the organizations, if brought to the table, can find some common ground and really move forward with significant success. Is there a realm in which that works on these issues?

Ms. Dawn Clark: I can speak for what's happening here in Nanaimo.

Our organization is working really hard on collaboration within the community. Our executive director has taken a lead role in inviting a variety of resources to the table so that we can work in concert. For example, we deliver a men's program called “Men Choose Respect”. That's a program for men who have identified themselves as having behaviours that may lead to violence and abuse and who would like to make a change before they get there.

We're also in partnership with a couple of other organizations that are working with men who have been mandated to attend counselling and groups. In partnership with these two other organizations, we've been able to create a continuum of services for men who are thinking that they'd like to make some changes in their behaviour, perhaps men who have gone before the court systems or are on probation, and their conditions may include involvement in a more intensive program.

We've been able to do that—

The Chair: Donna, I let you go a little bit over time there, but I do have to cut you off. I'm very sorry. We're now going to move to Sheila Malcolmson for her seven minutes.

You have the floor, Sheila.

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Thank you, Chair.

To Hiatus House, thank you. Your testimony is our final argument, basically. Everything you've said is extremely powerful, deeply articulate and terrible and true. Thank you for getting it on the record.

To the Haven Society, which is in Nanaimo and which I represent, I'm so proud of the work you do. Following on my colleague's question about collaboration, I've heard your executive director, Anne Taylor, say, "We collaborate." The women's movement and particularly the shelter movement collaborate like crazy, yet when it comes to the point of submitting funding applications for particular programs, you have to prove and re-prove how collaborative you are. You have to invent new programs to show how collaborative you are and deliver a brand new service that has never been done. The way it's been described to me by a number of operators is that you are just going into pretzels to invent some new thing, when really what you need is to pay the workers well, keep the lights on, pay the rent and deliver the core service.

On Friday the NDP launched a new campaign in Nanaimo, and Lesley Clarke, from the Women's Resource Centre in Nanaimo, said most particularly that for women in her program and her organization she feels like she's building their safety system on a house of cards. The bottom layer of the house of cards is all these individual programs, but she has to pull out the bottom layer of the house of cards, because once you've done an innovative program, it's no longer innovative and the funding disappears.

That's what we're really trying to impress on this government: the need for the government to fund core operations so that across the country women have an equivalent access to safety and the shelter operators can just get on with their work of providing that safety net. Can you give us a picture of what that costs? What kinds of good practices has Haven had to abandon for the purpose of fitting into a new program funding operation instead of investing in that core operations funding?

• (1610)

Ms. Dawn Clark: I think Lesley hit the nail on the head when she said that in order to keep the doors open and the lights on, your core services may not exist, because you have to reinvent them when in fact you're actually doing the same thing.

I think about the transition house in particular. We have 17 beds, 10 for children and seven for women. In order to provide the kinds of services that we want to provide, we have to reinvent those services, i.e. groups. We have a variety of different groups. It could be 16 Steps for Discovery and Empowerment, Weaving Our Voices or Process of Change, but at the end of the day, it's a support group that's peer-led by women.

In terms of providing services to kids, we have the PEACE Program. It used to be called the Children Who Witness Abuse program. I can't remember now what the acronym stands for, because I'm somewhat nervous right now, Sheila. We've named it something different, but at the end of the day we're providing services and supports to kids and families and their caregivers as a result of the abuse and violence that kids have witnessed.

In terms of housing, we've had to be very creative around our work with landlords and with other community partners, such as the Nanaimo Affordable Housing Society, in terms of moving women from shelters into safe and affordable housing that they can be in for the long term.

At the end of the day, you have to be extremely creative and you have to get the best bang for your buck. You have to be totally committed to being fully engaged in providing that service, because you don't know when that funding is no longer going to be available.

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson: I think we've heard from almost every witness that there's a cost to safety when the continuity of operations isn't there and women who are brave enough to ask for help are turned away.

Ms. Dawn Clark: Yes.

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson: No matter what, you're going to be collaborative and innovative. That's just the name of the game.

Ms. Dawn Clark: Exactly. The good news is that we have a wonderful association of transition and shelter services in B.C., and so we have this network of being able to phone other shelters. If we can't house somebody, or it's not safe for them to remain in the community, then we can support that woman and her children in getting elsewhere, but it's really hard to say no because you're full.

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson: It's life-threatening to say no.

Ms. Dawn Clark: Yes.

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson: I'm so short of time. I'm really sorry.

Anita Olsen Harper, I want to ask you more questions about your work, which is also going to be so helpful for this study. I'm sad that this is our final day of testimony.

You're the only person who has spoken directly to indigenous issues, and I know Women's Shelters Canada has been expressing concern about that. I'm hoping that you can maybe let us know who else we should call, who else would bring us testimony that you might recommend, and then I'm going to see if we can find a little bit of extra time on the panel to hear more voices.

Dr. Anita Olsen Harper: I could certainly do that, yes. You don't mean right now, do you?

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson: Maybe you could let us know whether you think it's helpful for us to hear more voices, and then maybe you could send some suggestions afterwards.

Dr. Anita Olsen Harper: Oh, definitely. It can be as many indigenous voices as you need for this issue. There are women who would love to talk about this. I'm not sure why I'm the only indigenous person to be speaking on this issue, because our rates of domestic violence are so exceedingly high compared to the average Canadian rate. In Nunavut and Northwest Territories, the rates are even higher. There's no shortage of women who would come up and talk.

• (1615)

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson: Thank you.

Chair, I would like to give notice of a motion:

That notwithstanding the motion adopted by the Committee on Tuesday, June 19, 2018, in relation to the study of the system of shelters and transition houses serving women and children affected by violence against women and intimate partner violence, the Committee extend the duration of its study to include Indigenous women's organizations, shelters, transition houses and Indigenous women themselves due to the lack of Indigenous voices during the study.

The Chair: Thank you.

Ms. Eva Kratochvil: Is it possible to make a recommendation as well?

When you're looking at indigenous women, you should invite indigenous women survivors, especially those who do not have their children and who have lost their children due to being in domestic violence. Actually, they didn't lose them; they had their children taken from them.

Could you include those voices at the table? Those are the voices I hear on the phones when I'm not able to bring them into shelter, and they're having their children removed from them because they can't be safe. I would appreciate that.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

You have the notice of motion, so that's been done.

We'll move forward. We're continuing.

