



ANNUAL REPORT 2004-2005

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Chairperson's Message

It has been an honour for me to have been recently appointed as the Chairperson of the New Brunswick Advisory Council on the Status of Women and it is indeed a pleasure to present this Annual Report.

I wish to first extend my gratitude to Dr. Mary Lou Stirling for her outstanding job, excellent leadership and focused direction she gave to the council during her term as chairperson. We are grateful that she has set a solid foundation and the Council will continue to build on that structure.

I also wish to recognize the hard work of Rose-Aimée Haché, member from the Acadian Peninsula. Rose-Aimée was a member of the Council for the past 7 years and her commitment has been appreciated.

The Council has had another very active year in 2004-2005. With its appointed members and small staff we have worked diligently in many areas in order to raise awareness of the status of women through our many public activities. We recognize that many considerable changes and progress have been made; however much remains to be done. The Council is committed to promoting equality for women in all sectors of New Brunswick.

As our report demonstrates, we have had a very active calendar year with many meetings and public events. We continue to work on issues such as the gender pay gap, violence towards women, child care, midwifery and women in politics, to name but few.

The Council also continues to partner with groups within the province in order to gather, research and disseminate information. We have been successful in creating solid partnerships with many groups. We want to continue to inform citizens of the work that the Council does and to increase awareness of women's issues.

And finally, all of our accomplishments as outlined in our report would have not been possible without the commitment of our members and staff. To each of our members, I wish to thank you personally for your active interest in promoting equality for women. And last but not least, my thanks are extended to Rosella, Wendy and Lorri. Thanks to their professionalism, commitment and loyalty, the Council continues to be pro-active in its drive to bring women's issues to the forefront. We are committed!

Ginette Petitpas-Taylor

Chairperson

March 31, 2005

WHO WE ARE

The members of the Advisory Council in 2004-2005 are:
Ginette Petitpas-Taylor, Moncton, Chairperson, appointed March 2005
Mary Lou Stirling, Fredericton, Chairperson, term ended March 2005
Sophie Robichaud, Acadian Peninsula, appointed June 2004
Odette Richard, Westmorland Kent, appointed June 2004, (Vice-Chairperson March 2005)
Joanne Barr, Greater Fredericton, appointed March 2002
Brenda Murphy, Greater Saint John, appointed April 2003
Kathleen V. Archibald, Restigouche, appointed March 2002
Gisèle Bujold-Michaud, Madawaska/Victoria, appointed March 2002
Patricia J. Allen, Kings/Albert, appointed March 2002
Jackie Matthews, Charlotte County, appointed March 2002
C. Anne Cummings, Carleton, appointed March 2002
Christine Augustine, Miramichi, appointed March 2003
Nathalie Boivin, Chaleur, appointed January 2003
Rose-Aimée Haché, Acadian Peninsula, re-appointed March 2002 to June 2004

WHAT WE DO

The Advisory Council was created by provincial legislation to advise the Minister on issues of concern to women and to bring these issues before the public and the government. The Mission of the Advisory Council is to promote equity for women in all sectors of New Brunswick society. The Council meets four times per year to study issues and adopt recommendations for action. On matters of interest to women, the Council:

- advises governments
- recommends laws, policies and practices to the N.B. government
- facilitates networking amongst women's groups
- gathers, researches and disseminates information
- increases awareness on issues, programs and services.

The Minister responsible for the status of women in 2004-2005 is the Honourable Margaret-Ann Blaney.

HOW TO CONTACT US

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COUNCIL MEETINGS

The 13 members of the Advisory Council on the Status of Women usually hold 4 meetings per year. In the previous year, 2003-2004, five meetings had been held, but this year, 2004-2005, only 2 meetings were held due to scheduling conflicts but also because the March meeting was postponed pending the appointment of a new Chairperson. Five conference calls were also held in 2004-2005.

Quarterly meetings usually include board and member development activities, such as orientation to board responsibilities and media training. Members report on their activities but also on the concerns of women in their region. Members have also established a tradition of taking time throughout the deliberations to refer to the Council's mission statement to ensure Council follows and fulfills its mandate.

June 10-11, 2004, Sackville, N.B.

Electoral reform: Over the previous months, the Council held 13 public information sessions, attracting over 80 women and various media representatives, made presentations to about 800 attendees of women's groups meetings or events and operated several event kiosks, on the subject of electoral reform. Council deliberated extensively on the issue of electoral reform for New Brunswick, and adopted recommendations (see Issues section).

Pay gap in New Brunswick: The preliminary results of the research on the impact of the current pay gap, being conducted by GPI Atlantic for the Advisory Council, provide evidence of some economic benefits of closing the pay gap. The third section of the research, dealing with other savings to be had from eliminating discrimination that causes the pay gap, is expected later in 2004.

Home support services: Dr. Linda S. Nugent assisted the Council in a working session on policy changes to address problems identified in home support services in New Brunswick. Solutions identified by Dr. Nugent and the members: giving the responsibility for home support to Health and Wellness (instead of Family and Community Services); including home support workers under employment standards; subsidizing training; and addressing discrepancies in salaries and in funding for heavy work and for night shifts. One suggestion for action was to send to groups and municipalities a motion for support of home support workers, providing facts and suggestions for action.

