

**February 20, 2015 For Immediate Release:**

## **Improving the Public Health Response to Family Violence and Child Maltreatment**

The British Columbia Centre of Excellence for Women's Health (BCCEWH) is pleased to announce our engagement in a new 3-year project addressing family violence in Canada. The Health Minister, the Honourable Rona Ambrose, announced the \$4.1 million initiative funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada, today in Toronto.

Minister Ambrose recognized that professionals need more support in responding adequately to family violence in Canada and has hosted several Roundtables to discuss the gaps, challenges and opportunities in providing care. It is clear that family violence remains a persistent and major public health problem in Canada, with devastating consequences for women, children, families, communities and society. There is an urgent need for improving the health and social service response.

The BCCEWH, in partnership with PreVAiL (an international, Canadian-led research network on violence) will identify the best evidence on how to respond to family violence and child maltreatment, and the preferred educational approaches for a range of professional groups. In order to bring evidence to practice, we will produce guidance, curricula, tailored training tools and protocols for a range of situations and professions.

We will collaborate with the major national professional organizations to create guidance for health and social care practitioners, including physicians, nurses, psychologists, oral health professionals, social workers, mental health and addictions counsellors, child welfare workers and women's shelter & transition house workers. This project will build a more responsive, informed and integrated system of support for those exposed to family violence, including Aboriginal women and children and a range of multi cultural groups.

The BCCEWH has engaged with practitioners, policy makers, community groups and researchers in bringing evidence to practice and policy on key women's health issues for 18 years. We will build on our established expertise in carrying out systematic evidence reviews, innovative consultation processes and knowledge translation strategies to improve care for women and children exposed to family violence.

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For more info, the project contacts are:

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