Bob, you have the floor for seven minutes.

Mr. Bob Bratina (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, Lib.): Thank you very much.

Thank you all. This is really fascinating and troubling.

I come from a municipal background, so we worked as councillors—and I was the mayor of Hamilton—from the ground up seeing these issues. As an example, Mission Services had a building they were going to use. I suggested to them that they sell it, which they weren't inclined to do at first, but they did sell that building for \$700,000. They said, "Well, we sold it. Now what do we do?" We found them a surplus building that was actually better for \$350,000. This is 2008-2009, so prices have gone up, but the point is they were able to manipulate their assets to get a better outcome.

What I would ask you all is whether you have a relationship with a municipality, and whether they are knowledgeable and aware. They have things like vacant buildings, properties and so on, that may become useful to you.

I'll ask Dawn first, and then Eva, and then Anita.

Dawn, do you have a relationship in Nanaimo with the municipality, and does it work to your benefit?

Ms. Dawn Clark: We do. Actually, our current transition house sits on city property, so we have a 99-year lease with them. We own the actual building, but they own the land. We've had that relationship with them since 1993, and we pay a dollar a year for the land.

Ms. Eva Kratochvil: You know what? I'll make this very personal, and I'll take it back to a time in Ottawa because this is where we are and this was my hometown. Often there are suggestions of empty buildings, and I look around my community and I see in Windsor there are vacant buildings, and I sometimes question that.

I also believe that women and children deserve the best quality of services and that it should not be a building that is in disrepair that is somehow made to be somewhat better, so I appreciate when it's good.

I will use the example of Ottawa in 1983-1984. We had Ottawa's finest move to their brand new building in 1983 on Elgin, and, as a result, the 60 Waller building, the old police station, became the homeless shelter, the emergency shelter, for women and children, where I resided from just before Christmas until February of the following year in 1985. It was in disrepair and eventually it was torn down, I think. The new Ontario gallery stands there.

In terms of it being a place where you put women and children, we were in a small room that was quite possibly, I gathered, an interrogation room with windows so high they were unreachable, cement planks that had little foam mattresses on them, and a steel toilet. I'm not sure that this was the best venue for a child to be in in terms of a homeless shelter, so I would seriously have you look at those solutions and what they mean in different communities. When you do it well, that's great, but I think we're—

Mr. Bob Bratina: Yes, the point isn't to find roofs. I'm against the notion that all we need is to put some roofs up and everybody's happy. What I'm talking about, though, is that if we're going to create a government program, an investment program, how can we maximize the assets so that we can address so many needs across the country? We've heard from people all over Canada.

• (1620)

Ms. Eva Kratochvil: We don't need warehouses for women while they wait for housing. What we need is housing for them.

Mr. Bob Bratina: What I'm talking about is the need to put a program together so that this doesn't happen, and that's why I'm saying we need a relationship with the cities to help us all work together to have that better outcome. Please don't get the idea that I want to put people.... We had that in Hamilton, and it was disgusting. The places, the city housing situations, were terrible, because there was indifference on the part of the people managing it, and that's why I'm here today: It's because I don't want to see that anymore.

Let's go to Anita. In terms of off-reserve shelters, because there's on-reserve and off-reserve, do you have an idea of the off-reserve situation for indigenous women? There are so many, and we have a large population in Hamilton. Are you conversant with that situation?

Dr. Anita Olsen Harper: First of all, there is such a distance between the municipal level of government and on-reserve services, or reserves period. Reserves are federal jurisdiction, and many are in isolated areas. Not only is the municipal government sort of the bottom level of government, but there's also the provincial government that's kind of sandwiched in between for first nation shelters. We really have very little to do with municipal governments.

Mr. Bob Bratina: Off-reserve, I know in Hamilton we did a shelter with federal funding for indigenous men, homeless men on the street, so let's go to the on-reserve situation. How do you get space created for women on the reserve?

Dr. Anita Olsen Harper: The shelter building movement on reserve happened mostly in the early 1990s, so about 20 or 25 years after the mainstream women's shelter movement happened. That was funding through CMHC, and that was for the physical structure itself. When the structure was finished, the band was told, "Okay, there's your shelter; now run it."

There were no steps that the band could take so that this could be done in an organized and efficient way. There was a lot of hit and miss and trial and error at the very beginning, but it's a lot better now. The National Aboriginal Circle Against Family Violence, for example, has done studies, and we help the directors to implement policies and to share best practices with one another across the board.

There are a few new shelters that have just opened up recently, such as in Nelson House in northern Manitoba. Usually there are—I don't know—three or four new shelters every five or six years, so considering there are over 600 first nations across Canada and only 40 shelters, we really can see that the reserves are very underserved in that area.

Mr. Bob Bratina: That's strong testimony. Thank you for that.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We're now going to start on our second round. We'll have time for two sets of questions. Jim, you're on the floor for five minutes.

Mr. Jim Eglinski (Yellowhead, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you to Dawn, Anita and Eva for the work you do with your different societies and associations. I spent 35 years as a policeman, mostly in aboriginal policing, and the service that you provide is so great. I remember, so many years ago, that there was just nothing. I remember calling my wife in the middle of the night, saying she should take the kids into our bed because I was bringing some people home. That's what you had to do in a lot of the rural communities, because there was nothing there for them. You had to look to protection.

You've all spoken. I think you're here because you see a need for us as a federal government to get involved. I believe you are so correct.

I'll start with Eva, then go to Anita and finish with Dawn. Of the funding you get today to operate your facilities, how big a percentage would you say is federal, provincial, or local community-driven, be it either fundraising or through municipal grants and stuff like that?

Are community agencies such as policing, social services and medical professions aware of the services you do, and do they work with you fairly closely, or do we need to do a better job to ensure those agencies assist you?

Thank you.

Go ahead, Eva.

• (1625)

Ms. Eva Kratochvil: In our community, the majority of the funding for Hiatus House, luckily, is through the federal government. The balance is provincial, not municipal. The municipality funds homeless shelters. That's part of what I believe the divide is. It's so poorly funded at the municipal level that you don't want to associate with it.

As to how we work collaboratively with the other agencies supporting us, they absolutely do. They provide referrals to us on an ongoing basis.

The sad fact is they also know we're running beyond capacity all the time, so they sit with us and try to figure where to send this woman tonight, a woman who's been severely assaulted. Police are involved. She's had to be turned away. This just happened to me not that long ago, working in the night. I had a woman with a four-month-old baby. I tried Samia, Chatham, Strathroy and London. How far away does she have to go to get a shelter bed?

