

Immediate Release- Press Release

April 12, 2018

New project promotes better health for Trans¹, Gender-Diverse, Non-Binary and Two-Spirit² Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence

Toronto, ON: Thursday, April 12, 2018, METRAC: Action on Violence launches a new initiative, *TransFormed*, in support of the health of Trans, Gender-Diverse, Non-Binary and Two-Spirit community members affected by intimate partner violence. This collaborative project is made possible through a three-year investment of \$478,000, from Public Health Agency of Canada, to prevent and address gender-based violence.

The Honourable Ginette Petitpas Taylor, Federal Minister of Health, represented by Randy Boissonnault, M.P. for Edmonton Centre, and the Special Advisor to the Prime Minister on LGBTQ2 issues, will announce federal support for the *TransFormed* project.

TransFormed brings together community members affected by gender-based violence, multi-sector agencies, researchers, health and social service providers and specialists who work in gender-based violence prevention and intervention, and health promotion and delivery.

Anticipated results of the project include:

- current research to fill substantial gaps in knowledge about the prevalence and experience of intimate partner violence towards Trans, Gender-Diverse, Non-Binary and Two Spirit individuals;
- identification of barriers to accessing health and social supports;
- promising practices in health and safety interventions for community members;
- creation and dissemination of health promotion tools designed by peers for peers affected by IPV; and,
- utilization of research findings to develop and launch new trainings and a knowledge exchange symposium for service providers.

¹ Trans is an umbrella term referring to people with diverse gender identities and expressions that differ from stereotypical gender norms - www.ohrc.on.ca

² Two-Spirit refers to a person who has both a masculine and a feminine spirit; and is used by some First Nations people to describe their sexual, gender and/or spiritual identity - www.lgbtqhealth.ca

Quotes

"Domestic violence is a global problem that affects many people around the world and various communities very differently", said Tatiana Ferguson Project Coordinator for the TransFormed project. The unique forms of oppression that Trans people experience both systemically and socially have resulted in many cases of Domestic Violence/ Intimate Partner Violence going unreported. In addition, the lack of adequate supports for Trans survivors of Gender Based Violence and the lack of gender recognition of various gender identities/expressions have disproportionately created barriers for Trans people seeking help."

- Tatiana Ferguson, TransFormed Project Coordinator, METRAC

"Intimate partner violence (IPV) is widely recognised as a global health and social problem with devastating consequences for individuals and their families. Historically IPV has been framed by dominant Western beliefs about gender roles and heteronormativity. Populations that did not fit into typical victim/offender roles were neglected both in research and practice. This project seeks to fix that by prioritizing Trans, Gender-Diverse and Two-Spirit communities as key agents of research and practice."

- Ilene Hyman, TransFormed Project Researcher, METRAC

"METRAC welcomes the opportunity to collaborate with the Government of Canada and community members and organizations in addressing the unique needs of Trans, Gender-Diverse, Non-Binary and Two-Spirit individuals affected by intimate partner violence (IPV). Through this investment we can reduce isolation and improve access to inclusive health and social supports for more community members affected by IPV."

- Wendy Komiotis, Executive Director, METRAC

Quick Facts:

- Population studies worldwide suggest that between 0.5% and 1.2% of people are Trans, though these are likely underestimates (Conron *et al.*ⁱ, 2012; Clark *et al.*ⁱⁱ, 2014; Dank *et al.*, 2014ⁱⁱⁱ)
- The TransPULSE report estimated that 0.5% of the Canadian population or roughly 180,000 people is Trans (Trans Health Pulse, 2015^{iv})
- Toronto is homes to an estimated 32% of transgender Canadians, or 57,600 people (Transgender People in Ontario, Canada: Statistics to Inform Human Rights Policy, 2015^v)
- Epidemiologic data suggests that the lifetime prevalence of IPV in Trans populations ranges from 19% - 80% (TransFormed Project Literature Review, 2018^{vi})
- Structural inequalities resulting from societal transphobia, marginalization and stigma, increase the risk of IPV and act as barriers to help-seeking and/or leaving the relationship (Greenberg, 2012^{vii}).
- Trans populations are less likely to report IPV to police or seek help from DV services (James & Herman, 2016^{viii}; Goodmark, 2013^{ix}; Grant *et al.*, 2011^x)
- IPV in Trans populations is associated with negative social and economic consequences including, poverty, suicide, homelessness, substance use and sex work (TransFormed Project Literature Review, 2018^{xi})