Prison: The ACSW completed a study of programs available for women in prisons, which shows the important services gaps, notably for women with addictions, francophones, Aboriginal women and women at the Madawaska Centre. All persons consulted expressed concern for the lack of addictions programs for women. The Council communicated with the Minister of Public Safety about programming problems but was refused an invitation to attend a forum of stakeholders. The short length of women's incarceration - about 90% serve less than 6 months - and the small number of female offenders, are said to be problems in providing adequate programming.

Working Group on Violence Against Women: The March 2004 meeting of the Minister's Working Group on Violence Against Women and the implementation of the protocols were discussed. Members expressed concern that legal aid for victims of spousal violence is still limited in the province.

Emergency contraception: Forthcoming changes in availability of emergency contraception were discussed including Council's efforts to urge the provincial government to ensure cost does not become a barrier to access to emergency contraception.

Socioeconomic Profile of New Brunswick Women by Mother Tongue - The findings of a socioeconomic profile of New Brunswick women by mother tongue, commissioned by the Fédération des dames d'Acadie and conducted by Irène Savoie were discussed. The results show differences in the educational level of Francophone and Anglophone women but point to similarities between women in other areas, as compared to men in the province. The Advisory Council has had the report translated and is making both versions available from our internet site.

Meeting with a group: Marianna Stack, president of the Elizabeth Fry Society of Saint John, spoke about the work and concerns of this advocacy group for women in prison. The Saint John group, one of 24 Elizabeth Fry Societies in Canada, does most of its work at the Saint John Centre, with some efforts at the Madawaska Centre and at the federal prison in Truro, Nova Scotia. A variety of programs and services are offered to help women in prison and their children, including a mother-child taped book reading program, one-on-one counselling, visits and bingo. This year they have a \$3,000 conditional grant from the provincial government. They continue to alert the public, MLAs and ministers to the deplorable conditions faced by women in N.B. prisons. Major concerns are the inadequate programming for women with addictions, the conditions

COUNCIL MEETINGS (continued...)

Meeting with a group (continued):

surrounding transporting of women between prisons, poor living conditions and inadequate programming generally for women in provincial prisons, where gaps are particularly severe for francophone and Aboriginal women. Some N.B. women request federal sentences so that they can serve them in better-equipped federal prison in Truro. E. Fry Society favours community-based options (i.e. house arrest, treatment programs etc.) to jail sentences for the non-violent crimes most frequently committed by women. Marianna Stack asks for Council help in obtaining government action, in advocating for these women and in identifying possible sources of funding to offer services such as court workers. The Council will contact public library authorities to explore the possibility of their partnering to ensure the E. Fry reading program for mothers in prison.

Conference call with Minister responsible for the status of women: Honourable Margaret-Ann Blaney joined the members via conference call. Members and staff briefed the minister on the discussions held during the quarterly meeting. The Minister expressed particular interest in the training needs of home support workers and encouraged the Council to pursue its work on the issues discussed.

ACSW Business

Meetings: Due to the budget cut, Council considered having one of the four required meetings via conference call or held in conjunction with another planned public event. The quarterly meeting scheduled for Bouctouche on September 30 - October 1 is replaced by a meeting on the day preceding the ACSW's planned conference on electoral reform. Council members also discussed other planned events, including lunch and learns on custody and violence and on caesarean sections and a conference on child care and the N.B. economy.

Budget: The 2004-2005 budget cut of \$37,000 was distributed among various expense items. Members commented on money-saving choices. While publication of the Report Card on the Status of Women will be suspended for 2005, requests for statistics have been sent for monitoring purposes. The members were briefed on the Council's appearance for Legislative Assembly's Standing Committee on Estimates, including positive comments received on public recognition of the expertise of the ACSW.

PUBLIC FORUM

Fifteen people joined the Advisory Council during an evening public forum on home support services with Dr. Linda S. Nugent, Associate Dean of Health Sciences, University of New Brunswick Saint John. Dr. Nugent has

worked as a nurse in rural New Brunswick homes, and conducted doctoral research on the contributions, working conditions and challenges of home support workers in the province. Members of the public expressed concern for quality of care, given the low salary and lack of standards. The currently available training through Community Colleges is unaffordable for many at \$850. There was consensus that this issue is reaching crisis proportion but only those living with the need know about it.

September 24, 2004, Moncton, N.B.

Two new members were welcomed, Odette Richard of Notre-Dame and Sophie Robichaud of Tracadie-Sheila.

Child care: The Council is organizing and sponsoring a symposium on November 19 that aims to identify child care as an issue with economic motivator. Business NB is providing some financial support for the event. There is no registration fee and the province's Community Economic Development Agencies will be sending representatives. Other economic-oriented groups and individuals will be invited (i.e. Conseil économique du NB, employers' associations), in addition to Family and Community Services day care officials. An ad campaign and tote bags will be launched just prior to the conference and will continue after the event. The Council is producing fact sheets on employer-sponsored child care and a "how to find" list for parents.

Electoral reform - The recently released paper, Options, of the Commission on Legislative Democracy was discussed. A forum on Women and Democracy on the day following the Council quarterly meeting will allow participants to discuss the Commission's proposals and the Council's recommendations on electoral reform.

