Male Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence in Canada

Prepared for the Office of the Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime (OFOVC)
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Men in Canada experience intimate partner violence (IPV) in significant numbers, yet little attention has been paid to their needs. In part, this is because more women are harmed by their partners and there is a shortfall of resources to meet their demand for services. This paper was commissioned by the Office of the Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime to assess the extent that male survivors of IPV receive their entitlements under the Canadian Victims Bill of Rights. It explores men's experiences of IPV and their interactions with the justice system and service providers.

Methods

We conducted a review of Canadian academic research published from 2010 to 2020 and summarized findings from a research sample with 45 male survivors of IPV. This sample was part of a larger study on resilience and survivors of violent crime, conducted in partnership with Algonquin College and the Victim Justice Network (VJN), and funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC).

Findings

1 in 5 cases of IPV reported to the police in Canada involves a male victim (Conroy, Burczycka & Savage, 2019). In 2018, that included 20,600 men (Conroy, Burczycka & Savage, 2019). Men are less likely to report their victimization to the police, and when they do, some risk being treated as a perpetrator (Dutton, 2012). Additionally, our review identified types of IPV that are more unique to same-sex couples, such as "outing" a partner (or threatening to), or using one's HIV status as a way to coerce behaviour (Gillis & Diamond, 2011). Indigenous men are more likely to experience IPV because of systemic risk factors related to colonization and cultural genocide (Boyce, 2016; TRC 2015), but there was limited information on men from other ethnocultural groups.

There are few resources available to male survivors and men have reported being further traumatized by their attempts to get help (Fortin, 2011). There are no dedicated IPV shelters for men in Canada, though a small number of IPV shelters will accept men and their children (Moreau, 2019). When men do seek help, they may be treated with suspicion and service providers may not be equipped with tools to address men's trauma (Brend et. al, 2019; Dutton 2012). There are a number of emerging resources to improve responses such as *Respect's Toolkit For Work with Male Victims of Domestic Abuse* (Martin & Panteloudakis, 2019). A collection of resources are provided in Appendix A.

The research sample of 45 male survivors validates many of the themes we identified in the literature. Men shared their experiences of IPV with an emphasis on false accusations, and described their challenges interacting with police and finding appropriate help.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Recommendations for Awareness, Education, and Prevention**

   Continue education on violence against women, while widening the frame of awareness, education, and prevention activities to include a focus on IPV experienced by people of all genders and sexual orientations. Implement and evaluate evidence-based programs that teach healthy relationship skills in schools and postsecondary institutions.

2. **Recommendations for the Justice System**

   Ensure risk assessment tools are responsive to violence experienced by all genders. IPV curriculum for police colleges can be redeveloped to include diverse examples of IPV and training on recognizing violence and coercive control. Police can request feedback from male survivors of IPV to better respond to their needs.

3. **Recommendations for Victim Services**

   Increase shelter capacity for all genders. Agencies that serve women should be free to provide safe spaces for women without being required to serve men. Agencies with a mandate to serve the broader public should audit their services to evaluate what actions and outreach strategies they undertake to provide gender-inclusive services. Agencies can consult best practices and credentialing frameworks for service providers working with men to identify ways to create safer, trauma-informed, spaces where men can heal. Male survivors should be consulted when developing programming and outreazch strategies to ensure that services are responsive to their needs. Programs that work with male abusers should be trauma-informed, responsive to gender-based power imbalances, address childhood experiences of violence, abuse, and neglect, and be informed by feminist, queer, and masculinities theory in a way that validates and celebrates healthy masculinities.

4. **Recommendations for Policy Development**

   GBA+ analysis can be applied to government responses to IPV to consider the impact of policy on all genders. All levels of government in Canada should provide leadership to alleviate the current housing crisis in recognition that access to safe and affordable housing is critical to personal safety.

5. **Recommendations for Research**

   Expand research on male survivors of IPV by encouraging more inclusive research designs that investigate patterns of IPV across the gender spectrum. Research can further consider how men's experiences of IPV intersect with race, socioeconomic status, disability, parenting, and long-term outcomes on children. Additionally, research needs to better explain cases where violence is reciprocated in relationships and better distinguish violence used in self-defence.

KEY FACTS

Women are disproportionately affected by IPV, representing 8 in 10 victims who report to police (Mahony, 2010). However, the following key facts illustrate that men also experience IPV in significant numbers, averaging about 20% of cases reported to the police in Canada and about 20% of IPV homicide victims (Burczycka & Conroy, 2017; Burczycka & Conroy, 2018; Sinha, 2012; Sinha, 2013; Statistics Canada, 2015; Statistics Canada, 2016).

- 1 in 5 cases of IPV reported to police in 2018 included a male victim (Conroy, Burczycka & Savage, 2019).

- According to the 2014 GSS, 4% of men in Canada (418,000 men) reported experiencing IPV during the previous five years (Statistics Canada, 2016).

- From 2009 to 2018, rates of IPV declined more significantly for women at 13% than for men at 7% (Conroy, Burczycka & Savage, 2019).

- Cases of police-reported IPV with male survivors rose from 18,850 cases in 2013 to 20,600 cases in 2018, an increase of 9% (Statistics Canada, 2013; Conroy, Burczycka & Savage, 2019).

- Men are less likely than women to report IPV to the police, and when they do, it is less likely to result in an arrest or police record (Dutton, 2012).

- In one Canadian study, 64% of male survivors of IPV who called the police for help reported being treated as the abuser (Dutton, 2012).

- Nearly 17% of men and 18% of women said they were concerned about rising violence in the home during the COVID-19 pandemic (Statistics Canada, 2020, p. 1).

INTRODUCTION

Men in Canada experience intimate partner violence (IPV) in significant numbers, though it is rarely discussed. From research, to policy, to service delivery, there tends to be more emphasis placed on the problem of violence against women (VAW), and rightly so. Women continue to be murdered by their intimate partners, seek medical care for injuries resulting from physical or sexual assaults, and lose access to housing more frequently than male survivors (Conroy, Burczycka & Savage, 2019). However, the number of women affected by IPV often overshadows the experiences of male survivors who report difficulty accessing help or navigating the legal system (Cook, 2009; Dutton 2012, Fortin, 2011; Moreau 2019).

This paper was contracted by the Office of the Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime to better understand men's experiences of IPV and their interactions with the justice system and helping professionals. We will explore to what extent men who experience IPV have access to their entitlements under the Canadian Victims Bill of Rights and how well they are supported by victim assistance services.

METHODOLOGY

This report includes:

- A review of Canadian peer-reviewed literature on male survivors of IPV, published from January 2010 to January 2020; and,

- A mixed methods study of 45 male survivors of IPV, from a broader study, entitled, *Resilience and Survivors of Violent Crime*, which was funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) and conducted at Algonquin College.

Literature Review Methods

Databases used. We searched the following databases: Scopus, Web of Science, OneSearch, and ProQuest for English sources, as well as Érudit for French sources.
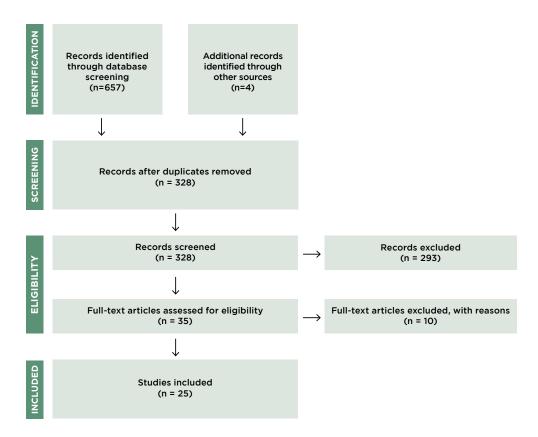
Search terms. The following search terms were included:

- *"male intimate partner violence"* OR *"male IPV"*
- *"female-perpetrated intimate partner violence"* OR *"female-perpetrated IPV"*
- *"male victims of intimate partner violence"* OR *"male victims of IPV"*
- *"male victims of domestic violence"*
- *"male survivors"* AND *"intimate partner violence"* OR *"male survivors"* AND *"IPV"*
- *"male victims of spousal abuse"* OR *"male survivors of spousal abuse"*
- *"violence conjugale"* ET *hommes*
- *"battered men"* OR "abused men"
- *"dyadic intimate partner violence"* OR *"dyadic IPV"*
- "*LGBTQ partner violence*" OR "*LGBTQ IPV*"
- "*gay partner violence*" OR "*gay IPV*" OR "*queer partner violence*" OR "*queer IPV*"
- "*trans partner violence*" OR "*trans IPV*"

Inclusion criteria. We included peer-reviewed studies published from January 2010 to January 2020 in our initial search. All studies on male survivors of IPV were retained in Endnote. We removed duplicates and excluded studies focused on women, childhood abuse, and dating violence during adolescence. Finally, we retained 25 articles related to male survivors of IPV in Canada. Figure 1 provides a visual summary of our search decisions.[1]

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1   Adapted from Peters (2015).