Mr. Jim Eglinski: I got the picture. I think we get the picture. I just want to give everybody a chance, Eva.

Anita, would you comment?

Dr. Anita Olsen Harper: Thank you.

On reserve, 100% of the funding comes from the federal government. There are proposals that are written by the executive directors of the shelter for individual needs—child safety seats, for example. Sometimes it means accessing little individual pockets of money. It often means that.

Are the community agencies working with us? Yes, they are, and I appreciate what you have done to help abused women and children. *Meegwetch.*

Ms. Dawn Clark: We don't receive any federal funding. Most of our funding is through the provincial government, through BC Housing's women's support program. Probably about 10% to 15% of the funding we receive is through private donations. We are constantly writing grants to support the work that's done at the transition house.

For instance, our crisis line, which is the first point of contact for women wanting to access services, is not funded, so we fully fund that crisis line. It's essential to women coming into the house. That's just an example of where we're underfunded and need to be funded.

Mr. Jim Eglinski: Okay. I'm up in five seconds.

The Chair: That's fine. You've done a great job.

We're going to move on to Pam. Pam, you have the floor.

Ms. Pam Damoff (Oakville North—Burlington, Lib.): Thanks, Chair.

Following up on my colleague's question, every organization that has come here has talked about the need for core funding. I'm not disagreeing at all, but if you're going to run women's shelters—and we all hope they're going to go away, but they've been here for 45 years—and if a government provides core funding, then, as we're seeing in Ontario, where programs in social services are being decimated, you could easily have all of it disappear.

How do you make it easier for you to access grants, or whatever it might be, with the knowledge that governments change? If we were to provide core funding to you, in time you could have a new government come in and take it all away, as has happened in Ontario. Then you're really in trouble.

Eva, you're shaking your head. I'm wondering if you have any thoughts on how to make the grant process more useful for you. How can we deal with that?

Ms. Eva Kratochvil: I'm not a grant writer. I'm front line. Looking at that as a survivor, though, just because the government changes, we don't get rid of fire, ambulance, and police. Why aren't we an essential service?

Ms. Pam Damoff: Something I was thinking about was that any funding seems to come from Status of Women. I'm wondering if it should actually be coming through Public Safety. Instead of thinking of this as a women's issue and funding it through Status of Women, which has very little money, should it actually be shifted over to a totally different way of thinking and be moved over to Public Safety?

● (1630)

Ms. Eva Kratochvil: For me, you don't say, "Well, sorry, there are too many fires. You're out of luck today. There's no fire assistance for you. We're not coming to your burning house." It's the same thing with police calls.

If we're an essential service, we're not going to say, "Sorry, no bed for you tonight." We have adequate services for what is needed across the country; I think it needs to be an essential service. That's just how I see it.

It must be complicated.

Ms. Pam Damoff: I wonder if any of the other ladies have any thoughts on that.

Dr. Anita Olsen Harper: I would have to say that for women's shelters on reserve, because they are federally funded, there should be an entrenched funding formula that is applicable on a district basis, not even on a provincial basis. We realize the vast geographical differences in where women's shelters are located.

I agree that it is not a women's issue, and it's ISC that funds the on-reserve shelters.

Ms. Pam Damoff: We had two witnesses who came from the north and who talked about issues in the Northwest Territories and in

Yukon—the lack of transportation, the difficulty getting to them, and so on.

I only have about two minutes left, Dawn, but I'm wondering what your thoughts are on that.

Ms. Dawn Clark: I think it's important for government to value women and children, to see them as of value. When you talk about the changes in government and core funding being pulled, it speaks to the fact that this is not as important an issue as it needs to be. I think there needs to be more light shed on the whole issue of violence and how we can best support families, because they are our future.

Ms. Pam Damoff: Dr. Harper, all of your work is being done in rural and indigenous communities. How often are firearms involved in women coming into your shelter?

Dr. Anita Olsen Harper: I really can't answer that. The rate of domestic homicide in indigenous populations, though, is at least five times higher than the average Canadian rate. In many cases, firearms are involved, but I cannot give you statistics on it.

Ms. Pam Damoff: What about you ladies?

Ms. Eva Kratochvil: That's one of the high-risk questions we ask. When I look across the shelter, that would be one of the things that qualifies them. The stats might be a little bit skewed there, because when there are firearms involved, that places them at a substantially high risk, so we're bringing them in more frequently.

Ms. Dawn Clark: I would agree with Eva. When we're doing an assessment, we focus a lot of attention on safety. That's just our work.

The Chair: Thank you so much. This has been a great panel.

Eva, Anita and Dawn, thank you so much for bringing so much information to our committee today.

I'll suspend for two minutes, and then we'll be back with Pam.

● (1630)

(Pause)

● (1635)

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Pam Damoff): I will call the meeting back to order.

Welcome back to the 122nd meeting of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women. For the second hour, I'm pleased to welcome Mr. Yvan Clermont, the Director of the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics at Statistics Canada, and Kathy AuCoin, the Assistant Director.

I'll now turn the floor over to you for your opening statement. You have seven minutes.

Mr. Yvan Clermont (Director, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Statistics Canada): Very good. Thank you very much.

[Translation]

Good afternoon.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our findings, which I hope will give you insight into the demand for shelter space among women seeking help because of intimate partner violence. I will be presenting data collected through police reports as well as a shelter survey.

Slide 2 shows our key findings. In the past three years, the rate of intimate partner violence against females has increased slightly, by 4%. The rates are highest in the territories, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. The last time we collected shelter data, we found that one in four women had sought shelter from the facility before and that more than half of the women who sought shelter because of abuse were admitted with their children. I would also like to point out that we have new shelter data coming out in the spring, data I believe will be essential to the committee's study.

Slide 3 shows data from the survey on shelters. The last time these data were collected was in 2014. At that time, more than 600 shelters across Canada offered services to women fleeing domestic violence and their children. In all, the shelters provided over 12,000 beds. The provinces with the most shelters were Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia. The day on which the survey was administered, more than half the women who had sought shelter were under the age of 35, and more than seven out of 10 women were looking for a shelter in a big city. In 2014, the average number of beds per facility was 19.