Pay gap: Council received the findings of its commissioned study on the economic impact of eliminating the gender pay gap in New Brunswick. The GPI Atlantic research shows that closing the gap would provide a total benefit to the provincial treasury of \$350 million, which includes tax receipt increases, savings in social program and health care costs. Members agreed that the findings provide a strong argument for government action. Members were invited to attend the November hearings of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments, which will be considering a private members' bill on pay equity.

COUNCIL MEETINGS (continued...)

September 24, 2004, Moncton, N.B. (continued...)

Updates: Members were given updated information on the issue of sexual assaults incident and charge rates in New Brunswick and Canada. Also, statistics showing New Brunswick's high rate of caesarean sections compared to the Canadian average and significant regional disparities in use of this surgical procedure were studied. Council decided to continue to raise awareness of the issue and to provide information to the public on birthing alternatives.

Plans for events: The Economics of Child Care conference was reviewed as well as the schedule for upcoming events on custody, caesareans, sexual assault, violence.

Violence against women: A poster featuring young men denouncing violence is being developed in collaboration with the Advisory Council on Youth and Menswork. Various slogans were tested with focus groups of young men. The poster launch is planned for November 25, International Day to End Violence Against Women and the beginning of 16 Days of Activism on Gender Violence.

Socioeconomic Profile of Francophone Women in NB: The study commissioned by the Fédération des dames d'Acadie has been translated to English and is available on the Council website. As a follow-up to this collaboration, the Council worked with the Fédération to develop a proposal for gender-based analysis to be submitted to the upcoming Convention de la société acadienne au N.-B.

Abuse of prescription medications: It was agreed that a letter should be sent to the Minister of Health, with copies to other concerned departments and to the NB Prescription Drug Committee (a coalition of stakeholders from addictions treatment services, pharmacists, police etc. that is working to develop a provincial strategy for addressing the inappropriate use of prescription drugs), on the need for an online system to track prescription by physicians (especially painkillers such as Oxycontin or Daludid).

Meeting with a local group: Michelle Geldart of PEERS Moncton (Prostitutes Empowerment Education Resource Society) spoke about her efforts to offer public education and outreach services to empower sex workers, and to help them build new lives. She currently works through the PEERS organization in Victoria, B.C. with limited funding provided by Health Canada. Michelle painted a stark picture of the prostitution scene in the Moncton area: average age of entry into the sex trade of 14 years, prevalence of drug and alcohol addictions, violence, loss of custody of children. There are no services designed for them. Members agreed that the Council must help find ways to establish the sustainability of her work. Suggestions for support (human and financial) included providing contacts in the academic community, service agencies, churches, government departments, judicial sector, and helping find short-term human and financial resources.

ISSUES

ELECTORAL REFORM

In 2004-2005, ACSW members worked intensively on women and electoral reform. The Advisory Council partnered with the provincial government's Commission on Legislative Democracy. New Brunswick women constitute just 13% of members of the Legislative Assembly, a situation that has deteriorated in recent years. Women's share of appointments to provincial government agencies, boards and commissions is about 30%. The Council launched a booklet, *Your Issues, Your Vote, Your Government*, and two posters on women and electoral reform in April 2004 to raise awareness among women and women's groups of the potential stakes for women in the reform process underway in the province.

In a brief presented in June 2004 to the Commission on Legislative Democracy, Council recommended that:

- The provincial government introduce a mixed member proportional system for electing MLAs, in which some members are elected in single-member geographical districts by first-past-the-post, and others are chosen through a proportional representation list system used in a corrective or compensatory manner to ensure that the proportion of seats held by each political party corresponds closely to the total votes received by each party.
- At least 40% of Legislative Assembly seats be PR list seats and the overall allocation of seats be done at the provincial level.
- Legislators and representatives of the First Nations communities decide on formulas for the allocation of at least two seats in the New Brunswick Legislative Assembly for elected representatives of the First Nations peoples, and for the fair representation of women and men in these seats.
- The voting ballot allows for two separate choices: the selection of a riding representative and of a political party. The party ballot should present a closed list of candidates, so that voters choose a slate of candidates in the order presented by the party of their choice. These lists, distributed for public scrutiny before the election, can be an important tool for favouring a more balanced range of candidates with regards to gender and other considerations than is usually obtained with single-member geographical ridings.
- The threshold or minimum percentage of the party vote to be eligible for PR list seats be set at 5% to avoid fragmentation of parties.
- The provincial government set a target of equal proportions of women and men on provincial bodies and adopt a pro-active approach to recruit and select potential female appointees. Vacancies on provincial agencies, boards and commissions should be publicly advertised and the government should systematically use and promote existing databases such as the Advisory Council's Talent Bank to identify potential appointees.
- The government introduce legislation requiring political parties to adopt a plan to bring about gender balance. The plan should cover the candidate search process, riding nominations and proportional representation lists. An initial goal of 30% female representation to be reached within 3 election periods should be gradually increased to 50%.
- The provincial government revise its limits on electoral financing to limit the costs of getting nominated and running election campaigns. While some limits on candidate and party spending for general and by-elections currently exist, there are no legislated spending or contribution limits for nomination campaigns in N.B.
- The provincial government set fixed dates for elections so that candidates and politicians can make plans to reorganize their paid work and family commitments to meet their political obligations.
- Political belief or activity be added to the prohibited grounds covered by the N.B. Human Rights Act, as proposed in legislation currently before the Legislative Assembly. Moreover, the provincial Human Rights Commission should have the material and human resources needed to pursue complaints on these grounds.
- The provincial government actively promote and expand mechanisms for bridging the gap between citizens and government, so that groups and women from diverse realities may become true players in the decision-making process. In this regard, the government should consider more frequent recourse to models along the lines of the Ministers' Working Group on Violence Against Women or the Social Policy Renewal process as a method for engaging the community and benefiting from its input.
- The provincial government commit to the use of a gender equality perspective at all stages of legislative change, policy development and program delivery, with the objective of ensuring that the results are of equal benefit to women and men in all their diversity. The adoption of a gender-based analysis approach as an integral part of governance is key to achieving substantive equality for the citizens of New Brunswick.