Figure 1. Search Decision Flow Chart

IDENTIFICATION	Records identified through database screening (n=657)	Additional records identified through other sources (n=4)	
	↓	↓	
SCREENING	Records after duplicates removed (n = 328)		
	↓		
ELIGIBILITY	Records screened (n = 328)	→	Records excluded (n = 293)
	↓		
	Full-text articles assessed for eligibility (n = 35)	→	Full-text articles excluded, with reasons (n = 10)
	↓		
INCLUDED	Studies included (n = 25)		

Consultation and additional resources. We corresponded with six professionals working in the field who identified three additional papers and provided feedback on our recommendations. As part of this process, we also identified a number of resources focused on best practices with male survivors of IPV, which have been summarized in a table in Appendix A. We have also included a table with brief descriptions of each academic study in Appendix B. Finally, following our academic search, we added 15 government documents from Statistics Canada to explore official data collected on male survivors of IPV. See Appendix C for an overview of these reports.

Data analysis. We summarized the methods and key findings of the 25 studies in a large table in order to complete a descriptive analysis. Following this, we analyzed the findings thematically drawing on Karmen's (2016) recommendations for research in the field of victimology. Specifically, we explored Karmen's (2016) recommended themes:

1. Identify, define and describe the problem.
2. Measure the 'true' dimensions of the problem
3. Investigate how the criminal justice system handles the problem.
4. Examine the societal response to the problem.

These areas will be explored in the literature review and findings from the sample of 45 male survivors, though they will not always be presented in that order.

Research Sample Methods

We analyzed data from a sample of 45 male survivors and 110 female survivors of IPV. They participated in a larger study, entitled, *Resilience and Survivors of Violent Crime,* funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC). Researchers at Algonquin College and the University of Ottawa partnered with the Victim Justice Network to conduct this mixed methods study. The 155 IPV survivors were a subsample of the study's whole sample of 435 respondents to an online survey and 71 participants of qualitative interviews - survivors of violence from all provinces and territories in Canada, representing both official languages. The broader study took place in 2017 and was approved by the research ethics boards at Algonquin College and the University of Ottawa.

Data analysis. We analyzed the qualitative data - the open-ended survey responses and the transcripts of the interviews - using QDA Miner. We coded the descriptive data first, then conducted several rounds of interpretive analysis and theoretical coding (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014). The case studies included in this report were developed from two interviews with male survivors of IPV. We analyzed the quantitative survey data descriptively, using SPSS.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definitions And Descriptions Of IPV

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines IPV as, "any behaviour within an intimate relationship that causes physical, psychological, or sexual harm to those in the relationship" (World Report on Violence and Health, 2002). Additionally, Conroy et al. (2019) define IPV as any violent offence that occurs "between current and former legally married spouses, common-law partners, boyfriends and girlfriends and other kinds of intimate partners" (p. 24). The conceptualizations of IPV in the 25 peer-reviewed studies in this review aligned with these definitions. Much of the broader literature we encountered during our review process used the words *violence against women* (VAW) or *gender-based violence* to describe IPV. While these terms are important to recognize the disproportionate impact of IPV on women and the roles that gender, misogyny, and patriarchy play in the dynamics of violence, defining IPV in these ways excludes male, transgender, and gender nonconforming survivors. Nearly all of the articles we reviewed on male survivors used the term IPV since it is inclusive of violence experienced by all genders.

The studies in the review highlighted that men and women can be victims or perpetrators of a full spectrum of physical and psychological IPV (Zamorski & Wiens-Kinkaid, 2013). Particularly highlighting gender differences, O'Campo et al. (2017) reported that men are less likely to identify non-physical controlling behaviours directed towards them as a form of abuse, while physical or sexual violence are likely to be identified as abuse regardless of gender.

Few studies in our review discussed risk factors as they relate to male victims of IPV. Of the studies that did discuss risk factors, there was a focus on very specific populations: Brownridge (2010) discussed risk factors that relate specifically to Indigenous men, and will be explored further in the section below. Woodin et al. (2014) considered couples transitioning into parenthood, while Zamorski & Wiens-Kinkaid (2013) used a sample of Canadian Armed Forces members. Both Woodin et al.(2014) and Weins-Kinkaid (2013) used samples of both male and female victims and perpetrators.

Two risk factors for IPV identified in these studies were alcohol use and mental health. These risk factors were highlighted in Woodin et. al (2014) and Zamorski & Wiens-Kinkaid (2013) for both male and female victims of IPV. In their study on transitions to parenthood, Woodin et al. (2014) found that when both partners drink excessively, the risk of physical or psychological IPV is increased for both partners. Discrepant drinking patterns appeared to work as a buffer to IPV. Zamorski & Wiens-Kinkaid (2013) identified that mental illness can be a risk factor for coercive and controlling behaviours in relationships, but is less likely to predict physical or sexual victimization.

Same-sex partners. Some forms of IPV are more likely to occur in same-sex relationships. Gillis & Diamond (2011) describe how an abuser may threaten to "out" their partner, revealing the victim's

sexual orientation or gender identity against their will as a form of coercive control. Men also reported experiencing abuse and controlling behaviours related to how masculine they acted (Oliffe et al., 2014). While not exclusive to the same-sex partnerships, an abusive partner may also use HIV status, threatening to tell others that their partner is HIV-positive or withholding access to prescriptions or medical care (Gillis & Diamond, 2011). An abuser who is HIV-positive may also infect or threaten to infect their partner with HIV, or if they contracted HIV from their partner, they may use guilt as a form of control or make their partner feel that they are unworthy to start a new relationship (Gillis & Diamond, 2011; Oliffe et al., 2014).

Measuring Intimate Partner Violence

Police reports. Several Canadian government publications document police-reported rates of IPV (Burczycka & Conroy, 2017; Conroy et al., 2019; Mahony, 2010; Statistics Canada, 2013). In 2018, men were recorded as victims in one fifth (21%) of police-reported cases of IPV (Burczycka et al., 2019). Men also averaged about 20% of IPV homicide victims (Burczycka et al., 2019). In an invited response to the journal *Aggression and Violent Behaviour*, Dutton (2012) wrote that men who experienced IPV were less likely to call for police assistance at a rate of 10% of the frequency that females call for assistance.

Overall, rates of police-reported IPV in Canada have declined from 2009 to 2018, with greater declines for women (13%) than for men (7%) (Conroy, et al., 2019). However, government publications also show a recent increase in rates of police-reported IPV, with the number of male victims rising from 18,850 cases in 2013 to 20,600 cases in 2018, an increase of nine percent (Burczycka et al., 2019; Conroy et al., 2019). From 2004 to 2008, there was also a steady increase in police-reported dating violence, with increases of forty percent for women and forty-seven percent for men (Mahony, 2010).

Regarding subtypes of IPV, in 2009, major assaults made up 17% of incidents with male victims and 9% of incidents with female victims (Mahony, 2010). Also of importance, a higher rate of weapon use was found in incidents involving male victims of IPV than in incidents targeting women (12% versus 4%) (Mahony, 2010). Male victims were also slightly more likely to report being a victim of intimate terrorism (IPV with highly controlling behaviours) than female victims (35% and 34% respectively) (Mahony, 2010). These numbers must be understood in context. Since men account for 1 in 5 cases of IPV reported to police, the actual numbers of women experiencing major assault, assault with a weapon, and intimate terrorism within the police-reported data are much higher than the numbers of men.

Canadian General Social Survey on Victimization (GSS). Four of the peer-reviewed studies we reviewed examined self-reported IPV based on the Canadian General Social Survey (GSS) on Victimization (Ansara & Hindin, 2010; Ansara & Hindin, 2011; Lysova et al., 2019; Stewart et al., 2012). As demonstrated in a study by Stewart et al. (2012) using the the data from the GSS, "Canadian data suggests that similar proportions of men (7%) and women (8%) identify as being a victim of physical (18%) and psychological (19%) violence within the past five years" (p. 10). This is very different from the prevalence rates of IPV for men and women in police reports. Based on more recent GSS data, Lysova et al. (2019) reported that men were more likely than women to report experiencing both physical and sexual IPV within the previous five years, at 2.9%, compared to 1.7% of women.

The finding that men and women experience similar rates of IPV is referred to as "gender symmetry" and it has been the topic of vigorous debate (Hamberger et al., 2016). There are multiple critiques about methodology including the suitability of the conflict tactics scale to measure violence, the absence of measures to assess the motivation for violence such as acts of self-defence, or to assess the impact of violence (Hamberger et al., 2016). At the same time, many victimization surveys of the general population conducted in different countries, at different times, by government or academic sources, find that men and women report similar rates of IPV (Chan, 2012; Chen & Chan, 2019). Given the debate, there are limitations to relying on victimization survey data alone as a measure of prevalence. According to the 2014 GSS, approximately 418,000 men across Canada (4%) reported experiencing IPV in the past five years (Statistics Canada, 2016). Police statistics underrepresent the actual number of cases because of those who do not report and victimization surveys may overrepresent men's cases of IPV. If we accept that the actual prevalence is somewhere between the two measures, there are a significant number of men experiencing IPV in Canada each year.

To better understand the impact of IPV, Ansara & Hindin (2010; 2011) conducted two studies examining gender differences more closely. They found that there may be significant differences in how men and women experience IPV. Ansara and Hindin (2011) used data from Canada's 2004 General Social Survey on Victimization to compare the psychosocial consequences of IPV on female and male victims. While their findings suggest that women experience greater mental health consequences across all subtypes of IPV, they also highlight the limitations of their analysis. For example, single survey questions that use explicit labels (depression, anxiety, shame) were used rather than scales that indirectly assess these outcomes, and males are more likely to use terms such as *stress* to describe their mental health (p. 1642). Additionally, they noted that men may be less likely to report experiences that are traditionally viewed as feminine qualities, such as lowered self esteem, shame, and guilt (p. 1641).