Moving on to slide 4, I should note that it provides an overview of shelter capacity in relation to the number of police-reported incidents of intimate partner violence. We know that, during the same year, about 70,000 women were victims of intimate partner violence, as reported to police. Once again, the highest rates were observed in Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia, the three largest provinces in the country.

Another data point worth noting is the rate of intimate partner violence. From that standpoint, we look at the number of victims and population differences. That way, we are able to see which regions present the highest risk. In 2014, the regions with the highest rates of intimate partner violence, as with crime overall, were the three territories, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Alberta.

[English]

Switching to slide 5, from this slide we note that the majority of women in shelters cited abuse as their primary reason for seeking shelter in 2014, and 78% of them identified their abuser as an intimate partner.

If you turn to the next slide, slide 6, this graph shows the various forms of abuse women have been reporting to the shelter. Note here that women can report more than one form of abuse. We can see the various forms of abuse experienced by these women on this chart. For example, two-thirds reported emotional abuse and half reported physical abuse. Also, 21% of women reported that sexual abuse was a factor for seeking shelter, and more than a quarter of women wanted to protect their children from witnessing the abuse.

On the next slide we can highlight some information that looks at capacity issues. In 2014, on a snapshot day, more than 300 women and 200 of their children were turned away from a shelter. More than half of these individuals were turned away because the shelter was at capacity. Other reasons for being turned away included alcohol and

drug issues, 8%; mental health issues, 6%; and women being on a non-admit or caution list, 4%.

Another critical data point to consider is that one in four of the residents served on the snapshot day had stayed at the shelter before—that is, they were return clients of the shelter. Among these, 37% had stayed at the same shelter one time in the previous 12 months, and 17% had stayed there two to three times, while 30% had stayed at the shelter but had their stay more than a year ago.

● (1640)

Additionally, almost half of the female residents had not reported the abuse to the police.

Now we turn to the type of services these shelters are offering. According to the last iteration of the transition home survey covering the year 2014, there was a range of services that were available to women residents, including counselling, transportation services and housing referrals. Many shelters were also able to meet the diverse needs of indigenous women and children.

Up to now, I've presented information that was collected in 2014, the last time we captured information on shelters. Now I'd like to provide you with trend analysis related to intimate partner violence against females reported to the police and coming from the uniform crime report.

Overall in Canada, between 2009 and 2014 there was a year-over-year decline in rates of intimate partner violence against women. However, since 2014 these rates have increased by 4%, almost all driven by an increase in females being victims.

We now look at regional differences.

The largest increases over the three-year period were noted in Northwest Territories, Manitoba and Prince Edward Island. However, decreases were noted in Yukon, B.C. and Alberta. Remember these are percentage changes. Overall, levels of intimate partner violence against females remain much higher in the territories and higher in Manitoba and Saskatchewan compared to British Columbia and the east.

To finish this presentation, I would like to draw your attention to two new surveys that are still in collection right now and being processed, and will be informative to your critical research here.

The first survey is the survey of residential facilities for victims of abuse, which is replacing the transition home survey we conducted the last time in 2014. It will be collecting important new information listed on slide number 11 here. Specifically, the survey will provide us with information on the characteristics of shelter residents, according to age and gender, and further by indigenous identity, visible minority identity, residency status and whether they have disabilities, and, if so, which type. The first results will be available next spring, in 2019.

Also coming toward the end of next summer in 2019, Statistics Canada will be releasing data from the new survey of safety in public and private spaces. We will have additional information that will be of value to this committee—in particular, intimate partner violence victims will be asked to report on whether they have had to leave their home because of violence and, if so, where they went. Combined with numerous individual characteristics and other victimization results, these data will present a very interesting picture of the situation.

This ends our presentation today, so we're ready for questions. Thank you.

● (1645)

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Pam Damoff): Thank you very much for your presentation.

For the first seven-minute round, we're going to turn to Marc Serré.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marc Serré (Nickel Belt, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mr. Clermont, thank you very much for your presentation and the work you're doing in this area.

There's a lot of information to digest. I have several questions for each slide. You talked about the statistics being compiled in 2014, mentioning that new data would be released in 2019. You also referred to a new report.

You heard a number of witnesses comment on the lack of data and the need for more information. I'd like to know how we can improve the available data and get you the additional resources to do that.

For my first question, though, I'd like you to briefly explain the difference between the two reports, if you would.

Mr. Yvan Clermont: I would be happy to, Mr. Serré.

You're asking about the transition home survey, which is a type of survey in which the data are aggregated. I won't go into the details, but suffice it to say it's a survey we conducted every two years up until 2014. At that point, we felt the need to rework the survey. We wanted to incorporate important elements of information and reassess the databases that were being used for the survey because of deficiencies in certain areas.

We redesigned the survey and are now able to conduct it once again. Right now, we are collecting data. The new survey will deliver much more detailed content, and the results will be released in the spring of 2019.

In terms of what we need, or the requirement for additional resources, I can tell you that the survey is funded by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

Mr. Marc Serré: That's great.

On slides 4 and 5, you provide statistics for each province. Beyond the provincial breakdown, do you have any data for urban versus rural areas?

Mr. Yvan Clermont: With police data, it would be possible to compare the situation in urban and rural areas.

Mr. Marc Serré: You don't have that information, however. Do you?

Mr. Yvan Clermont: It's not part of this deck, but we could provide it for another meeting, as needed.

Mr. Marc Serré: Could you forward the information to the clerk?

Mr. Yvan Clermont: Yes, of course.

Mr. Marc Serré: Very good.

Slide 2 deals with intimate partner violence. What sorts of statistics do you have? Do you have data on violence involving a firearm, for instance? Again, it would be important to have that information for urban versus rural areas.

Mr. Yvan Clermont: When we are using police-reported information, we are able to say whether a firearm was used. On December 5, we'll be coming out with a report on family violence containing data on that very issue, the use of firearms in intimate partner violence.

Mr. Marc Serré: I see.

Slide 5 shows a breakdown of the various forms of abuse, which can include dependence.

In light of your study, do you think there are statistics that aren't being collected but should be? That's something you could recommend to the committee.

Mr. Yvan Clermont: Are you referring to slide 5 of the deck?

Mr. Marc Serré: It's actually slides 5 and 6.

Mr. Yvan Clermont: Okay.

Yes, exactly.

Ms. AuCoin, does the 2019 survey provide more details on the forms of abuse?