ISSUES (continued...)

ELECTORAL REFORM (continued...)

- Referendum use be guided by the following rules:
 - only the government may directly initiate a referendum, and only after an issue has been debated in the Legislature. Citizens may present petitions to the government to request the holding of a referendum, but the government is responsible for deciding on the referendum question. Referendum questions are framed with the objective of obtaining public input on policy options through a process involving discussion by an all-party legislative committee.
 - a referendum is allowed only as part of a process involving public debate after a public education campaign overseen by a non-partisan body.
 - spending by parties, groups and individuals is limited during referendum campaigns and all sources of funding must be disclosed.
 - some funding is provided by government for those interested sides of the referendum debate which are unable to invest a minimum amount in the referendum campaign.
 - a “compound” majority is needed to pass, that is a majority of all voters, as well as a majority of voters in a majority of the individual electoral districts.
 - the results of a referendum are not binding on government.

In spring 2004, the ACSW held public information sessions on women and electoral reform in Moncton, Miramichi, Woodstock, Grand Sault, Campbellton, Fredericton, Saint John, Sussex, Bathurst, Tracadie, St. Stephen. Then in September 2004, a provincial forum in Moncton on *Women and Democracy* was organized by the ACSW in collaboration with the Commission on Legislative Democracy. About 65 individuals and representatives of women’s groups around the province met with experts to discuss electoral reform with a view to ensuring better representation and participation of women.

Sonia Pitre of University of Ottawa focused on the attitudes of local political elites and their level of awareness of the barriers to women’s representation. Her research carried out with political elites of New Brunswick after the elections of 1999, concluded that New Brunswick’s New Democratic elites are the most liberal in their attitudes toward women. She noted few differences between the Liberal Party and Progressive Conservative Party elites in New Brunswick. Women in the parties believe in the concept of equality, regardless of the party they represent, whereas the highest score among men went to the NDP. Men are more inclined to maintain that the under-representation of women is due to a supply

Problem, whereas women tend to attribute it to the “old boy’s club” and misogyny.

Dr. Joanna Everitt of UNB Saint John noted that “minority” interests have difficulty gaining representation since our system is just based on territory. Women have a difficult time to be nominated as candidates in a single-member plurality system since the parties can choose only one candidate per riding. Proportional representation systems elect three to four times more women than do other types of systems in countries with similar cultures. Political parties must have open attitudes toward women since they are the ones that control the nomination of candidates.

Dr. Lisa Young of University of Calgary said there are no simple solutions to the problem of increasing the participation of women. Under proportional representation, the more list seats there are in a region, the better represented women will be. Countries where the political parties are publicly funded have a greater tendency to respect incentives and penalties and she suggested looking at the possibility of extending tax credits to nominating conventions. She proposed linking the party list seats to the riding seats in each region, as a way to recruit women.

Nathalie Des Rosiers, Dean of the Faculty of Civil Law, University of Ottawa and immediate past president of the Law Commission of Canada spoke of the Commission’s recent report, *Voting Counts: Electoral Reform for Canada*. The report favours the implementation of a mixed proportional representation system and recommends requiring political parties to develop policies aimed at promoting equal representation of the sexes.

CHILD CARE

If we get child care right, everyone benefits was one of the slogans of a public awareness campaign launched by the ACSW in November 2004. Posters and brochures were released presenting quality child care as good for children and for community development. Children are spending a lot of time away from parents, in child care, so child care must offer developmentally appropriate stimulation in a safe and nurturing environment. As well, investment in early childhood and child care is critical to economic growth, especially when three-quarters of mothers with preschoolers are in the labour force. In a province with a low birth rate, child care services can be important to support families so that they will be able to have the number of children they want. One of the posters features a father and child walking to work and a child care site - a reality for New Brunswick families.

ISSUES (continued...)

CHILD CARE (continued...)

In November 2004, the ACSW organized a provincial conference on child care aimed at economic development agencies and community leaders to explore the link between economic development and child care services. About 200 persons attended. The ACSW partnered with Business New Brunswick, Training and Employment Development and Early Childhood Care and Education N.B. to organize the Economics of Child Care event in Fredericton.