Same-Sex Partners. According to police-reported data, each year between 2009 and 2017 there were more than 2,300 incidents of IPV involving same-sex partners in Canada, and of those incidents, 55% involved a male victim and a male accused (Ibrahim, 2019). Male survivors in a same-sex partnership experienced increased levels of violence in comparison to female survivors in a same-sex partnership with male survivors being more likely to report major assault incidents which includes assaults Level 2 and 3 (18% versus 12%, respectively) (Ibrahim, 2019). For those living in census metropolitan areas, same-sex partners were between two to three times more likely to report IPV to the police than heterosexual partners (Simpson, 2018). In rural areas, men in same-sex relationships who experienced IPVwere more likely than men in urban areas to request that no further action be taken by the police against the accused (Ibrahim, 2019). Of the IPV homicides that occurred between same-sex partners from 1998 to 2017, 86% of the 73 homicides included a male victim and offender (Ibrahim, 2019).

Based on our literature review, two reports explored reasons men in same-sex relationships may be less likely to report IPV to the police:

- Oliffe et al. (2014) found some men normalized IPV, associating it with more dominant partners or because of personal histories of family violence.

- Men concealed violence from others because of beliefs that "aligned with masculine ideals characterized by the strength and power to stoically absorb hardship" (Oliffe et al., 2014, p. 570).

- Gillis and Diamond (2011) found the lack of safety offered to trans and gender nonconforming victims in mainstream shelter settings increased feelings of isolation, especially if the victim's family of origin did not support the partnership. When LGBTQ2S people rely on the support of their partner, leaving an abusive situation can mean losing a critical support network.

Other than the study by Gilles and Diamond (2011), our search terms did not yield further results involving trans or gender nonconforming experiences of IPV, highlighting a need for additional research in this area.

Indigenous men. From 2014 to 2019, Indigenous Peoples were found to be more likely than non-Indigenous people to have experienced spousal violence (respectively, 9% and 4%), and Indigenous men were twice as likely to report experiencing IPV to the police than non-Indigenous men (8% and 4%, respectively) (Boyce, 2016). Additionally, in a study conducted by Girard & Laflamme (2018), it was found that Indigenous men may be at an increased risk of being murdered by their female partner. Their study compared 60 females who had killed their spouse with 60 males who had killed their spouse. Of the 60 female-perpetrated homicide cases in the study, 55% of the murders were committed by female Indigenous partners versus 35% for English Canadians and 33% Francophone Canadians.

Brownridge (2010) reviewed data of Indigenous male survivors of IPV in Canada and noted that this population's elevated risk could be attributed to the fact that Indigenous males tend to be overrepresented in several risk categories for IPV:

- Age: the Indigenous population is young in comparison to the general population, and those in younger age categories are at a higher risk for IPV;

- Education: the Indigenous population tends to have lower education levels, which is associated with an increased risk of IPV;

- Unemployment: rates of unemployment are higher in the Indigenous population, which increases the risk for IPV;

- Rural residence: Indigenous peoples are more likely to live in rural areas, which increases the risk of IPV;

- Alcohol use: Indigenous peoples are overrepresented in alcohol use statistics, and alcohol use is linked with an increased risk of IPV;

- Family size: Indigenous women have a higher birth rate than non-Indigenous women, and an increase in the number of children in a family increases the risk of IPV.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC, 2015) has documented centuries of colonial violence, systemic racism, and intergenerational trauma experienced by Indigenous Peoples in Canada and provides context to the overrepresentation of Indigenous men in the risk categories presented by Brownridge (2010). For example, the TRC has called attention to poor funding for housing and schools on reserves, discriminatory hiring practices, and culturally inappropriate responses to mental health and substance use. Ferrera (2018) recommends that complex trauma of this nature be addressed through trauma- and resilience-informed policy development using a Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+) lens to explore the intersectional ways that policy affects different segments of the population, including gender, race, culture, history, and geography. While the research in our review indicates that Indigenous men are more likely to report IPV to police, the TRC (2015) suggests that Indigenous men experience added barriers when seeking help from police. Further research is needed on men from diverse ethnocultural groups and their experiences reporting IPV to the police.

Overall, police-reported statistics and victimization surveys in Canada have limitations in identifying the number of men who experience IPV. As with any type of victimization, we acknowledge there is a "dark figure" representing the number of offences never reported to police or captured in official statistics (Wemmers, 2017). The studies in this review suggest that the prevalence may be higher than what is commonly reported.

Interactions With The Justice System

Interactions with Police. Many of the 25 studies we reviewed reported on interactions with the police. They highlighted discrepancies in how police respond to male and female survivors of IPV, the reduced likelihood of charges being laid when the victim is a man, the elevated risk of male survivors being arrested by mistake, and how risk assessment tools are poorly calibrated to men's experiences of IPV.

   Discrepancies in perceptions of seriousness. Dutton (2012) found that police tend to perceive female perpetrators as less abusive and requiring less intervention than male perpetrators, even when levels of IPV were matched across cases. This was found to impact interactions with police: for example, Dutton (2012) found that when seeking help, police mistakenly assumed that 64% of male victims were the abuser. More recent research found that female victims of IPV were almost four times more likely than male victims to have a restraining order enacted against their perpetrator (Lysova et al., 2019).

   Arrest and charge discrepancies. Another theme in the literature was discrepancies in arrest and charge rates for male and female victims. Several researchers highlighted that a woman's partner is more likely to be arrested for IPV than a man's partner when he experiences IPV (Dawson & Hotton, 2014; Mahoney, 2010; Millar & Brown, 2010). Mahoney (2010) found a 71% chance of arrest for perpetrators of IPV against women versus 57% for perpetrators against men. The most common rationale for not laying charges was that the complainant denied the violence (12% for male victims and 7% for female victims) as well as the discretion of the responding police officers (10% for male victims and 7% for female victims).

Millar and Brown (2010) also found that in cases of IPV, injuries to men are far less likely to result in the charging of their partner than injuries to women. They found that the partners of injured men have a 54% chance of being charged, while the equivalent probability for injured women is 90% (p.

319). Male victims also have a higher likelihood of being charged by the police after being injured by their partner: 16% versus 1% of women who are charged after being injured (p. 319). For cases where no injuries occurred, Millar and Brown (2010) found that men were 37 times more likely than women to be charged (p. 319).

Biased risk assessment tools. Hilton et al. (2014) concluded that risk assessment tools used by law enforcement and frontline workers are gender-biased. They gave the example of the Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment (ODARA) to assess the risk of recidivism. The ODARA scoring list includes "assault on the victim while she was pregnant", which demonstrates an inherent bias in that male victims who otherwise meet all the scoring criteria will always score one point lower than a female victim who also meets all scoring criteria. Additionally, the definitions of violence in the ODARA use feminine pronouns to describe actions taken against the victim, and the instructions for interpreting scoring refer to perpetrators as "wife assaulters" (Mental Health Centre Penetanguishene, 2005), potentially leaving little room for law enforcement or service providers to consider other scenarios of domestic violence. Also of note, the ODARA neglects to include risk factors outside of physical abuse. For example there are types of abuse that do not include a physical act such as coercive control, verbal abuse or financial abuse, which are all critical factors in determining whether or not an individual is experiencing IPV.

Nicholls et al. (2013) recommended greater attention to research on risk assessment to ensure validity with diverse populations. Similarly, Shanks et al. (2013) recommended more research on the motives for relationship violence within different populations to improve risk assessment and develop more responsive interventions (Shanks et al., 2013).

Interactions with Family Court. Cook (2009) describes how the belief that family court and custody hearings are biased against men may act as a barrier to men leaving violent relationships. According to statistics from the Department of Justice (2017), data on child custody and access show that despite shared custody orders being on the rise (28% in 2014-2015), mothers are still awarded full custody at a much higher rate (55%) than fathers (7%) (p. 3). While there are many reasons why mothers tend to be awarded full custody, Cook (2009) contends that fathers are aware they are unlikely to receive full custody of their children and that their fear of losing day-to-day contact or being forced to leave their children with their abuser may prevent them from seeking safety.

Interactions With Service Providers

Throughout our review of the literature, a common theme was the lack of adequate support services available to male victims of IPV. The literature described limited access to shelters and how not finding effective help could increase psychological distress. Most services for IPV are provided to women and there is limited capacity in the sector to respond to the needs of male survivors. The stereotype that men are only perpetrators of IPV perpetuates the lack of available resources (Dutton, 2012). Additionally, it is important to recognize that male victims of IPV are not a homogenous group and have diverse needs (Martin & Panteloudakis, 2019).

Limited access to shelters. In 2017/2018, there were 552 shelters for victims of abuse operating across Canada that saw over 68,000 admissions, the vast majority being women (60.3%) and their accompanying children (39.6%) (Moreau, 2019). In that time period, 86 men (0.001%) were admitted to shelters for victims of abuse (p. 4). Fifteen shelters (3%) indicated that they assisted women, children, and men; however, no facility solely supported men (Moreau, 2019). Morneau's (2019) report includes a one-day snapshot on April 18, 2018, where 549 women and 6 men were turned away from emergency shelters due to capacity issues (pp. 11-12). These figures highlight the limited availability of emergency support in Canada, suggesting the need for more shelter beds and greater investment in violence prevention.

