

ANNUAL REPORT

2025-2026



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WELCOME FROM THE DIRECTOR

SHEILA MACDONALD, RN, MN
PROVINCIAL DIRECTOR



2025-2026 has been a year of enhancing our capacity to provide more outreach, support, and education across the province. All the Team Lead roles for the SA/DVTCs have been funded and are in place. The establishment of these roles will ensure stable leadership and support for the SA/DVTC clinicians, outreach and collaboration with community partners and enhanced education within our teams and for other stakeholders.

The 6 regional Clinical Practice Leader (CPL) roles have also been established. The CPLs will work with the SA/DVTCs, community emergency departments and other stakeholders providing support, training, and enhancing collaboration among services. The CPLs are also updating/developing standardized training/guidelines for use across the province.

To increase support for the Network and the SA/DVTCs, a full-time Administrative Assistant has been hired. We welcome Shenae to the Network team!

This year we updated our SA/DVTC Standards of Care, a document which details our own expectations for service delivery and care. This will assist programs in identifying areas where services can be strengthened to enhance patient care.

We also completed and approved the nursing documentation forms, an initiative that has taken a few years. The revised forms ensure that information being documented is current and medically relevant for our patients. We are also working to strengthen processes for how and when the patient's health record is released when there is a legal proceeding. We have been in discussions with our provincial Health Information departments at teaching hospitals in Ontario as well as the provincial Sexual Assault Crown Attorney group. This work is ongoing.

The provincial Navigation Line continues to be a resource for patients/service providers seeking access to Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Treatment Centre (SA/DVTC) services. There is an ongoing need to assist patients seeking access to care at the closest SA/DVTC with a nurse available. Thank you to all the nurses across the province who have supported this effort. In addition, our Navigation Line nurses have begun providing guidance and support to service providers when they provide service at a local community hospital or nursing station.

On October 27 and 28, 2025, we held a two day in-person Clinical Education Forum for 185 clinicians from across the province. The theme of the Forum was SA/DVTC Safety and Care: Enhancing Responses for Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence.

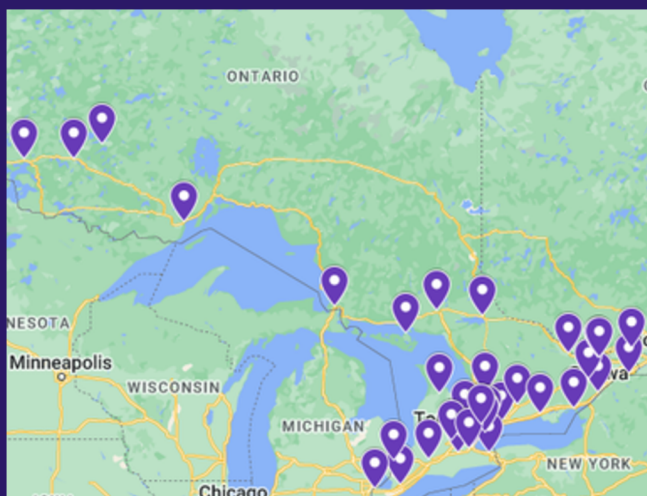
Bi-monthly program leader meetings were held virtually to share information and discuss issues affecting our services and care. At one of our meetings, a TBI Navigator from UHN presented on their role assisting patients who have experienced a traumatic brain injury. There are navigators located across the province.

All the Network's achievements could not be made possible without the support and leadership from the Network core team as well as the researchers, Advisory Council, Medical Co-Advisors, the co-chairs of the nursing and social work communities of practice, and forensic nurse educators.

Thank you to all the clinicians, program leaders, and team members over the years who have worked on our teams. Your contributions have advanced our efforts. Thank you also to Women's College Hospital and leadership team for their ongoing support in the administration and management of the Network home base. The Network continues to receive support from the Ministry of Health as its funder. In 2025-2026, the Ministry of Health funded the 37 SA/DVTCs for the Team Lead roles as well as the 6 Regional Clinical Practice Leaders. They also enhanced funding for the Network to support the various initiatives underway such as; vicarious trauma/secondary traumatic stress support, enhancing support for clinicians across the province via the Navigation Line.

With the enhanced funds, we will continue to build our capacity and outreach to provide service to survivors of sexual assault and intimate partner violence wherever they present for care.