Ms. Kathy AuCoin (Assistant Director, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Statistics Canada): The upcoming survey will include more data.

We did a two-year consultation of our survey managers.

● (1650)

[*English*]

The three key points they wanted us to collect were women seeking shelter with disabilities and the types of disabilities. When we were looking at indigenous women, they wanted more clarity on first nations and Métis. They were very comfortable with the forms of abuse that were being asked about.

Remember, this is just one tool. We also have the General Social Survey—Victimization, which is self-reported, where we really get a lot of detailed information about the types of abuse women are suffering. We also get that through the Uniform Crime Reporting Survey when there's a weapon involved, if there's an injury, so there are multiple different data sources that we're using.

Mr. Marc Serré: Is that survey done every seven years? I think we heard in the past that it should be done more often than every seven, but resources are needed.

Ms. Kathy AuCoin: That's a valid statement. It's done every five years, but in addition, through funding from Status of Women, we're doing a survey of safety in public and private spaces. That is in the field now, with a very large sample, and it will complement the other survey. It will add to our knowledge.

Mr. Marc Serré: Based on a lot of that information, in 2019 you're looking at data on first nations, disability, and immigration, which are things you didn't have the resources to do in the past.

Ms. Kathy AuCoin: That's correct.

Mr. Yvan Clermont: As we said at the conclusion of our presentation, we're going to have information from two different sources coming out in 2019—the new redesigned aggregate survey on shelters and the survey on safety in public and private spaces.

Mr. Marc Serré: I want to thank you for the work.

I just want to go back to the disability aspect. We don't have any data on disabilities. Do you have any other data that you could provide to the committee regarding support within the shelters?

Second is the dependencies.

[Translation]

I'm talking about the social problem of dependence.

[English]

Ms. Kathy AuCoin: What we could tell from the transition home or shelter information was the number of people, or individuals, or women turned away because of alcohol or dependency issues. I'm sure you've heard from other witnesses that that's a core group whose needs are perhaps not being met, and they're being turned away.

Further to that, what we can release and what we have released is prevalence of women with disabilities and their prevalence of being a victim of intimate partner violence. I could send a report that we did. They are at greater risk.

Again, I'm sure you've heard from other witnesses who are shelter managers regarding what they have available to service that community. The data from here doesn't really dig into that aspect, but I can provide you with the overall prevalence of women with disabilities and their likelihood of being a victim of this type of violence.

[Translation]

Mr. Marc Serré: Thank you very much.

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Pam Damoff): Thank you very much.

Madame Boucher, you have seven minutes.

[Translation]

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, CPC): Thank you.

I'm new to the committee because I'm standing in for someone. This is a very important issue in my view. The Liberal member asked about rural versus urban violence. I happen to think there is a difference.

You talked about violence involving a firearm. A recent study in Quebec revealed that a lot of incidents involve knives, as well as

bare hands. They are all lumped together in the same category so as not to capture only incidents involving firearms because domestic violence is often not clear-cut.

In your opening remarks, you talked quite a bit about domestic violence involving indigenous versus non-indigenous women. Did you apply a similar lens to immigrants, whose numbers are growing in Canada? Do they experience violence at the same rate as everyone else? What forms of abuse do they experience based on where in Canada they settle?

Mr. Yvan Clermont: I'll try to answer your first question as best I can.

It is possible to establish differences in the modus operandi used in domestic violence from an urban versus rural standpoint. One of the things we look at is whether the domestic violence involves handguns, knives or fists, so that comparison between urban and rural areas is something we can do. We can provide you additional information on that.

You also asked whether domestic violence differs depending on whether it involves indigenous or non-indigenous people or different ethnic populations. We aren't able to break down police-reported domestic violence incidents for each of those groups, because police aren't consistently able to identify whether individuals are from the indigenous or non-indigenous community, belong to the immigrant population or have a particular ethnic background. That applies to both victims and accused.

In homicide cases, it's different because a much more in-depth investigation is conducted. For police-reported assaults and threats, however, the information is not always collected and dealt with here. The General Social Survey does provide us with some indicators, though. The sample-based survey allows for that differentiation, because it tells us whether an individual is an immigrant, a member of a particular ethnic community or an indigenous person.

●(1655)

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher: Thank you very much.

Do I have time left?

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Pam Damoff): You have three and a half minutes.

[Translation]

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher: We are talking about intimate partner violence. Back when I was Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women, we travelled up north, to Iqaluit. There, everyone knows where the shelters are. Everyone knows where the shelter in town is. In the provinces, at least in Quebec, the partner of a woman who goes to a shelter isn't supposed to know where it is. Is that the same for all provinces, or is it only in Quebec that the location of the shelter isn't supposed to be known? Do you have that information?

[English]

Ms. Kathy AuCoin: That would be a good question for one of the shelter associations. We don't ask that question, but you're right that most of them are confidential, to protect the women. However, my understanding is that in smaller communities where they only have one shelter, some women leave their community in order to find safety. Then the transportation becomes an issue. Again, that wasn't in the survey.

[Translation]

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher: That would be something to consider, then. The committee would have to put the question to the shelter representatives.

We saw that New Brunswick, Quebec and Ontario have the most incidents of violence. Does it have to do with the provinces being bigger? Frankly, I was surprised to see that there were more incidents in Quebec and New Brunswick than in British Columbia, not because I think it's a more violent province, but because it's much larger geographically, so I would've thought the number of incidents would be higher.

Mr. Yvan Clermont: Yes. I think you're referring to the increase in the rates of police-reported violence from 2014 to 2017.

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher: Yes, of course.

Mr. Yvan Clermont: The rates changed from 2014 to 2017. That said, we are not talking about levels. In my speaking notes, I pointed out that, despite the larger increases in certain provinces, including in the Maritimes and Quebec, the levels remain higher in the territories and western provinces, specifically Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Alberta. You were right to notice it. These are year-over-year changes, but when you look only at the levels—and we could have shown this here—they are higher in the western provinces. It's consistent with the overall crime rate trends in those places.

• (1700)

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher: Thank you.

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Pam Damoff): Thank you very much.

Sheila, you have the next seven minutes.

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson: Thank you, Chair.

Thank you to the witnesses. The timing is really good to bring this information together.

On November 8, your Centre for Justice Statistics in Stats Canada released a report called "Police-reported sexual assaults in Canada before and after #MeToo, 2016 and 2017". The numbers were pretty striking. There were 25% more victims of police-reported sexual assault in the three months after #MeToo first went viral. The average number of police-reported sexual assault victims went from 59 per day before #MeToo to 74 per day after #MeToo.