Gordon Cleveland, Economics Professor, University of Toronto spoke on the benefits of good quality childcare: it allows women to take on more responsibilities, has a large impact on family income; benefits on children's development outweigh the costs 7 to 1, yet we put \$1 in early childhood education and development for every \$40 put into education. A universal childcare program would cost \$5.3 billion per year; the benefits (to children, family and the economy) - \$10.6 billion.

Governments should fund supply side i.e. put money into training and workers' salaries, and should insist that the framework must be in the non-profit sector.

Lynell Anderson, a Certified General Accountant who co-authored a report on funding child care and a member of the Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC spoke on accessibility to high quality childcare today is a result of good luck and high family income. Canada has a patchwork of services and is at a competitive disadvantage relative to other developed countries. Parents should be contributing 20% of the total cost of childcare. A national childcare system should be federally funded, provincially planned, and locally delivered. Subsidies to families are not the answer since they don't ensure accessibility and quality. Wages and qualifications ensure this.

Janet Towers, President, Early Childhood Care and Education NB said 11% of NB children have access to licensed childcare. 147 daycare staff are taking distance education. 20% of staff have certificate in early childcare education. Average annual salary of childcare workers is \$15,700 - close to low income cut-off for most of them. 58% of the revenue of centers comes from parents, the third highest proportion in Canada.

Charles Coffey, Executive Vice President, RBC Financial Group, said there are economic costs to doing nothing with respect to early childhood care and development. An investment in childcare is about generating economic prosperity. He believes N.B. "gets it" when he sees Business NB and Training and Employment Development partnering with the ACSW to hold this conference. Link between the economy and childcare is an uncommon theme but shouldn't be. Cost savings through investing in quality childcare are attained through: reduced spending on special education; lower drop-out rates;

increased earning potential; critical to attraction and retention of good employees. When business people say that children are our most important resource he says 'Why is it then that Canada has one of the highest child poverty rates in the industrialized world? Why is it that our shelters are overflowing with abused women and children? Why is it that the suicide rate of aboriginal youth is so high? Why are childcare workers one of the lowest paid groups?'

Jane Bertrand, Executive Director, Atkinson Centre for Society and Child Development, gave an overview of Toronto's First Duty Project, a universal early learning and care program that also supports parents in their parenting role.

Jody Dallaire, Coordinator, Early Childhood Care and Education NB spoke of the integration of early education and childcare in several countries and the need for a publicly funded system.

THE PAY GAP

Cost of the Gender Pay Gap - A study commissioned by the ACSW from GPI Atlantic of Halifax, attempted to answer the question: *What are the economic, social, health, taxation and other benefits of closing the pay gap in N.B.?* The study, *Gender Wage Gap In New Brunswick*, by economist Dr. Ather H. Akbari of the Economics department of St Mary's University, released in November 2004, concluded that the pay gap caused by wage discrimination in New Brunswick results in significant lost tax revenues and increased health and social program expenditures.

The cost of the current pay gap to taxpayers and the economy is a major argument in favour of action towards eliminating the gap. The study projects an increase of about 11% in federal and provincial personal income tax collection for New Brunswick from removal of wage discrimination against women. New Brunswick could expect to gain about \$105 million in additional personal income tax revenues and savings of about \$19 million in government transfer payments made to individuals.

The Advisory Council called for government intervention to address the problem of the gender pay gap in the province, including measures to address the low value placed on women's traditional work, such as the pay equity legislation, as well as getting more women into non traditional jobs, and helping families balance work and family life.

The GPI study also suggests that overall savings in health care costs resulting from an anti-discrimination program in N.B. could reach \$60 million per year.

ISSUES (continued...)

PAY GAP (continued...)

Pay Equity Bill - The ACSW, appearing before the Legislative Assembly's Standing Committee on Law Amendments studying a pay equity bill, supported the proposed bill as a reasonable framework for addressing that part of the pay gap caused by pay inequity. The Advisory Council called for government intervention to address the problem of the difference in the average pay of women and men in the province, including measures to address the low value placed on women's traditional work, such as the pay equity legislation, as well as getting more women into non traditional jobs, and helping families balance work and family life. The Advisory Council also reiterated its support for the 2003 recommendations of the Wage Gap Roundtable, as the minimum needed to potentially close the gap, if implemented with sufficient resources and an accountability framework focussed on results.

Gender Pay Gap In New Brunswick Civil Service -

Women employed in Part 1 of the New Brunswick civil service earned 99.8% of the average wage of male employees in 2003. Statistics include permanent and contract employees of government departments (not hospitals and schools) and exclude casual employees. This compares to 82.2% in N.B. society generally in 2003. There remain wide pay gaps within certain departments and several occupations remain heavily dominated by women or men. Women are underrepresented in decision-making positions, although that has been improving. Certain departments with especially large numbers of women with relatively good salaries - such as Health and Family and Community Services - had the effect of bringing up women's overall average. In a few departments where the gender pay gap was wide in favour of men, a high proportion of the department's employees were female administrative support workers. This was the case in the departments of Justice and Education. In 2003, female employees were more likely than male employees to be earning in the middle salary ranges of \$20 to \$35 per hour: 60% of women earned between \$20 and \$35 per hour, compared to 47% of men. More men than women earned above \$35 per hour or below \$20 per hour.