About METRAC: Formed in 1984, METRAC is an award-winning not-for-profit agency devoted to ending gender-based violence across communities, through education, research, and policy. We work with people of all ethnicities, races, classes, faiths, abilities, ages, sexual orientations, and gender expressions/identities affected by violence. Our vision is “A Safe Ontario for Women. A Safe World for All”. METRAC works with individuals, communities, and institutions to change ideas, actions and policies towards the achievement of our mission. Our programs focus on public education and outreach, legal information resources, youth violence prevention and mentorship, and community safety. We produce and distribute print and online materials in multiple languages and accessible formats; and we lead community-based research and social policy initiatives to improve systemic responses to gendered violence. Our work is driven by values of: Equity, Respect, Safety, Excellence, Innovation, Feminisms and Collaboration.

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- ⁱ Clark, T. C., Lucassen, M. F., Bullen, P., Denny, S. J., Fleming, T. M., Robinson, E. M., & Rossen, F. V. (2014). The health and well-being of transgender high school students: results from the New Zealand adolescent health survey (Youth'12). *Journal of Adolescent Health, 55*(1), 93-99
- ⁱⁱClark, T. C., Lucassen, M. F., Bullen, P., Denny, S. J., Fleming, T. M., Robinson, E. M., & Rossen, F. V. (2014). The health and well-being of transgender high school students: results from the New Zealand adolescent health survey (Youth'12). *Journal of Adolescent Health, 55*(1), 93-99.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Dank, M., Lachman, P., Zweig, J. M., & Yahner, J. (2014). Dating violence experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth. *Journal of youth and adolescence, 43*(5), 846-857
- ^{iv} Bauer, G., & Scheim, A. (2016). *Transgender people in Ontario, Canada: statistics from the Trans PULSE Project to inform human rights policy*. University of Western Ontario
- ^v <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2017/cd/bgrd/backgroundfile-104163.pdf>
- ^{vi} Brown, T.N.T., & Herman, J.L. (2015). Intimate partner violence and sexual abuse among LGBT people: A review of existing research. Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. Retrieved from <http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/IntimatePartner-Violence-and-Sexual-Abuse-among-LGBT-People.pdf>.
- ^{vii} Greenberg, K. (2012). Still hidden in the closet: Trans women and domestic violence. *Berkeley Journal of Gender, Law & Justice, 27*, 198–252.
- ^{viii} James, S. E., Herman, J. L., Rankin, S., Keisling, M., Mottet, L., & Anafi, M. (2016). The Report of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey. Washington, DC: National Center for Transgender Equality <http://www.transequality.org/sites/default/files/docs/usts/USTS%20Full%20Report%20-%20FINAL%201.6.17.pdf>
- ^{ix} Goodmark, L. (2013). Transgender people, intimate partner abuse, and the legal system. *Harvard Civil Rights – Civil Liberties Law Review, 48*(1), 51–104.
- ^x Grant, J. M., Mottet, L. A., Tanis, J., Harrison, J., Herman, J. L., & Keisling, M. (2011). Injustice at every turn: A report of the national transgender discrimination survey. Washington, DC: National 978 J Fam Viol (2016) 31:975–979 Center for Transgender Equality and National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.
- ^{xi} Riggs, D. W., Fraser, H., Taylor, N., Signal, T., & Donovan, C. (2016). Domestic violence service providers' capacity for supporting transgender women: Findings from an Australian workshop. *British Journal of Social Work, 46*(8), 2374-2392.