I'm hearing that this is increasing the load on the front-line women's organizations, whether they're operating domestic violence shelters.... It's all sexual assault prevention. They're very intertwined.

I'm curious as to whether you have data or are planning to collect data, now that the taboo on reporting is being lifted, on how this increase in demand is stretching the limits of these sexual assault

support centres and the rape crisis centres, the help lines, the trauma lines. There are so many that are involved in this.

Is this something that StatsCan is collecting or is planning to collect?

Ms. Kathy AuCoin: Over the past two years we have been working with the directors of victim services from the provinces and territories with a new survey that's looking at the number of victims coming to various services. That's not just shelters, but any type of service. We are monitoring that closely.

Similarly, we will be watching and looking at the police data more closely to see if the number of police-reported sexual assaults sustains itself and continues.

The pre-MeToo and post-MeToo report that you referred to was very interesting. We looked on a quarterly basis, every three months, to see the increase of police-reported sexual assaults. We looked at it by province as well as by large cities. We noted that after the #MeToo social media phenomenon, there was a very substantial increase, but then it decreased. We're not sure why. It could have been two things happening. We know that some police services were advertising new hotlines, and we knew that Canadians were out there—it was in the media—and maybe more victims were feeling more comfortable to report what they experienced to the police.

We will be monitoring to see if those numbers keep going up, and we will be working with the directors of victim services to collect information from them.

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson: The NDP was disappointed that the federal government didn't go all the way to its UN commitment for a national action plan to end violence against women. They said that they would do a federal action plan instead—much more narrow—and focus on federal agencies.

One of them was StatsCan. They would get their house in order, they said, before following the UN commitment to do the national work with the provinces in creating a coast-to-coast-to-coast plan.

Can you talk with us more about the piece that StatsCan might be taking on to gather more knowledge about the front-line groups? They're the ones who are delivering the service. When women are turned away, are you able to tell whether it's because there aren't enough beds, they couldn't pay their rent, there aren't enough workers to carry the service?

Ms. Kathy AuCoin: Under the federal strategy regarding violence against women, we have received funding from Status of Women to carry out three critical surveys. One's the survey of safety in public and private spaces. It looks at various forms of abuse, including sexual violence, and whether it meets the criminal threshold, as well as inappropriate behaviours, whether they happen in a public place or a private space. We ask questions about shelter access and whether or not they've accessed services.

Two other surveys look at sexual misconduct or inappropriate behaviours among post-secondary students. The third one is within the workplace environment. In addition, with the new shelter survey currently in the field, we will be looking at whether women or even men or LGB community members were turned away. We will be looking at questions of capacity under that survey, and again this spring.

• (1705)

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson: Thank you.

I'm going to shift to a different area in the time I have remaining.

Because of the news reports during the week that we were away from Parliament about forced sterilization of indigenous women, I'd like to ask the committee to call the minister to speak to this. I have a motion to propose. I know this is just now a notice of motion, but I'm hoping that the committee members will consider waiving the notice so we can vote on it and actually go ahead and invite the minister.

The motion reads as follows:

That pursuant to the Minister's mandate for a "renewed, nation-to-nation relationship with Indigenous Peoples, based on recognition of rights, respect, co-operation, and partnership" and the government's commitment to Article 7(2) of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Committee ask the Health Minister—

I've written "Health Minister", but it could as well be Indigenous Services if that's more appropriate.

—to appear no later than December 2018 to brief the Committee on the government's efforts to immediately end the practice of forced and coerced sterilization of Indigenous women; that this meeting be no less than one hour in length; and that the meeting be televised.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Pam Damoff): Just to clarify, do you want to see if we have unanimous consent to waive the rules to deal with this now?

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson: That would be ideal. Thank you.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Pam Damoff): I do believe it's the Minister of Indigenous Services.

[Translation]

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher: Since some of us are here filling in for regular committee members, I would prefer you wait until the next meeting so they can see the motion. Not being a regular member of the committee, I think it would be best to wait until the next meeting.

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Pam Damoff): That's a no.

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson: I'll just suggest to my colleague that this committee will not be meeting other than in camera for some weeks, so that was my rationale.

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher: That's not my problem.

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson: Understood.

If you are saying that there is no unanimous consent, then that's clear.

Then it's a notice of motion. I hope we can vote on it at the next opportunity we have when we're not in camera.

Thank you.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Pam Damoff): Thank you. You still have 30 seconds. Do you have anything else for that time?

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson: No, that's fine. Thank you. I appreciate that.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Pam Damoff): Emmanuella, you have seven minutes.

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos (Saint-Laurent, Lib.): Thank you so much for being with us today to answer our questions.

Obviously we know that not even close to the number of women who actually experience abuse and who should be seeking help in shelters actually do reach out for help. A lot of them are hiding. A lot of them don't come out, and a lot of them are considered to be under hidden homelessness.

I know that we're discussing the data that you collect from shelters and from people who are seeking services in shelters, but what do you suggest we could do, or you could do, or we collectively could do in order to gather more information? While someone might not want to show up at a shelter, maybe if they were asked the question on a paper, even if their name was associated with it, they might be more willing to admit it.

While I'm suggesting something myself in my question, what do you suggest that we could do in order to help improve our data on this issue?

Ms. Kathy AuCoin: I'm trying to be thoughtful, and being a statistician and a data person and someone who's worked on family violence issues for 15 years, I'd suggest a survey of women who've stayed in a shelter, perhaps. From our data, we know women are coming back, and that becomes, from my perspective, a revolving door. If they've come to a shelter and they've stayed for two or three months, and then within a year are coming back, a need has not been met or they are still highly vulnerable, so look at those women to ask what they needed to move to the next level of security and to find a secure home.

We know from the general social survey on victimization that very few women who are victims of intimate partner violence use shelters, but from that large sample that we're using, maybe some of them had extended family or maybe they were fortunate. Those who used shelters—and I'm sure you've spoken to managers—are the ones with the greatest needs. Those are sometimes women going from their apartment with green garbage bags and two children on a bus to a shelter. Those are the most vulnerable people. From a data collection perspective, I would suggest doing a survey of those women in shelters to really get a sense of what their needs are to transition out of that cycle from a policy perspective.

That's just my opinion.