Lack of support increases distress. As the research reviewed in this study suggests, help-seeking by male victims of IPV can lead to greater distress. This is not only due to the lack of resources, such as shelters (Dutton, 2012), but also in regards to the level of care men receive. As previously mentioned, the more men seek help from different individuals who are unsupportive, the greater the negative impact on their level of distress (Fortin, 2011). More specifically, the research shows that men who have had negative interactions with service providers in the past are less likely to seek help in the

future (Oliffe, 2014). As such, male victims were far less likely to use mainstream services (16.4% of males versus 12.9% of females), with the notable exception of police (St. Pierre & Senn, 2010).

Limited responses to men's trauma. When men do find services, they are sometimes met with resistance from service providers in terms of not being believed, or they are served with the same tools used with female survivors. Brend et al. (2019) explain that service providers may resist the perspective that women can be perpetrators of IPV; however, for men who have been abused by women, acknowledging this can provide important validation and improve support outcomes. Furthermore, Dutton (2012) explains that some of the support strategies used with women may not be a good fit for the unique needs of male survivors and fail to explore the impact of violence within the context of masculinities.

Emerging best practices. Authors like Dutton (2012) advocated for improved responses to male survivors of IPV and for consideration of masculinities in support programs, and there is work being done in the sector to improve. Beyond the academic articles and government reports identified in our review, we were able to identify a number of service standards and resources developed for service providers. One example is *Respect's Toolkit For Work with Male Victims of Domestic Abuse* (2019) (Martin & Panteloudakis, 2019). This toolkit outlines standards to increase the safety and well-being of male survivors of IPV. Through our consultation process on our recommendations and our own review of grey literature, we have compiled a brief list of resources for service providers in a table found in Appendix A.

Societal Responses To Male Survivors

Gender is important to understanding the impact of IPV. Men who are victimized by their partner can experience stigma for their perceived failure to live up to standards of masculinity constructed within society (Arnocky & Vaillancourt, 2014). Within the context of patriarchy, men are expected to be strong, to protect and provide, with the ability to brush off trauma (Arnocky & Vaillancourt, 2014; Oliffe et al., 2014). Arnocky and Vaillancourt (2014) explain,

> "Males differ from females in their experiences with partner aggression. These differences are seen psychologically and behaviourally (i.e., in perceptions of what is victimizing, in minimization, and in help-seeking). It seems intuitive that these differences might be related, in part, to differences in gender role expectations and the differential degree of stigma faced by males when they fail to meet these gendered requirements" (p. 717).

Subsequently, men are led to believe that IPV is only a female issue, which contributes to further stigmatization and suppression of men's experiences (Martin & Panteloudakis, 2019). Arnocky and Vaillancourt (2014) found that more negative attitudes are held towards male victims of IPV than females. Denfeld (1997) further explains, "If women get mad at their husbands, it is not viewed in the same way as husbands getting mad at their wives. Male anger contains a threat. Female anger, if it contains anything...is laughed off as a joke" (p. 39).

Stigma reduces the likelihood that a survivor will disclose their partner's violent behaviour, and often leads to minimizing and hiding the abuse. Arnocky and Vaillancourt (2014) as well as Fortin et al. (2011) found that men are less likely than women to demonstrate help-seeking behaviours, including seeking out social support.

Not only does this stigma develop barriers in disclosure and help-seeking, but it also affects the conceptualization of the violence that male victims experience. Many men either minimize the experience of IPV or lack the awareness that violent behaviour can be more than physical acts. This combination decreases help-seeking behaviour in male victims with men feeling it is less necessary than women to seek help for non-physical behaviours, such as stalking (O'Campo, et al., 2017).

Unfortunately, due to the gender role expectations of male victims of IPV, men often go unacknowledged as victims. This is reflected in a study conducted by Cismaru, Jensen, and Lavack (2010) in which they analyzed twelve domestic violence bystander intervention campaigns that were designed to encourage intervening in public displays of IPV. They found that none of the twelve campaigns depicted male victims of IPV, and concluded that this lack of inclusion could lead to bystanders being less likely to identify abuse involving men and less likely to sympathize with male victims.

Because domestic abuse against men is less common, it is often trivialized. This trivialization is not only detrimental to facilitating bystander intervention, but the lack of male victims in public domestic violence campaigns may also result in bystanders being less likely to notice abuse involving male victims or to interpret such abuse as an emergency. Depicting men as victims might also make male bystanders more likely to pay attention and sympathize with victims of domestic abuse in general (Cismaru, Jensen, and Lavack, 2010, p. 72).

Gendered language in the construction of victimization. The everyday language used to speak about victimization can reinforce gender inequality through biases that are either overt or subconscious. For example, Liu, Shair-Rosenfield, Vance, and Csata (2018) found that gender-based languages (including French) tend to feminize words associated with victimhood (victim, injury) and masculinize words associated with perpetration (predator, perpetrator, assailant, aggressor), reflecting a gendered worldview that negatively predisposes society to perceive women as "victims" and men as "perpetrators." While the english language uses gender-neutral pronouns, Gupta (2014) notes that words associated with *victim* include *helpless*, *passive, damaged*, and *weak,* which not only hold negative connotations towards both male and female victims, but are also inconsistent with traditional conceptions of masculinity.

LITERATURE REVIEW CONCLUSION

Men who experience IPV in Canada have difficulty knowing where to turn for help. Since women experience more IPV, sustain more injuries, and are more frequently killed by male partners, the more commonly used terms for IPV include Violence Against Women (VAW) and Gender-Based Violence (GBV). When legislation, policy, and service delivery options are framed around these definitions, there is little space to provide remedy to male survivors of IPV. The studies we reviewed show that male survivors of IPV in Canada have difficulty finding services, may not be believed when they ask for help, and may be perceived as perpetrators by police when they do report. There is a discrepancy in police perceptions of severity when the victim of IPV is a man, and some of the risk assessment tools used by police contain a gender-bias in their language and scoring based on the assumption that the victim is a woman. The challenges with adequately measuring the prevalence of male-targeted IPV likely add to the barriers encountered by survivors.

There was limited research with Canadian samples and existing recruitment strategies can influence findings. For example, Ouellet et al. (2017) note that if researchers focus their recruitment efforts on shelters and community-based programs, they will underrepresent key demographics. Furthermore, while there were studies showing an increased risk of IPV for Indigenous men and men in same-sex relationships, there was limited research on other ethnocultural groups, alternative masculine or nonconforming gender identitites, men with disabilities, and other intersecting identities.

Based on our findings from the literature review, it is not clear that men have access to their entitlements under the Canadian Victims Bill of Rights, most importantly, the right to protection. For men who have been dehumanized through violent relationships characterized by physical, sexual, or psychological abuse, the dehumanization can continue when they ask for help. Wemmers (2017) argues that victims rights should be understood as human rights - universal and accessible to all.

Table 1 provides a summary of the findings from the literature review. The paper will continue with a summary of findings from a research sample with 45 male survivors of IPV in Canada, and conclude with a set of recommendations to improve safety and recourse for male survivors.

Table 1. *Summary of Findings from the Literature Review*

Karmen's Methodology	Themes	Literature
Definition of the Problem	• "Any behaviour within an intimate relationship that causes physical, psychological, or sexual harm to those in the relationship" • "Between current and former legally married spouses, common-law partners, boyfriends and girlfriends and other kinds of intimate partners" • IPV includes survivors of all genders	World Report on Violence and Health (2002); Conroy, Burczycka & Savage (2019)
Measurement of the Problem	• Prevalence is higher than reported to police • Government statistics may not accurately reflect the true number of cases	Dim & Dutton (2019); Oliffe et al. (2014); Dutton (2012); Moreau (2019)
Justice System Response	• Barriers in reporting • Discrepancies in police responses • Negative interactions with CJS • Fear of losing access to their children • Bias in risk assessment tools	Arnocky & Vaillancourt (2014); Fortin, et al. (2011); Oliffe et al. (2014); Gillis & Diamond (2011); Dutton (2012); Brown (2010); St. Pierre & Senn (2010)
Service Provider Response	• Suspicion towards male survivors • Limited shelter options • Lack of adequate support services • Need to acknowledge violence suffered • Treatment tools are not tailored to men's experiences of trauma • Emerging resources	Dutton (2012); Zamorski. & Wiens-Kinkaid (2013); Nicholls et al (2013); Martin & Panteloudakis (2019); O'Campo et al. (2017)
Societal Response	• Male victims perceived as weak • Falling short of gender role expectations • Double standards in responses to male and female anger • Men have difficulty recognizing IPV • IPV often framed as a women's issue	Arnocky (2014); Oliffe (2014); Denfield (1997); O'Campo (2017); Martin & Panteloudakis (2019)

RESEARCH SAMPLE OF MALE SURVIVORS OF IPV (N = 45)

As shown in the literature review, men experience IPV but there is relatively little Canadian research on the topic. Based on a group of 45 male survivors of IPV, this analysis addresses the research questions: What types of IPV do men experience? What barriers do they encounter when seeking help? What kinds of interactions do they have with police? How satisfied are they with the justice system? Are their rights under the Canadian Victims Bill of Rights respected? We asked people to share what had been helpful or unhelpful following their experiences of violence. We also asked for feedback on the criminal justice system, victim assistance services, and informal support from family and friends. This portion of the paper will present a summary of our findings on how men are affected by IPV.