In high-level civil servant positions, women have gained ground. In 2003, 23% of deputy ministers were women, as were 30% of senior executive officer. Representation varies significantly by Department: in 2003, only 13% of senior executive officers in Transportation and 17% in Public Safety were women. Family and Community Services and Education had 42% and 44% female representation among senior executive officers respectively. The concentration of women and men in certain job categories has changed little between 1996 and 2003.

Women increased their representation in almost all civil service job classifications, but men still represent 91% of the operational category, which includes general labour and trades such as cooks, laundry workers and road workers. Men also held 89% of technical category jobs such as lab technologists; public health inspectors; engineering technicians; industrial training and certification officers. Women were 49% of the overall workforce of Part 1 of the provincial civil service in 2003, up from 45% in 1996. While several departments had close to equal numbers of female and male employees, women were just 13% of employees in Transportation, down from 16% in 1993 and 27% in Natural Resources. Women were significantly over-represented in Health and Wellness (82%) and Family and Community Services (75%).

HEALTH

In 2004-2005, the ACSW organized several public events and released statistics on several topics related to women and health. The Council also submitted a brief, *Health Charter of Rights and Responsibilities Act*, to the Legislature's Select Committee on Health Care in March 2005. The ACSW emphasized that, for women to gain the same benefits as men from the proposed Charter - right to information, informed decisions, timely access to services and considerate attention - the Charter must address equality. The ACSW recommended that the preamble to the Health Charter make reference, not only to the principles of health care and to language rights, but also to the promise contained in the Canadian Constitution that rights are guaranteed equally to women and men, and that equal protection and equal benefit of the law must be extended to both women and men.

The Council's brief noted that some health conditions are sex-specific, some are more prevalent among women and result from the role of women in our society, such as eating disorders and depression, others appear to be sex-neutral, such as heart disease, but the signs, symptoms and optimum treatment of the disease may be different in women and men. New Brunswickers' right to safe, comfortable and considerate attention requires that services be developed incorporating knowledge about the specific needs of men and women and that training of health care professionals includes gender-sensitive courses on women's health, human rights, and gender-based violence. The brief also discussed specific concerns surrounding birthing, sexual health, sexual reproduction, abortion, co-ed hospital rooms, addictions services and home support services

ISSUES (continued...)

SAME-SEX COUPLES

The Advisory Council compiled a limited list of the changes that would be needed to end provincial government discrimination against homosexual persons: legislative changes to allow and to recognize same-sex marriages; ensuring that hospitals allow a partner in a same-sex couple to list the other partner as a substitute decision-maker in case of incapacity, as heterosexual partners can; allowing the registration of a private pension plan that offers survivor benefits to same-sex partners; and legislative changes to recognize a surviving member of a same-sex couple as eligible for inheritance by the Probate Court, when one partner dies without a will.

VIOLENCE

The ACSW partnered with MensWork, the New Brunswick Advisory Council on Youth to produce a poster, magnets and decals showing four New Brunswick youth with the message, "When we see violence, we say that's not right. Take a stand!" The young men featured are blues musician JP LeBlanc of Bathurst, rap artist Red Suga of Pabineau First Nation, UNB law student Adam Neal, and Ryan Donaghy, treasurer of the Advisory Council on Youth. The material was distributed free throughout the province during the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence celebrated internationally from November 25 to December 10.

In August 2004, the ACSW in collaboration with MensWork, Coalition Against Abuse in Relationships and Support to Single Parents' Peer Support Program presented a session on *Spousal Violence and Misguided Fears Of Bias* with Dr. Peter Jaffe. The Moncton session, attended by over 150 judges, social workers, lawyers, policymakers and advocates, presented a framework for action by courts and communities to recognize the plight of abuse victims and their children after separation. Dr. Peter Jaffe is Special Advisor on Violence Prevention and Founding Director, Centre for Children & Families in the Justice System, London Family Court Clinic, and author of *Child Custody and Domestic Violence: A Call for Safety and Accountability*.

In September 2004, the ACSW and the Fredericton Sexual Assault Crisis Centre organized a panel in Fredericton on *Why so many sexual assaults and so few charges in N.B.?* New Brunswick's rate of sexual assaults reported to the police (assaults on male and female, child and adult victims) has been higher than the Canadian average since the late 1980s. In 2003, there were 86 reported sexual assaults per 100,000 population in N.B., compared to the national rate of 74. However, New Brunswick's rate of sexual assault reports resulting in charges is lower than the Canadian average. Only 38% of sexual assaults reported to police in New Brunswick in 2003 resulted in charges, compared to 42% nationally.

It is known that if Crown prosecutors, who approve all charges in New Brunswick, find insufficient evidence to proceed with a charge, the police record the incident as "cleared otherwise". In most other Canadian jurisdictions, police do not revise their records when the Crown does not proceed. However, in New Brunswick as in Canada, the reasons why a substantial proportion of reported incidents still do not make it to the charge stage remain unknown.

A public session on *Why Domestic Violence is Everyone's Business* was organized in November 2004 in Beresford, by the ACSW and Nepisiguit Family Services. Susan Loosley, of the Community Group Program for Child Witnesses of Woman Abuse of the London, Ontario Children's Aid Society, presented to the 80 professionals and citizens in attendance.