• (1710)

Mr. Yvan Clermont: I think to address the dimension of what you were raising about those not always seeking services from a shelter, I believe that the survey of safety and private and public space will bring us insight or more information about those who have not sought services from shelters, but were victims, and see why they did not do this. This new survey will bring us new data. It's only then, when we start analyzing it, that we'll see if we still have an important information gap on that issue.

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos: Thank you very much.

You also mentioned that in the new survey that's going to be coming out in April of 2019, you're going a lot more into detail about which people are receiving these services. However, we know that many of them are turned away. Every single witness we've spoken to has told us that they have to turn away more than they can accept. Are we collecting any data on who is being turned away?

While we know that a lot of it is due to alcoholism or drug abuse, we don't know if there are other things at play here such as racism, homophobia or anything like that. Can you maybe speak to that a bit?

Ms. Kathy AuCoin: Again, in redesigning the shelter survey, we consulted with provincial and territorial transition home associations, academics and NGOs, and the focus really was, from their perspective, that most turnaways were for reasons that we already had, such as alcohol and drug abuse.

There was some concern for the transgender population, and that came out in our consultation. Some shelters don't have the capacity to manage transgender, because their core group is females. We are collecting more data along those lines because we saw it as a gap and something that was prevalent.

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos: That's it for me. Thank you very much.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Pam Damoff): Jim, you have two minutes left. Does anybody else on that side want to take two minutes?

Mr. Jim Eglinski: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'd like to thank the witnesses for coming out today. You brought some very interesting statistics.

There's one question I want to ask you, and then I keep thinking maybe I shouldn't ask you, but I will leave that towards the end.

I'm finding your graph number 3 very interesting. I'm either confused or I'm going to be shocked at what your answer is going to be.

According to the 2014 GSS, 6% of women who were victims of spousal violence in the provinces reported that they had contacted or used a shelter, transition home....

That's what you say on that line. Then you're telling me that we have 12,058 beds across Canada and that 51% of the women were turned away, and I'm trying to do the math here.

It's already shocking that we need 24,000 beds. We know that. That tells us that right off the bat, but what it tells me is that it's only 6%, and if 6% is 12,058, where am I missing the math here, folks? It's a little confusing to me. Either we're drastically under-bedded or there's a lot more going on there than we realize. According to your statistic, it's telling me that there's a lot more going on than we really realized. Can you answer that?

Ms. Kathy AuCoin: The General Social Survey asks Canadian men and women if, in the past five years, they have been a victim of some form of intimate partner abuse. It can be a range of behaviours from uttering threats to slapping or some sort of physical abuse, and that person is counted. It might have only been one experience. Would they have left their home or their partner because of that abuse? Often it's not the case. When we collected the data from the GSS, we found that it's only in the most severe instances that women leave and seek a shelter. Not every woman—or man, for that matter—in a situation of abuse in their relationship will go to a shelter. They might leave their relationship and go to family members or friends.

• (1715)

Mr. Jim Eglinski: That 6% is not really in relation to that graph—

Ms. Kathy AuCoin: That's correct.

Mr. Jim Eglinski: A separate survey was done. Thank you for that clarity.

Mr. Yvan Clermont: It is contextual information, and you are right. Those beds can serve—

Mr. Jim Eglinski: You mentioned during your presentation, Yvan, that it stopped in 2014. Why? We could have had two years of data there. I wonder if you could clarify it for me.

Mr. Yvan Clermont: That's a very good question.

The reason it was stopped in 2014, first of all, is it was a survey conducted every two years. The year before that was 2012, and now it was 2014. There were some methodological issues with the survey at the time, so it was decided to take the next two years to do a very thorough redesign of the survey, both in the sampling frame we're using to make sure that we have the right number of shelters and that we contact our contact person in each of the provinces and territories to see that we have a very good sense of all the shelters in existence, and also to redesign content, because the content of the 2014 and previous iteration of that survey was starting to be old and not necessarily well tuned to the new realities. We only had to do either a redesign or a collection. We used it to do a redesign. Now it's in collection in 2018. We jumped one cycle, and we're releasing it in the spring.

Mr. Jim Eglinski: Again I'm going back to graph 3, where we talk about the different provinces, the number of shelters, and total beds of 12,058. I think from the data you've given us, 51% are turned away. Is that in relation to this, or is that something different?

Ms. Kathy AuCoin: I want to go to the slide to clarify it.

Mr. Jim Eglinski: I'd like to clarify it.

Ms. Kathy AuCoin: In 2014 we chose one day to look at the characteristics and ask our shelter managers how many women and children were there. There were more than 7,000 on snapshot day, and on that day 300 women and 200 children were turned away.

Mr. Jim Eglinski: This is just the snapshot.

Ms. Kathy AuCoin: Yes, and 56% of the 300 women and 200 children were turned away because of capacity issues. More than 7,000 women and children were at the shelter that day. On snapshot day, 500 women and children were turned away for various reasons. Some of them were for alcohol issues or mental health issues or they were on a no-admit, but 50% of those who had been turned away were turned away because of a capacity issue for those shelters. You might have been okay in Toronto—lots of room—but it was in New Brunswick on that one day.

Mr. Jim Eglinski: Thank you very much for that clarification. Do I have any time left?

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Pam Damoff): You're over time right now.

Mr. Jim Eglinski: I thought you were going to give me those two minutes.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Pam Damoff): Well, I was going to give you part of it.

Mr. Jim Eglinski: I think my question is very relevant to everybody here.

Of the stats you gave us here, again on page 3, do you have a breakdown so we could get the difference in the rural situation? I'm a rural member of Parliament. We have urban members here, and I know most of the urban communities are fairly well served. I know a lot of our rural areas aren't. Do you have the statistics to give us the difference later on?

Ms. Kathy AuCoin: I'm thoughtful because I believe the locations of shelters are often confidential. From working on different groups, especially in rural areas, I know some women might leave their community for their safety. I will explore and see what I can do.

• (1720)

Mr. Jim Eglinski: Thank you, and thank you, Madam Chair, for giving me that opportunity to slide that in.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Pam Damoff): Sonia, you're next, for five minutes.

Ms. Sonia Sidhu (Brampton South, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you all for being here and answering our questions.

I want to go to your slide number 1. You said that assaults are highest in territories and Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Is it because of fewer shelters? When we are asking the question on assault rates, are we mentioning the reason the stats are high in those territories?