Characteristics of participants. Our study included survey responses from 45 male and 110 female survivors of IPV. Two of the male respondents and twelve of the female respondents agreed to participate in follow-up, in-depth qualitative interviews. Given the scope of this paper, we will focus on the characteristics of the male survivors shown in Appendix D. Almost all of the men were heterosexual (98%) and reported abuse by a female partner (98%). One participant was bi-sexual and reported abuse by a male partner. Most of the men were Caucasian (89%), although some reported multiple ethnic or cultural origins. Just over half of the sample was from Ontario (55%, n=25), followed by British Columbia (25%, n=11), and Alberta (11%, n=5). In total, responses were received from seven provinces. All of the respondents were over 20 years old, and most were living with their partner full-time (78%), or part-time (11%) at the time of the violence. While this was a convenience sample and is not representative of male survivors across Canada, the men who participated provide insight into their experiences seeking help and interacting with the justice system.

What Types Of Violence Did Men Experience?

As shown in Table 2, the majority of the men in this study experienced psychological violence (86%) and physical violence (84%). Over half experienced financial abuse (59%) and threats of violence to themselves, their children, or their pets (55%). The men were also subject to other forms of abuse such as harrassment (41%), damage of property (34%), sexual violence (23%), and stalking (14%). When compared to the women in the study who experienced IPV (n = 110), men reported similar rates of physical violence (84% vs. 83%), half as much sexual violence (23% vs. 53%), less stalking (14% vs. 37%), but higher rates of economic violence (59% vs 46%).

Table 2. *Intimate Partner Violence by Sex of Survivor (N = 155)*

Type of Violence*	Male Survivors		Female Survivors	
	n = 45	%	n = 110	%
Threats of violence	25	55	73	66
Physical violence	38	84	91	83
Sexual violence	10	23	58	53
Psychological violence	39	86	89	81
Harassment	19	41	54	49
Stalking	7	14	41	37
Damage of property	16	34	57	52
Financial or economic abuse	26	59	51	46

*Note. Totals will not equal 100 due to multiple response options

Men reported physical and psychological harm from their experiences of IPV. Resulting physical conditions included broken bones, eye damage, and scarring from bite marks and stab wounds. Resulting mental health conditions included diagnosed and undiagnosed symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), depression, anxiety disorders, panic disorder, agoraphobia, sleep disorders, and substance use disorders. Other health-related effects of IPV included weight loss, chronic pain, memory loss, sexual arousal disorders, and exacerbated symptoms of pre-existing conditions. One participant said, "I'm not heavy to begin with but I lost nearly 20 pounds because I didn't want to eat ever." Reflecting on sexual trauma in his relationship, another man explained, "Sexual violence can affect a man's ability to become sexually aroused in subsequent relationships. This is an invisible aspect of being physically 'broken' from that event that continues to sabotage [me]."

False accusations. A common form of abuse reported by male survivors of IPV was the threat of false accusations by female partners. Since perpetrators of IPV are generally understood to be men, our respondents said that their female partners believed they could file false charges to gain the upper hand in the justice system or family court. Men reported being threatened with false accusations related to abusing their children, and physically or sexually assaulting their partners. Threats of this nature were used as a form of coercive control. One man described his wife's pattern of repeated calls to the police, "My partner was a functional alcoholic. During periods of rage she would engage the police. Sometimes waking me up in the middle of the night, physically hitting me while she was calling the police." The outcomes of these false accusations not only affect the survivors directly, but can introduce consequences for their children. One participant wrote, "False accusations, lying to the system, and failing to keep agreements are all abuse. One of the outcomes of this abuse is that my son has lived a life of addiction as a clear result of his mother's abusiveness, and his life will be shortened." Case Study 1 is based on one of our interviews and provides an in-depth look at one man's experience of IPV, including false accusations.

Case Study 1.
Bruce's Story

"One of the most difficult things was the false accusation. It turns your life upside down."

Bruce was a caucasian male in his late fifties who experienced IPV from his wife. It started with verbal abuse, then developed into emotional and physical violence. The violence continued for many years - Bruce's wife locked him out of the house, locked him in the basement, destroyed his belongings, and assaulted him with objects in front of their children. On one occasion, Bruce's wife was hitting him with a stool in front of their son, and asking, "why are you hitting me?" Bruce's son said, "He's not. You're hitting him." Bruce feared the impact his wife's behaviour was having on their teenage children.

He said that the hardest part of the abuse were the false accusations that his wife would make against him. His wife made false accusations about him trying to get into his daughter's room when she was undressed, and she would make accusations that he was abusive towards her. This made him take steps to protect himself.

He spoke with a friend who was a lawyer and reached out to the Canadian Mental Health Association. Based on their advice, he began to document everything. He became concerned that his wife would accuse him of threatening her with his firearm, so he documented removing it from the house and contacted the RCMP and the gun registry to advise them. About one year later, his wife threatened to call the police and say he had threatened her with his rifle. This happened on at least 4 occasions.

He began to fear that people would believe her false accusations because he had not come forward earlier, so he started to talk about their relationship with others. He let co-workers hear abusive voicemail messages and occasionally spoke with her on speakerphone. He felt validated when others started to see how his wife was acting and began to see her as abusive because she was very different in public than how she acted at home.

He is no longer in the relationship but continues to support her financially to avoid further conflict. He now chooses to focus on positive influences and being around positive people. While the abuse made him feel isolated and lose confidence, he credits his optimism for choosing to move on with his life.

Recognizing abuse. It was common to hear that men had a difficult time recognizing that they were experiencing abusive behaviour from their partner. For example, at the end of Bruce's interview presented in Case Study 1, he said he was not sure that he had experienced violence despite years of physical and emotional abuse. Several men felt that it took longer for them to identify that they were being abused because they had never heard that IPV can happen to men. One participant suggested, "If my female friends came to me and described their male partner doing all the things my first wife did to me I would see instantly that she was badly abused."

What Interactions Did Men Have With The Justice System?

About half of the study participants had contact with police (52%, n = 24). A smaller number had also been through criminal court (36%, n = 17), family court (32%, n=14), or civil court (5%, n=2). Three men had been through the parole process for a federally sentenced offender (7%, n=3). Almost half (45%, n=20) of the sample had no contact with the police, criminal court, or other judicial process.

The survey contained indicators of satisfaction with the justice system, many that reflect language in the Canadian Victims Bill of Rights (2015), which guarantees certain rights to information, protection, participation, and restitution. Table 3 shows the percentage of respondents that agreed or strongly agreed with satisfaction with the justice system statements. Overall, the male survivors in our study were dissatisfied with the justice system with only five percent reporting that they were satisfied with the outcome and no men reporting they were satisfied with the justice process. One respondent put it this way, "There is nothing about the criminal justice system that was helpful. They simply didn't believe me and would not help me." Men reported that they were rarely kept informed about their cases, that their security was not well protected, and that the police and crown prosecutor tended not to be respectful of their views. In our larger study on survivors of violent crime (N=435), male survivors of IPV reported lower satisfaction scores than any other group, including women who experienced IPV (Roebuck et al., 2020).

Table 3. *Satisfaction with the Criminal Justice System*

Satisfaction Indicators	% of male survivors that agree with indicator (n=22)	% of female survivors that agree with indicator (n=72)
The police kept me informed about my case	14	26
The crown prosecutor kept me informed about my case	5	19
The police protected my security, identity and privacy	11	31
The police were respectful of my views	19	31
The crown prosecutor was respectful of my views	12	28
I felt the police believed me	5	56
I felt the prosecutor believed me	12	51
Overall, I was satisfied with the outcome	5	19
Overall, I was satisfied with the process	0	15

Interactions with police. Many men reported negative experiences with the justice system, specifically with police. Several men reported being arrested when they called the police for help. One man described it this way, "They don't believe that women are capable of violence and that a man can be the victim. After calling the police myself with a bloody nose they ended up arresting me instead." Similarly, other men felt that they could not call the police because of the risk involved to them or because of fear about losing custody of their children. One man explained, "During each instance of physical abuse I knew calling the police was not an option. I knew my partner would claim I hit her because she told me she would do so." One other man discussed the role that mandatory charge policies play in police responses to domestic violence, saying that police can be "forced to lay charges they know are wrong." At the same time, a few men reported having positive interactions with police, explaining how the police had taken the time to understand what was happening without making assumptions. In Case Study 2, Maxime found the police helpful and empathetic.

Case Study 2.
Maxime's Story

"I've had to turn on my phone recorder for my own protection because she would threaten to take the kids from me. A couple instances, she said that she would kill me."

Maxime was a caucasian male in his mid-20's, married with two young children, who experienced IPV from his wife. While on maternity leave, Maxime's wife entered a relationship with another man and would disappear for days to go partying, leaving the kids with Maxime, including their five-month-old infant. She eventually moved out of the house and lived with her new boyfriend, but continued to control Maxime's behavior and hacked into his social media to monitor his relationships. Maxime's wife became increasingly violent - escalating to behaviours like tampering with his engine or punching him in the face. But Maxime found her controlling behaviours, emotional manipulation, and threats more problematic, explaining that the pain from those behaviours lasted longer than physical violence.

Although she was in another relationship herself, Maxime's wife did not approve of him being with other women, and she began to confront him and women who had contact with him. On one occasion when he had a friend at his house, Maxime's wife left her two small children in the car and used a window to break into his house and attack the woman.

After that incident the police were involved, and Maxime was told by the responding officer that men have a disadvantage in cases of domestic violence. Fortunately, his wife admitted to her behaviour when questioned by the police. She was charged with four criminal offences for multiple break and enters, stealing, and assault. The Children's Aid Society (CAS) became involved, and Maxime felt hopeful that the police and CAS involvement would help his wife change her behaviour.