In February 2005, the ACSW published statistics made available by the Department of Public Safety that showed that New Brunswick has the highest conviction rate for sexual assault charges in Canada. Of charges that were laid against adults, 52% resulted in a conviction in N.B., compared to 24% for Canada, in 2003-2004. Conviction rates had not been previously publicly known. In most provinces, the investigating police force makes the decision to charge. In N.B. and in Québec, the prosecutor, not the police, decides if charges are laid; these 2 provinces have a lower proportion of reports resulting in charges compared to a Canadian average.

HOME SUPPORT

In the fall of 2004, the ACSW contacted associations, service clubs and municipal councils in the province to propose a resolution that encourages more public investment in quality home support services.

About 7,650 New Brunswickers, mostly seniors, receive on average 20 hours per week of home support services, about half of them living alone. About two-thirds of home support clients cannot rise for the day nor retire for the night without caregiver assistance. Home support services include delegated health care tasks such as applying ointments, and personal care, such as bathing, medication reminders and meal preparation.

The proposed motion states that home support services cost per day a fraction of a hospital stay or nursing home stay but that many clients cannot get the homesupport they need, particularly in rural areas. It asks the provincial government to increase the monthly maximum subsidy so that the salaries, working conditions and standards for workers can be improved.

Problems related to home support services are reaching crisis proportion in the province but few know about it until it touches their family. The level of responsibility of home support workers continues to increase as hospital stays get shorter and the frail population increases.

ISSUES (continued...)

HOME SUPPORT (continued...)

A severe home support staff shortage is forecast if conditions do not improve. The Atlantic Provinces have one of the most rapidly aging populations in the world. The ACSW has stated that part of the reason the service is undervalued and invisible is that the nature of the work is traditionally female. Most clients and most workers are women.

Over 50 municipalities and associations have adopted the motion and taken the recommended follow-up actions.

In January 2005, about 130 policy makers, home support workers, advocates and citizens met in Fredericton to discuss home support services with two noted Canadian researchers. The event, *Home Care: Low-cost, Popular and ... Vanishing*, sponsored by the ACSW and the Women's Studies Programme at University of New Brunswick featured Dr. Pat Armstrong of York University speaking on the principles for homecare delivery, and Dr. Linda S. Nugent, Associate Dean of Health Sciences at UNBSJ, presenting on the working conditions and challenges of New Brunswick's home support workers.

GENDER BASED STATISTICS AND ANALYSIS

Following the publication of the 2004 Report Card on the Status of Women in N.B., the ACSW reported to the provincial government some difficulties it encountered in obtaining information. The ACSW met with several instances where officials had to compile custom tables since the inclusion of gender was not consistently part of the available statistics. The ACSW has recommended that gender based analysis be incorporated in government policies and programs and offered its services in developing a policy and training officials. The first requirement of equity-sensitive analysis is that sex-disaggregated data be available.

Legal aid documents do not currently record any information by sex. Statistics on First Nations women, including teen pregnancy, violence and health issues such as caesarean rates and physical activity, are not available. Information on workers receiving employer-sponsored training, training expenditures per employee and students in private sector institutions are not available by sex. The average student loan annual authorized amount; the average total student load debt in final year; the number of students by institution type by age; the average monthly debt payments; and the average repayment time are not available either at all or by sex. The ACSW also noted that the county-level statistics provided by the N.B. Vital Statistics branch undercount the actual number of pregnancies because their calculations do not include abortions performed in clinics or outside of the province and spontaneous abortions.

Statistics from Family and Community Services do not distinguish between elder abuse cases involving self-neglect and those involving abuse and neglect by others. The gender of the beneficiary of a support order following separation is no longer collected.

Other information not available includes the support amounts not collected with or without cause and the average waiting period between initial request for service for a support order and an appointment with service deliverer.

The ACSW participated in an advisory capacity in a group advocating equity for francophone women in the Atlantic provinces. *Femmes équité atlantique (Équité socio-économique et les femmes francophones et acadiennes évoluant en situation minoritaire dans les provinces atlantiques)* will provide training for women's groups on gender-based analysis and will advocate for solutions to poverty and pay inequity.

FIRST NATIONS WOMEN

The ACSW has given financial and other support to various initiatives of First Nations women, including the March 2004 *Reclaiming Our Spirit and Songs* Aboriginal Women's Gathering organized by Committee for Career Advancement of Aboriginal Women.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

INFORMATION SERVICE

One of the routine tasks at the ACSW provincial office is the provision of information to groups and individuals, mostly through a toll-free line and email. Non-identifying data on these requests is kept in a database. Of 500 files opened in the last 18 months, almost 300 are from individuals, 100 from media, 50 from groups, 25 from provincial government, 12 from educational institutions and a few from federal government. The referrer is often a Council member, a government official including MLAs, or a friend or teacher/professor; some had called upon the Council after reading a media article, our publication or NB Women's News. The topics were varied: family law, violence, general questions about women or the Council, health, employment rights, women in the workforce, education, pay gap, statistics, harassment, housing, poverty and abortion. About 100 questions were categorized as "other" and included a large variety of subjects, including complaints about sexist ads or art exposition, professionals looking for options for their clients, requests to the Talent Bank, auto insurance, welfare, etc. Calls concerning violence were as often media looking for statistics or an interview as women looking for assistance.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMUNICATIONS

NB Women's News / NouvELLES - This weekly email bulletin keeps over 1,800 New Brunswickers informed about women's issues in the province. The bulletin is archived on the Council internet site. A bookmark promoting the NB Women's News and the Council's internet site was produced.