Sheila Macdonald, RN, MN
Provincial Director



37 Treatment Centres Across the Province of Ontario.

For the list, please visit:

<https://www.sadvreatmentcentres.ca/get-helpxmap.html>

NETWORK STATISTICS

The data for the 2025-2026 fiscal year includes all 37 ONSADVTCs across the province.

Categorical Volumes

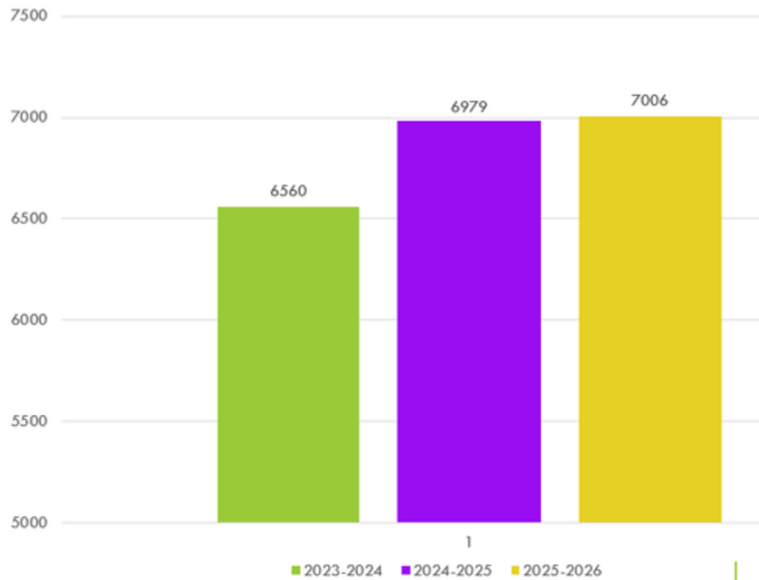


Figure 2. Provincial volumes for sexual assault, domestic violence, and pediatrics (acute and non-acute) reported over a 3-year period.

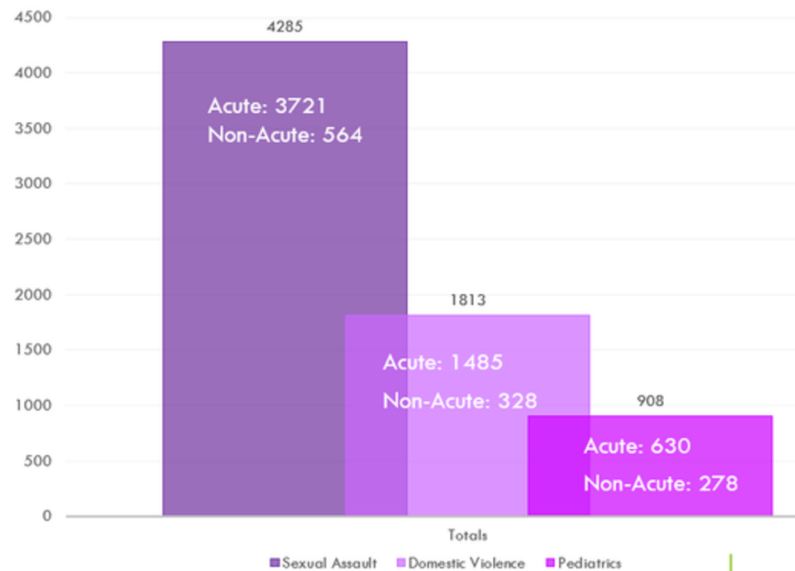
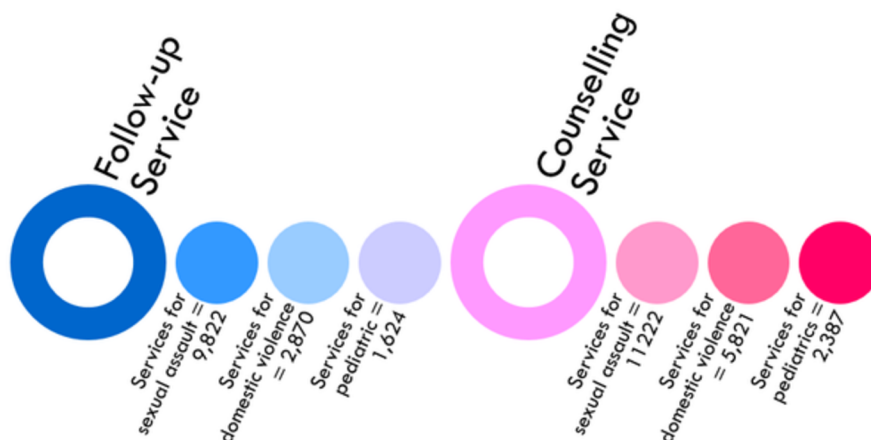


Figure 3. Provincial volumes for sexual assault, domestic violence, and pediatrics in the 2025-2026 fiscal year.