Maxime received strong support from his family throughout his experience. At the time of the interview, he was appreciating the time he had to spend on his hobbies but missing his kids because of new shared custody arrangements. He continued to be concerned for their well-being.

Perceptions of bias. Many of the men in our study had come to believe that the justice system is biased against men who experience IPV. This message was often communicated to men by their female partners as a form of coercive control and was reinforced through their interactions with the justice system. As previously described, some men were arrested when they called the police for help, while others, such as Maxime in the case study above, were told directly by the responding police officer that men experience a disadvantage in cases of IPV, facing a greater burden of proof and needing to have their "ducks in a row" to be taken seriously. This type of messaging was also communicated by crown attorneys, defence council, and family lawyers preparing fathers for child custody hearings in family court. As a result, some of the men in the sample believed that there are less legal protections for men who experience IPV, and that seeking help includes a risk of criminalization.

Where Did Men Access Support?

Table #4 provides a summary of the use of services and supports. About half of the men in the study sought support from friends (53%) or family (47%), and many interacted with a wide range of service providers, including mental health services (28%), child protection (19%), domestic violence counsellors (16%), virtual support services (14%), a workplace employee assistance program (12%), or healthcare (7%). Some men also sought spiritual support (12%) or participated in a peer support group (12%). Finally, a quarter of respondents (26%) indicated that they did not interact with any services or supports.

Table 4. *Survivors of IPV and interactions with services and supports*

Service and Supports	Male Respondents		Female Respondents	
	n = 43	%	n = 108	%
Rape crisis or sexual assault centre	2	5	17	16
Domestic violence shelter	2	5	28	26
Domestic violence counsellor	7	16	37	24
Child protection services	8	19	25	23
Victim assistance services	4	9	44	41
Healthcare	3	7	46	43
Mental health services	12	28	51	47
Virtual support services	6	14	9	8
Victim advocacy organizations	2	5	13	12
Victim witness program	1	2	14	13
Workplace employee assistance program	5	12	17	16
Family members	20	47	63	58
Friends	23	53	73	68
Religious leader or religious community	5	12	15	14
Drug or alcohol support programs	2	5	7	6
Peer support groups	5	12	15	14
No services or supports	11	26	11	10

Note. Totals will not equal 100 due to multiple response options

Feedback on services and supports. For men who did find the help they needed, they provided the most positive feedback about interactions with individual counselors, family counselors, and social workers, either in person or through a support line. One man described how his family counsellor helped him to better understand different types of abuse such as verbal, emotional, and physical abuse. Another spoke about a social worker who established a strong therapeutic alliance and worked additional hours for free to provide support.

Barriers to accessing help. Many men reported that it was difficult to find help. Several explained that resources for survivors of IPV tend to be set up for women and children and it is not clear where to access support if you are a man. Even so, some men did try to access help at resources for women, such as domestic violence shelters or other support centres and were turned away or assumed to be perpetrators. One man said, "No domestic violence shelter would take me and my children." Another said:

> I did not seek help from victim service programs for this incident because I had a prior experience when I was assumed to be perpetrator and not a victim of sexual assault by a woman. It makes you feel even more terrible when people look at you like a criminal.

Some men who were able to access services reported that their workers did not believe them and lacked adequate knowledge of the impact of IPV on male survivors. One man said, "I had to get counselling from a woman's shelter that had no experience with a male perspective." Similar to interactions with the justice system, men who were not believed by service providers were often frightened that their attempts to seek help could result in criminalization or losing custody of their children.

Conclusion: Masculinities And Victimization

Men's experiences with the justice system and with service providers occur within the broader context of men's roles in society. Men shared the pressure they felt to be strong, to be leaders in their homes, to be problem-solvers, and to not appear weak. Men said it was difficult to disclose IPV to their peers, and reported being teased or receiving glib responses like, "that doesn't happen to men," or "man up." Those who received supportive responses from their peers often acknowledged how fortunate they were to be believed.

To highlight the barriers they had encountered, some men in our study contrasted their experience with violence against women. One man said:

> *If you look at how hard it is for women to come forward when they have huge awareness campaigns, huge amounts of sympathy, police protection, all kinds of hotlines, and programs and shelters, then ask if it might be harder for men, when there is no sympathy, support, or shelters.*

As researchers we recognize that women encounter barriers and too many women do not receive the help they need. At the same time, it was evident that many men in our study did not have access to the types of support available to women who experience violence. For some men, the risks involved in seeking help and the lack of resources were reasons to stay in their relationship. Table 5 provides a summary of the research study findings organized according to Karmen's methodology (Karmen, 2016).

This study contributes to understanding men's experiences of IPV in Canada. The sample does not address the experiences of Indigenous, gay, or transgender men, but it does offer findings with a comparison group of female survivors. We conclude that there is significant work to do to ensure that male survivors of IPV receive their entitlements under the Canadian Victims Bill of Rights.

Table 5. *Summary of Research Study Findings*

Karmen's Methodology	Themes
Definition and Description of the Problem	• Physical, sexual, psychological, and financial abuse • Coercive control • False accusations • Difficulty recognizing abuse
Measurement of the Problem	• Barriers to reporting lead to underreporting • Statistics are not an adequate representation of the scope of the issue
Justice System Response	• Treated with suspicion by police • Some men treated as perpetrators or arrested • Limited communication on the progress of the case • No men reported satisfaction with the justice process • Perception that legal responses to IPV are biased against men
Service Provider Response	• Difficult to find service providers for male survivors of IPV • Treated with suspicion by service providers • Most services were for women and children • Limited understanding of men's experiences of trauma • Individual counseling was helpful • Fear of losing custody of children
Societal Response	• Treated with suspicion by peers and family members • "That doesn't happen to men" or "Man up" • Pressure to be strong, have it together, be "head of the home"

RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations were drafted after reviewing the literature and findings from our sample of 45 male survivors. We received feedback from six professionals, including a psychiatrist, social worker, academic, lawyer, nurse practitioner, and executive director. IPV affects women disproportionately, however this paper has shown that men can be victimized by their intimate partners and there are gaps in research and services available. Our recommendations are not intended to take resources away from female survivors, but rather to ensure that every survivor, regardless of gender, has access to rights and services.

1. Recommendations For Awareness, Education, And Prevention

The violence against women (VAW) movement has made stong gains in raising awareness about the impacts of IPV on women. Numerous services, educational resources, and prevention campaigns have been developed to support awareness and action. While more needs to be done, men who experience IPV have reported not being able to recognize the signs of violent relationships, not knowing where to look for help, and not being believed by professionals or other people in their lives when they disclose their experiences. These issues reflect a lack of awareness that could be improved through public education and prevention.

- Widen the frame of awareness, education, and prevention activities to include a focus on ending IPV experienced or perpetrated by all genders.

- Specialized campaigns are required to continue tackling violence against women, with additional campaigns breaking new ground in the public's understanding of violence experienced by men in heterosexual, same-sex, and gender nonconforming relationships.

- Implement evidence-based safe dating and healthy relationship programs at a young age and continuously throughout school health curricula in elementary, secondary and postsecondary institutions, including healthy and assertive communication skills, how to recognize signs of an unhealthy relationship, and where to go for help if needed.

- Evaluate the implementation of evidence-based prevention programs to measure violence reduction and cost savings.

2. Recommendations For The Justice System

Men who experience IPV have reported challenges accessing justice. Men have reported serious incidents of violence including weapons by female or same-sex partners, and being arrested when calling the police for assistance (Dutton, 2012). IPV is complex and it can be difficult to discern responsibility when one party is lying. We recognize that abusive men lie to the police about their behaviour and we acknowledge that women who experience abuse have been unjustly arrested or prosecuted for acts of self-defence (Johnson & Conners, 2017, p. 5). At the same time, the literature and research sample presented in this paper have shown that men who experience IPV are less likely to have the police believe them.

- Continue developing and evaluating risk assessment and lethality tools to better protect women who experience violence, with added sensitivity to the experiences of male survivors in heterosexual, same-sex, and gender nonconforming relationships.

- Embed indicators of coercive control, such as false accusations, within risk assessments to provide a more holistic overview of abusive behaviour.

- Revise the Criminal Code of Canada to include coercive control, reflecting a more contemporary understanding that IPV is not limited to acts of physical or sexual violence.

- If women-only police centres are developed in the future as a response to VAW, ensure there is clear communication on reporting options for men, trans, and gender nonconforming survivors.

- Redevelop IPV curriculum for police colleges with examples of IPV inclusive of all genders as both victim and perpetrator, and provide training on bidirectional violence.

- Request feedback from men who have reported IPV to improve responses.

- Provide survivors with a choice about the gender of their investigating police officer.

- Provide legal help and victim assistance to survivors in family court to navigate the complexities of interactions with their partner and ensure the wellbeing of their children.

3. Recommendations For Victim Services

Our primary recommendation is to greatly increase funding and access to services to address violence against women. There is a high demand for service from women who experience IPV, with many women fleeing abusive relationships turned away from potentially life-saving access to domestic violence shelters every year because they are at capacity (Morneau, 2019). At the same time, men have reported not having access to shelters that specialize in responses to IPV (like VAW shelters) or being turned away from shelters that do allow men, because they were at capacity (Morneau, 2019).

- Ensure victims of IPV have access to life-saving shelter support regardless of gender, and ensure that homeless shelters are not seen as a valid option for responses to violence.