Mr. Yvan Clermont: These incidents are violence reported to the police and collected through the Uniform Crime Reporting Survey. They basically follow the trend of increasing east-to-west general crime rates, which are always higher in the west and in the territories—much higher in the territories. Therefore, it's mostly about what is being reported to the police, but not about shelters or the number of beds.

Ms. Sonia Sidhu: At that point, when you are redesigning the sampling and the questions, are you adding in the reason and whether it's crime-related or violence-related? Are you designing that question in the survey?

Mr. Yvan Clermont: The Uniform Crime Reporting Survey is not in redesign as a source for depicting those trends of increasing crime rates from east to west.

The reasons can be explained by the demographics, basically, and this is what we have seen. It is well-established trends or differentials between provinces and territories that we had been observing over several years, which keep persisting.

Ms. Sonia Sidhu: Thank you.

We are hearing that there are 41 shelters for women and children living on-reserve across provinces and Yukon, but how are you collecting the data on the women who do not live close to one of these 41 shelters?

Ms. Kathy AuCoin: The data that we would be getting for our shelter survey would be coming from the shelters in Yukon, and it would be the women who would be using those surveys. If Yukon females were leaving the community and going to another shelter in another province, we would get that information, but I would have no way of knowing whether they moved or not.

We did some consultations when we were developing the survey of safety in public and private spaces to see if we could capture that information, but it's really hard for survey managers to start asking for a lot of detailed information from residents, because they have a relationship. As a result, we were unable to get at that information.

That said, using the police data and our General Social Survey, we still have a better sense of where the highest rates of intimate partner violence are, and again, working with our victim services directorates, we'll know the volume of residents in the Yukon who are accessing victim services, including victims of sexual assault and domestic violence, as well as the shelters, but it would be an aggregate count.

Ms. Sonia Sidhu: Are you engaging social workers as well? Social workers have a lot of data on their clients too.

Ms. Kathy AuCoin: That's a good question.

Currently, under another project within Statistics Canada being funded by the Public Health Agency, we are looking at collecting administrative data for community services, which would feed into the social work, into the welfare system, and whether there is a suspicion of child abuse. We are exploring how to collect that information, but it's very preliminary as we explore if it is viable.

Ms. Sonia Sidhu: Thank you.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Pam Damoff): Go ahead, Marc.

I actually have a couple of really quick questions when we're done.

Mr. Marc Serré: When you say it is a snapshot of that one day, wouldn't it be better to ask the shelters for a snapshot of the last 12 months? In that one day, it's hard to get some true data to sink our teeth in. What would be needed of—

• (1725)

Ms. Kathy AuCoin: Again, my understanding, working with survey managers, is that resources are limited. Their priority is to focus on the women and children coming in. They are not the collectors of data.

We work closely with the associations to try to figure out how to collect the information without putting a burden on them, and I believe their resources are stretched.

It's a very valid question, but they're able to manage the snapshot day, and some even have difficulty providing us that information.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marc Serré: Do you have any recommendations as regards co-operation with provinces and municipalities?

What can they do to help the federal government with data collection? Do you have any recommendations for the committee? You don't have to provide them today.

Mr. Yvan Clermont: Collecting data in a systematic and consistent way is a very big job, administratively speaking. With their limited resources, transition homes, or shelters, can't exactly afford the IT systems necessary to collect data. In my view, aggregate surveys, when supplemented by the National Household Survey, can reveal a tremendous amount of information.

The results of the new survey, administered on a specific date, as well as the Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces will deliver a huge quantity of information. From there, we'll be better positioned to identify any data deficiencies and make recommendations accordingly. It's tough for us to say right now. Nevertheless, I would advise against any data collection systems where every single person walking into a shelter would be surveyed. That's how correctional services operates. Even though the organization is funded, staff have trouble getting the job done.

[*English*]

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Pam Damoff): I've let both sides go over quite a bit. If the committee would indulge me, with just a few minutes left, I would like to ask a couple of questions.

Do you collect data on same-sex partners and issues with shelters when it's a same-sex relationship? You talked briefly about trans people, but we've talked very little about intimate-partner violence in same-sex relationships.

Ms. Kathy AuCoin: I'm going to have to go back to see exactly how it was asked in the redesign, and I will get it back to you, but we do have data from the GSS as well as the new survey looking at the higher prevalence of intimate-partner victimization in same-sex relationships. We have a lot of that data. My concern is whether I'm going to get the data that I think you're getting at.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Pam Damoff): Do you have any questions that relate to pets? I understand from speaking to shelters that often women don't leave an abusive relationship because most shelters do not take pets. Is there anything in your data that looks at whether they accept pets, or whether women are staying because of the pets?

Ms. Kathy AuCoin: I am pretty certain not. I can look back at our consultation and whether it came up. Again, we spent 12 months in discussion. I can report on whether that was an issue.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Pam Damoff): I have a last question. The stats we have are on violent crimes that have been reported to the police, but we know those numbers are extremely low. Also, certain communities—for example, indigenous women—are very hesitant to report crime to the police. Is that balanced in any way to try to come up with statistics that reflect the reality?

Ms. Kathy AuCoin: I can send you.... From our last general social survey, we know that only 30% of victims of spousal violence, intimate-partner violence, will report to police. For indigenous women, I think it's about 33%. We have those rates, and I can share that with the committee.

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Pam Damoff): Do you have any stats on how many women who are not able to access shelters end up in prison? Quite often when women have to leave a shelter or an abusive relationship, they end up committing a crime out of poverty. Do you have any data on the correlation between shelters and corrections?

Ms. Kathy AuCoin: It's an excellent question, and we don't have that information. We would like to explore looking at women who are in a violent relationship and whether we could.... For example, in child maltreatment, did something happen early on and follow that pathway? The intersectionality of what happened at a young age and continued, with the victim ending up perhaps in a correctional facility because of a life of abuse, has to be explored, but currently we don't have it.

• (1730)

The Vice-Chair (Ms. Pam Damoff): I want to thank you very much for your testimony. We look forward to the reports you have coming out, but it's been very helpful to all of us to have you here today.

I want to remind members that draft recommendations for the study on barriers facing women in politics are due this Wednesday, November 21. We have no meeting this Wednesday because of the fall economic statement. On Monday, November 26, we'll be meeting in camera to start consideration of the draft report for the study on barriers facing women in politics.

With that, we are adjourned.

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