2025-2026 Follow-Up and Counselling Volumes



NETWORK DATABASE

The Network Database has been in the works for many years, with the 2025-26 fiscal year bringing the first year of reliance on the database for statistics at some centres. This database is housed within a data capture software called REDCap. It maintains a unified and consolidated method of collecting and reporting information relating to the services provided by SA/DVTCs across the province. At the conclusion of each clinical visit, clinicians use the Network Database to enter information about the services provided. The information being collected within the Network Database is far more robust than the Network's current quarterly statistics reporting method. The transition from our current reporting mechanism to the Network Database continues to occur through the 2025-2026 fiscal year, contingent upon the status of each individual centres' launch. This allows for the generation of various reports that assist the Network and centres in understanding the client populations served, and services provided as well as undertaking quality assurance initiatives.

Since the launch of this database in April 2022, 33 centres have signed the legal agreement to join and contribute to the Network database. Of the 32 centres, 31 are currently active in collecting and reporting information to the Network Database and the other 2 centres are preparing to begin collecting and reporting information to the Network Database. The remaining 4 centres are reviewing the legal agreement.

PROVINCIAL NAVIGATION LINE

1-855-628-7238

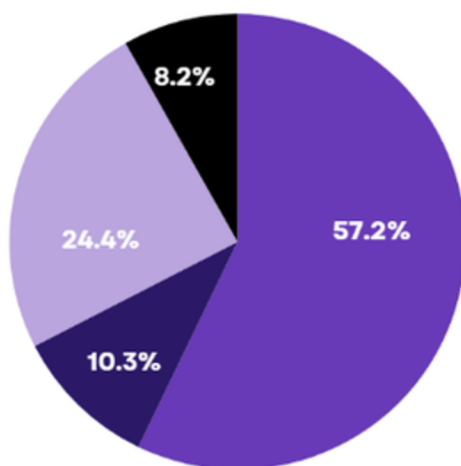
Recognizing the impact of COVID-19 on nurse staffing and access to acute and non-acute care, the Network established its 24/7 nurse-staffed Provincial Navigation Line to support timely access to services. While initially created in response to pandemic-related pressures, the Navigation Line has evolved and has since exhibited an essential resource for individuals affected by sexual assault and domestic/intimate partner violence. Callers can connect with a nurse to be directed to the nearest treatment centre or receive information.

Since its launch in May of 2020, the Navigation Line has received **1,985 calls in total**.