- Continue to engage men and boys in efforts to end violence against women, confront harmful constructions of masculinity rooted in patriarchy, and further engage all genders in ending IPV.

- Agencies that exist to serve women should not be expected to serve male survivors. This will ensure that women have access to safe, trauma-informed, and women-centred spaces to heal.

- Agencies with a mandate to serve the broader public should audit their services to evaluate what actions and outreach strategies they undertake to provide gender-inclusive services.

- Agencies with a mandate to serve the broader public or male-specific services should consult best practice documents and credentialing frameworks for service providers working with men to identify ways to create safer, trauma-informed, and gender-inclusive or male-specific spaces to heal.

- Male survivors should be consulted when developing programming and outreach strategies to ensure that services are responsive to their needs.

- Programs that work with male abusers should be trauma-informed, responsive to gender-based power imbalances, address childhood experiences of violence, adversity, and neglect, and be informed by feminist, queer, and masculinities theory in a way that validates and celebrates healthy masculinities.

4. Recommendations For Policy Development

Public policy shapes the funding, availability, and delivery of services and helps to frame how social issues are understood. Government policies around IPV are generally framed through the lens of violence against women or gender-based violence and often exclude the possibilty that heterosexual men, gay, trans, and gender nonconforming partners experience violence. This reinforces gaps in research, funding, and service delivery. Since governments have an obligation to serve all citizens, there needs to be a widening in the scope of public policy in this area.

- Governments should continue developing policies with the explicit objective of responding to, preventing, and ending violence against women.

- Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+) approaches to IPV need to consider the impacts of violence on all genders, developing policy-relevant responses to the needs of each.

- Since access to safe and affordable housing is critical to personal safety, all orders of government in Canada need to provide leadership to alleviate the current housing crisis, ensuring adequate access to emergency shelters, rapid rehousing programs, rental subsidies, and reduced wait times for social housing.

- The Canadian Victims Bill of Rights provides a right to protection. This could include access to housing. Better responses to the housing needs of survivors need to be explored to reduce the frequency of survivors and their children losing access to safe housing when they are abused.

- Policy-makers need to engage with male survivors to better understand their needs. Male survivors have reported not being believed, being treated with suspicion that they are perpetrators, or dismissed as men's rights activists. The needs of male survivors merit careful policy development to provide better service responses without jeopordizing gains made through the violence against women movement.

5. Recommendations For Research

There is limited research on male survivors of IPV in Canada. Government victimization statistics and police-reported data consistently show that men experience IPV, but because women experience higher rates of violence there is limited analysis of the impacts on men. Most universities across the country have academics working on research related to violence against women, but our review of Canadian literature on male survivors of IPV returned very few results. Because effective policy, interventions, and funding are influenced by research, we recommend that more attention be paid to developing quality research in this area. Specifically,

- Future research should examine dominant theoretical frameworks from studies on violence against women to better understand how they apply to male heterosexual, gay, trans, and gender nonconforming survivors of IPV. For example, how are power and control understood in these relationships? What barriers exist when trying to leave a violent relationship? Why do their abusers continue with their behaviour? And how do intersectionalities such as race, socioeconomic status, or disability affect male and gender nonconforming survivors?

- Research is needed to better understand the impacts of same-sex and female-perpetrated IPV on the children of male survivors, including the nature of trauma and help-seeking behaviours, secondary stigma and shame, experiences with child protective services or in family court, and the long-term impact on future relationships.

- Government reports on IPV should continue to highlight the disproportionate number of women experiencing violence and should also contribute to a deeper understanding of men's experiences.

- Research on male survivors of IPV does not always account for the dynamics of bidirectional violence, or the reality that female "perpetrators" may be survivors engaged in self-defence. Studies on IPV need to better account for these dynamics, asking questions about two-way violence and self-defence.

- Future research should explore data collected in other countries and jurisdictions to better contextualize the experiences of male survivors in Canada.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Resources and Toolkits

Name	Source	Hyperlink	Description
The Respect Male Victims' Standard (2019)	Respect UK	http://respect.uk.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Respect-Male-Victims-Standard-2019.pdf	Respect accreditation that provides a comprehensive guide for frontline workers who are working with male survivors.
Toolkit for Work with Male Victims of Domestic Abuse (2019)	Respect UK	https://setdab.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Respect-Toolkit-for-Work-with-Male-Victims-of-Domestic-Abuse-2019.pdf	Used to support frontline workers in their work with male victims of domestic violence in both heterosexual or same-sex relationships.
Serving Male-Identified Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence, (TAG) Technical Assistance Guide (2017)	National Resource Centre on Domestic Violence (USA)	https://vawnet.org/sites/default/files/assets/files/2017-07/NRCDV_TAG-ServingMaleSurvivors-July2017.pdf	Resource that provides guidelines for responding to male-identified victims of IPV to create inclusivity of services for all victims and survivors.
Identifying and Responding to Male Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) in the Health Care Setting—Pilot Guidelines (2007)	Family Violence Prevention Fund (USA)	https://www.leapsf.org/pdf/one-page-screen-men.doc	Assessment tool to identify and respond to male IPV, both victims and perpetrators (screening, assessment, intervention, documentation, and reporting).
Men Abused by Women in Intimate Relationships (2006)	Government of Alberta	http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca/documents/PFVB1100-men-abused-by-women-booklet.pdf	An information booklet discussing what abuse is, the signs of abuse, what can be done to support men, and available resources.

Online Video Resources:			
Abused By My Girlfriend: The Teenage Romance That Descended Into Terrible Violence (2019)	British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC Three)	https://youtu.be/3_dr9y41J38	Case study of a man's (Alex) experience of IPV by his girlfriend (Jordan). In the UK, this case became the first female conviction of controlling or coercive behavior.
"20 Stories": Dr Liz Bates and the University of Cumbria (2017)	The Mankind Initiative (UK)	https://youtu.be/ZSyT3UV0D9I	Excerpts from 20 male survivors of IPV detailing their experiences.
Inside a refuge supporting a male victim of domestic abuse (2020)	The Mankind Initiative (UK)	https://youtu.be/ou8MbXO7wy0	Excerpts from male survivors and support staff from a refuge in the UK. Discussion around males experience, the need to support men, and concerns around funding.
#ViolenceIsViolence: Domestic abuse advert Mankind (2017)	The Mankind Initiative (UK)	https://youtu.be/u3PgH86OyEM	Video experiment demonstrating the impacts of the bystander effect on male and female perpetrators of IPV in public. This resource reveals the need for awareness of male survivors of IPV.

Feature on the experiences of male victims of domestic abuse (2018)	British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC Inside Out)	https://youtu.be/78B-Y-aw_Hs	Report on male victims of IPV in the UK, including case examples, university research, and reflections on the challenges of reporting and accessing services.
Working with Male Survivors of Domestic Violence Webinar (2018)	Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence (PCADV)	https://youtu.be/fZycYUgtrXY	This webinar provides information on the dynamics male IPV, how to identify male survivors, how socialization and victimization affect men's interactions with the legal system, and best practice advice on how to provide effective services.
Providing Inclusive Services to Male Survivors of Domestic and Sexual Violence (2017)	Arizona Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence	https://youtu.be/77QhmV_BOeY	This webinar explores the dynamics of male victimization, the impact of trauma, and ways programs can increase effective responses to men. It also discusses policy and procedure development and serving male survivors who are gay or transgender.

Appendix B: Summary of Canadian Academic Research

Author	Title	Description
Ansara, D. & Hindin, M. (2010)	Exploring gender differences in the patterns of intimate partner violence in Canada: a latent class approach	This study used latent class analysis (LCA) to map the patterns of physical violence, sexual coercion, psychological abuse and controlling behaviour, and examined whether LCA can better illuminate the gendered nature of this experience than conventional measures of IPV.
Ansara, D. & Hindin, M. (2011)	Psychosocial Consequences of Intimate Partner Violence for Women and Men in Canada	This study used latent class analysis (LCA) which estimated the proportion of individuals who reported each of the psychosocial reactions for each type of IPV.
Arnocky, S. & Vaillancourt, T. (2014)	Sex Differences in Response to Victimization by an Intimate Partner	This study analyzed the differences in responses to IPV based on gender. Negative attitudes that are held (i.e stigma) towards male victims of IPV than females; male and females differ in how they conceptualize violence.
Barrett, B.J., Peirone, A., & Cheung, C.H. (2020)	Help Seeking Experiences of Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence in Canada: the Role of Gender, Violence Severity, and Social Belonging	GSS dataset (from the 2009 Canadian General Social Survey-Victimization) used to assess severity of abuse by number of incidents, physical injury, and fearing for one's life.
Dawson, M., & Hotton, T. (2014)	Police Charging Practices for Incidents of Intimate Partner Violence in Canada	A review of existing data from the 2008 Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) survey. Incidents were coded based on "clearance" of criminal charges by the police. Additionally, seven independent variables were coded in order to categorize findings in order to analyze police charging practices.
Brend, D. M., Krane, J., & Saunders, S. (2019)	Exposure to Trauma in Intimate Partner Violence Human Service Work: A Scoping Review	A scoping review of 13 empirical studies investigating the impacts of exposure to IPV on human service workers.
Brownridge, D. (2010)	Intimate Partner Violence Against Aboriginal Men in Canada	Analysis of IPV against Aborginal men from 1999 General Social Survey. The categories that increase the risk of IPV for Aborginal men are reported and discussed.
Cismaru, M., Jensen, G., & Lavack, A. (2010)	If the Noise Coming From Next Door Was Loud Music, You'd Do Something About It	Scoping review and content analysis of 12 bystander intervention campaigns that encouraged intervening in witnessing IPV. Was found that none of the 12 campaigns discussed or brought attention to male victims of IPV.
Dutton, D. (2012)	The case against the role of gender in intimate partner violence	Review/critique of papers published in an issue of Aggression and Violent Behaviour criticizing the framing of IPV and gender paradigm methodology.
Fortin, I. et al. (2011)	Intimate Partner Violence and Psychological Distress among Young Couples: Analysis of the Moderating Effect of Social Support	This study examined quantitative responses from heterosexual couples regarding the types of violence, distress, and role of social support when experiencing IPV. The differences between men and women are reported.