Internet Site - The Advisory Council internet site, www.acswccf.nb.ca, provides all current Council documents for viewing and downloading. Individuals can also subscribe to the e-newsletter, submit their name to the Talent Bank, add their group to the list of women's groups and check what equality-related events are occurring throughout the province. Over 2,000 "unique visitors" use the site each month, with the most popular publications being the Report Card on the Status of Women and the brochure on living common law.

Nancy's Award - The Advisory Council launched a new award, to be given for the first time in 2005, to recognize student projects on New Brunswick women's history. Nancy's Award, named in honour of Nancy Morton, a woman who challenged her enslavement to a York County Loyalist in 1800, will be one of the awards to be won by middle-level students participating in the regional Heritage Fairs. These fairs are a project of the Heritage Branch of the Culture and Sport Secretariat,

Historica and the Department of Education. To be considered, the project must deal with some aspect of New Brunswick women's history and highlights an aspect of women's lives, their individual or group accomplishments or their individual or group struggle for equality and must be based on historical research.

RELATIONS WITH GOVERNMENT

The Advisory Council met with several Ministers to discuss issues of concern to women relevant to their department. The Advisory Council met several times with the Women's Issues Branch of Executive Council Office to facilitate communication with this internal agency. The Advisory Council has advised officials within provincial government departments that it is available for consultation or partnership on issues of concern to women.

RELATIONS WITH WOMEN'S GROUPS

The Advisory Council collaborated in 2004-2005 in joint ventures with women's and equality seeking groups, including development of campaigns, publication of documents and organization of events. The internet site of the Advisory Council includes documents from other equality-seeking groups in the province, and is offered as a clearinghouse for news about New Brunswick women. a

TALENT BANK OF NEW BRUNSWICK WOMEN

The Talent Bank of NB Women has accumulated over 250 résumés of women who have agreed to consider invitations to act as a resource or be considered for appointment. Women from all walks of life are sought to add their name to the Bank, which is being used by the Advisory Council to answer requests from groups, media and government.

MEDIA

Several dozen media requests for interviews, information and names of potential resource persons were received in 2004-2005. The Council responded to various editorials and statements and also issued media releases on the following topics:

- Gender pay gap in New Brunswick civil service almost closed, June 2004
- New Brunswick women have potentially much to gain from electoral reform, April 2004
- Release of the Advisory Council's presentation to the provincial Commission on Legislative Democracy, June 2004
- Opinion piece, Political Fix Would Improve New Brunswickers' Involvement, July 2004.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS (continued...)

MEDIA (continued...)

- Applauding the Premier's announcement that changes will be made to the adoption policy to recognize same-sex couples, following a human rights decision found the province discriminated against same-sex couples when it came to naming and adopting children, August 2004
- Announcing a provincial conference, Economics of Child Care, on the link between economic development and child care services, organized with Business New Brunswick, Training and Employment Development and Early Childhood Care and Education N.B., October 2004.
- Announcing a meeting of New Brunswick's female mayors, October 2004.
- Announcing an initiative to bring awareness to the problems related to home support services in the province, October 2004.
- Releasing a commissioned study on the cost in lost tax revenues and increased health and social program expenditures of the gender pay gap in New Brunswick, November 2004.
- Announcing a campaign on quality child care and its importance for children and for community development, November 2004.
- Launching an awareness campaign aimed at youth to prevent violence against women in partnership with MensWork, the New Brunswick Advisory Council on Youth, November 2004.
- Announcing various lunch and learn events.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

No complaint concerning the Advisory Council was filed with the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages in 2004-2005.

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED IN 2004-2005

The following publications can be consulted at www.acswcccf.nb.ca or can be ordered from the Advisory Council.

Your Issues, Your Vote, Your Government, booklet on women and electoral reform along with two posters. April 2004.

Factsheets 2004 Report Card on the Status of Women in N.B. - updates of the factsheets on Women in the labour force; Violence; and Youth. April 2004.

Representation, Pay and Status of Women in the Government of New Brunswick, Part 1 Employees, 2003. May 2004.

Women and Electoral Reform in New Brunswick, a brief to the Commission on Legislative Democracy. July 2004.

Motion and scenarios related to home support services in the province. October 2004.

If we get child care right - Child Care campaign materials: 2 posters and a brochure. November 2004.

When we see violence, we say that's not right. Take a stand! - poster and other materials for a campaign aimed at youth to prevent violence against women, in partnership with MensWork, the New Brunswick Advisory Council on Youth. November 2004.

The Cost of the Current Pay Gap, a study commissioned by the ACSW and conducted by GPI Atlantic, Dr. Ather Akbary. November 2004.

Health Charter of Rights and Responsibilities Act, a brief to the Legislature's Select Committee on Health Care, March 2005.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

March 31, 2005