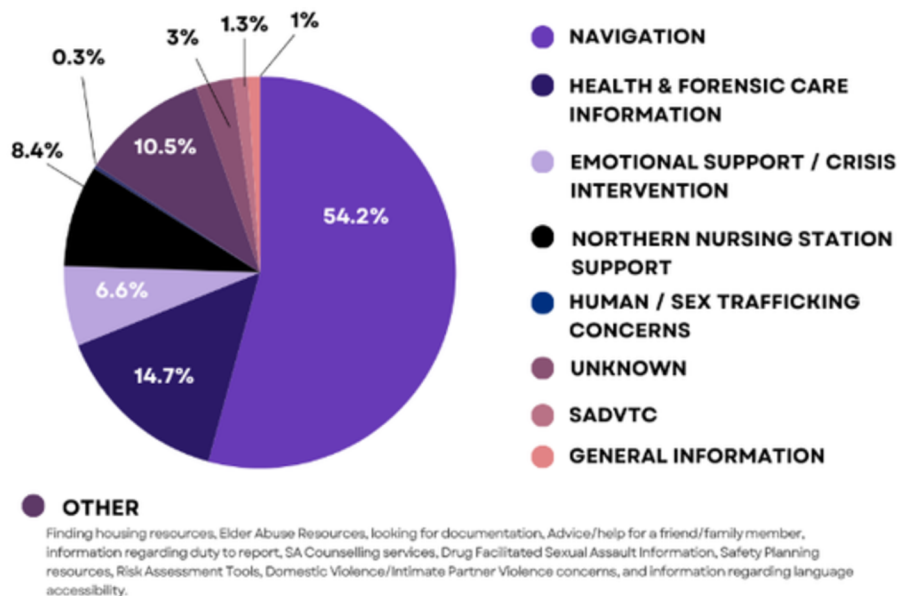
SUMMARY OF CALLS

TOTAL CALLS: 1'985

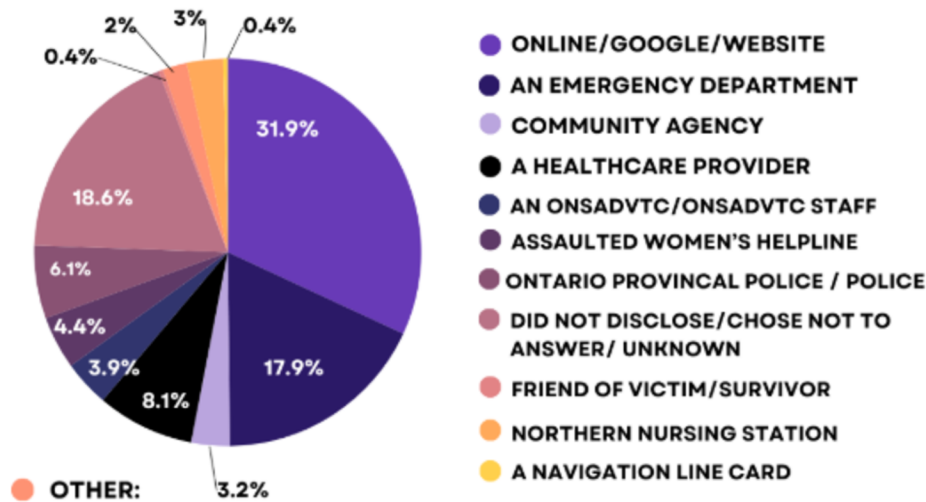
- **ANSWERED**
- **LISTENED TO RESOURCES**
A list of resources is provided should a caller not wish to speak with a nurse.
- **HUNG UP**
- **MISSED**
88% of missed calls were followed up with a call back from a nurse. The remaining 9% did not receive a call back, as these callers did not leave a voicemail (to protect caller safety and confidentiality).



REASON FOR CALL:

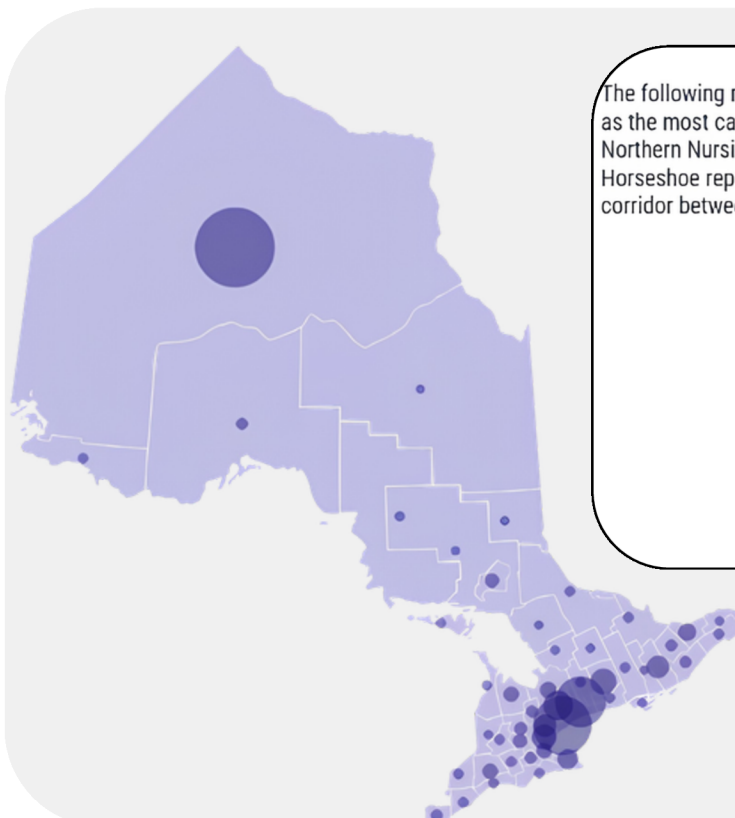


HOW DID A CALLER HEAR ABOUT THE NAV-LINE?



Women's legal clinic, Kids Help Phone, Previous Use of The Line, Network Team Email Signature, 211, TPS, Patient Relations, Hospital Switchboard, Victim Services, Telehealth, College Course, Male Survivors Sexual Abuse Support Line, a department email, A Detox Centre, an Education Session, and 511.