Girard, M. & Laflamme, S. (2018)	Le meurtre du partenaire intime chez les femmes au Canada selon qu'elles sont Autochtones ou non-Autochtones	This study raises the question of whether Aboriginal men are at a higher risk for victimization
Hilton, Z. et al. (2014)	Preliminary validation of the ODARA for female intimate partner violence offenders	Analysis of a scoring system to predict recidivism rates. Sample included 30 female offenders within the Ontario provincial correctional system with a police record for violence against a marital, cohabiting, or dating partner.
Huot, M. (2019)	La médiation familiale en présence de violence conjugale : quels sont les moyens mis en place pour assurer la sécurité des personnes?	This study conducted interviews of family mediators in Quebec to discuss their experiences of family mediation and IPV.
Lysova, A., Dim, E., and Dutton, D. (2019)	Prevalence and Consequences of Intimate Partner Violence in Canada as Measured by the National Victimization Survey	Analysis of data based on the 2014 Canadian General Social Survey on Victimization. Analytic techniques were used to examine the prevalence and consequences of IPV and the help-seeking behavior by gender.
Millar, P. & Brown, G. (2010)	Explaining gender differences in police arresting and charging behavior in cases of spousal violence	This study involved an analysis of a two-year sample of spousal violence police cases (N = 2,935) from the Edmonton Police Service, including an analysis of arrests based on gender.
Nicholls, T.L. et al. (2013)	Risk assessment in intimate partner violence: a systematic review of contemporary approaches	All English publications from western nations from 1990 to 2011. A total of 39 articles that examine risk assessment for IPV were included in the analysis.
Nixon, K. & Tutty, L. (2010)	"Where have all the women gone?"	A discussion on the social policy agenda in Alberta, arguing in favour of framing IPV as Violence Against Women (VAW).
O'Campo, P., Zhang, Y., Omand, M., Velonis, A., Yonas, M., Minh, A., Cyriac, A., Ahmad, F., & Smylie, J. (2017)	Conceptualization of Intimate Partner Violence: Exploring Gender Differences Using Concept Mapping	This study explores the gender differences between men and women of how IPV is conceptualized. What should be considered as IPV is discussed and speculation to why this is explored.
Oliffe, J. L. et al. (2014)	Gay men and intimate partner violence: a gender analysis	This study analyzed the experiences of IPV within a same-sex marriages. A total of 14 men were included in the sample in order to provide a gendered analysis of the male IPV in same sex relationships.
Ouellet, F., Blondin, O., Leclerc, C., & Boivin, R. (2017)	Prédiction de la revictimisation et de la récidive en violence conjugale	This study used police data from Quebec between 2000-2009 where the police responded to 52 149 incidents between partners and resulted in a report.
Shanks, É., Boucher, S., & Fernet, M. (2013)	Les domaines de schémas, la communication et l'utilisation de comportements violents chez les jeunes couples	Based on a pre-completed questionnaire, couples were asked to discuss an area of disaccord in the relationship within a laboratory setting in order for them to try and find a resolution to the issue. The interaction was filmed.
St. Pierre, M., & Senn, Y. (2010)	External Barriers to Help-Seeking Encountered by Canadian Gay and Lesbian Victims of Intimate Partner Abuse: An Application of the Barriers Model	The sample was composed of 280 self-identified LGBTQ persons (101 male). The survey related to participants' experience with partner abuse, experiences of discrimination and access to supports and services.
Stewart, D., MacMillian, H., & Wathen, N. (2013)	Intimate Partner Violence	Position paper discussing the risk factors (sexuality, physical limitations, poverty, and alcohol use) for both men and women being associated with a higher risk of IPV.
Stewart, L., Gabora, N., Allegri, N., & Slavin-Stewart (2014)	Profile of Female Perpetrators of Intimate Partner Violence in an Offender Population: Implications for Treatment	Female perpetrators of IPV under federal supervision (Correctional Service of Canada) in September 2002. Database allowed for access to detailed information about the female offenders in regards to IPV and associated risk factors.
Woodin, E., Caldeira, V., Sotskova, A., Galaugher, T., & Lu, M. (2014)	Harmful alcohol use as a predictor of intimate partner violence during the transition to parenthood: Interdependent and interactive effects	98 heterosexual couples were assessed for alcohol use and IPV at three time periods: during the third trimester of pregnancy; one year postpartum; two years postpartum
Zamorski, M. & Wiens-Kinkaid, M. (2013)	Cross-sectional prevalence survey of intimate partner violence perpetration and victimization in Canadian military personnel	Data from the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF)'s 2008/2009 Health and Lifestyle Information Survey. IPV was assessed in those currently in a relationship. Respondents indicated whether they were a victim or perpetrator of ten acts of abuse.

Appendix C: Summary of Canadian Government Reports

Author	Title	Description
Boyce, J. (2016)	Victimization of Aboriginal People in Canada, 2014	Provincial and territorial data collected from the 2014 General Social Survey.
Burczycka, M., & Conroy, S. (2017)	Family violence in Canada: A statistical profile, 2015	Data applied from the Uniform Crime Reporting Survey and Homicide Survey in 2014.
Burczycka, M., & Conroy, S. (2018)	Family violence in Canada: A statistical profile, 2016	Data applied from the 2014 General Social Survey on Canadian's Safety (Victimization) and the 2016 Uniform Crime Reporting Survey and the Homicide Survey.
Burczycka, M., Conroy, S., & Savage, L. (2018)	Family violence in Canada: A statistical profile, 2017	Data applied from the Uniform Crime Reporting Survey and the Homicide Survey in 2017.
Conroy, S., Burczycka, M. & and Savage, L. (2019)	Family violence in Canada: A statistical profile, 2018	Data applied from the Uniform Crime Reporting Survey and the Homicide Survey in 2018.
Department of Justice Canada (2017)	JustFacts: Child custody and access	Based on data collected from the Survey of Family Courts, The General Social Survey cycle 25 (2011), and the Civil Court Survey between 2005/2006 and 2010/2011.
Mahony, T. H. (2010)	Police-reported dating violence in Canada, 2008	Data from police-reported dating violence in Canada. Sample included those aged 15 and older. A supplementary section analyzes results from those aged 12 to 14.
Ibrahim, D. (2019)	Police-reported violence among same-sex intimate partners in Canada, 2009 to 2017	Data from the Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey is examined from 2009 to 2017. Data from the General Social survey (2014) on Canadians Safety (Victimization) incorporated into the analysis.
Moreau, G. (2019)	Canadian residential facilities for victims of abuse, 2017/2018	Victims of abuse in Canadian residential facilities for the years of 2017 and 2018. Snapshot day taken on April 18th, 2018.
Simpson, L. (2018)	Violent victimization of lesbians, gays and bisexuals in Canada, 2014	Data used from the 2004, 2009, and 2014 General Social Survey (GSS) with Canadians over the age of 18.
Sinha, M. (2012)	Family violence in Canada: A statistical profile, 2010	Data used from the 2010 Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, the Homicide Survey, and the 2009 General Social Survey on Victimization.
Sinha, M. (2013)	Family violence in Canada: A statistical profile, 2011	Data used from the 2011 Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, the Homicide Survey, and the 2009 General Social Survey on Victimization.
Statistics Canada (2020)	Canadian perspectives survey series 1: Impacts of COVID-19	Data collected from a web panel survey with more than 4,600 respondents from ten provinces between March 29 and April 3 2020.
Statistics Canada (2015)	Family violence in Canada: A statistical profile, 2013	Data used from the 2013 Uniform Crime Reporting Survey and Homicide Survey, and the 2009 General Social Survey on Victimization
Statistics Canada (2016)	Family violence in Canada: A statistical profile, 2014	Data used from the 2014 Uniform Crime Reporting Survey and Homicide Survey, and the 2014 General Social Survey on Victimization

Appendix D: Sample Characteristics

Demographics and characteristics of male survivors (n=45)

Male Survivors	Number	%
Age		
20-39	17	38
40-59	24	53
60+	4	9
Total	**45**	**100**
Sexual Orientation		
Heterosexual/Straight	44	98
Bisexual	1	2
Total	**45**	**100**
Ethnic/Cultural Origins*		
Indigenous	3	7
White/Caucasian	40	89
African, Caribbean, Black	2	5
Asian - East & South	5	11

Totals will not equal 100 due to multiple response options

Disability (After Violence)*		
Yes, physical	2	5
Yes, mental health	21	49
Yes, other health	4	9

Totals will not equal 100 due to multiple response options

Gender Of Person Inflicting Violence		
Man	1	2
Woman	44	98
Total	**45**	**100**
Living With The Person At The Time		
Yes, full-time	35	78
Yes, part-time	5	11
No	4	9
Prefer not to answer	1	2
Total	**45**	**100**