LOCATION: ONTARIO



The following map highlights the Kenora Municipality of Ontario as the most calls to the Navigation Line. This encompasses Northern Nursing Station calls. The Greater Toronto Area/Golden Horseshoe represents the second most calls, followed by the 401 corridor between east Toronto and Ottawa.

Unlisted:

Did not disclose / Unknown - 94
 Quebec - 4
 British Columbia - 6
 Nova Scotia - 1
 Prince Edward Island - 1
 Manitoba - 2
 United States - 4

CONNECTING NETWORK CLINICIANS

In 2025-2026, the Network formally established six Regional Clinical Practice Leader (CPL) roles: Shannon (Northeast), Lorena (North), Jane (East), Linda (Central), Leah (Central West), and Heidi (West). Diana is currently providing interim support to the North region.

The CPLs have been working to increase regional connections to the Network by supporting centres through ongoing nursing education delivered via team meetings and skills days, as well as targeted outreach and training with community partners such as Public Health nurses, regional paramedics, Child Protective Services, police officers attending OPP's Sexual Assault Investigator's Course, University of Toronto nursing students, and Unifor Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Advocates, to name a few.

Collectively, the CPL group has also led reviews and updates of key Network-level documents, including the Paediatric Standards of Care, Standards of Care, Products of Conception Guidelines, Ontario Hospital Association - Hospital Guidelines for the Treatment of Persons Who Have Been Sexually Assaulted – 4th Edition, and the online Emergency Department learning modules.

In line with the Strategic Plan, the CPLs have begun working with local emergency departments across Ontario to improve access to care and enhance outreach. This work has and will continue to include emergency department-specific training, development of clear care pathways, and enhancement of mobile support services. The CPL group, along with Tanya Smith, will also be working with each centre in their region to ensure the staff are appropriately trained to respond to paediatric cases, to ensure our youngest clients don't have to travel great distances to be assessed and supported. The CPLs have also begun work with Diana Tikasz to provide regional support to centres, helping ensure each team has the skills and capacity to address vicarious trauma and secondary traumatic stress, creating a space of safety for healthcare workers.

NURSING COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Open to all nurses from the Network's 37 treatment centres, the Nursing Community of Practice (NCOP) met monthly throughout the fiscal year with breaks in July and August. As Lisa, Waterloo, concluded her term, Sarah (Hamilton) was joined by her new co-chair Ashley (Sudbury).

The NCOP benefited from a diverse range of learning opportunities and discussions over the past year. Sessions included case studies and centre spotlights, featuring work from Brantford and Waterloo. Presentations ranged from guest speakers from Health Sciences North, such as sessions from the Gender Diversity Clinic and from Rita O'Link, to having Dr. Lin Haag from the Canadian Centre of IPV-BI to the Provincial crown attorneys of Ontario.

CONNECTING NETWORK CLINICIANS

SOCIAL WORK COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Open to all SA/DVTC social workers, the Social Work Community of Practice (SWCOP) met bi-monthly via Zoom. Darcy and Rekha (Women's College Hospital) continued in their roles as co-chairs, fostering increased engagement across the group.

These meetings create a space for social workers to connect, exchange insights, and discuss approaches to clinical practice. They also supported ongoing learning through peer discussion, resource and information sharing, and participation in education and professional development opportunities both within and beyond the Network. Materials such as resources, meeting agendas and minutes, recordings, and presentations continue to be housed on the eLearning Platform for ongoing access.

Over the past year, the SWCOP has also begun exploring new initiatives, including the development of a social work orientation module to support onboarding, as well as the formation of a committee focused on enhancing the use of REDCap, the Network Database.

NETWORK EDUCATION

CLINICAL EDUCATION FORUM - OCTOBER 27 & 28, 2025

For the second year since the return to in-person gatherings following the pandemic, the Network held a two-day Clinical Education Forum SA/DVTC Safety and Care: Enhancing Responses for Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence, in Toronto. Network nurses, social workers/counsellors, and physicians, gathered to strengthen SA/DVTC responses formed by evidence-best practice, research, and clinical expertise.

In total, there were approximately 183 attendees, which included 165 Network clinicians, the core Network team, and speakers.

Practical and clinically relevant information was shared through a diverse group of 13 speakers and panelists with both lived experience and clinical or academic expertise.

The feedback from the evaluations was overwhelmingly positive, indicating Network clinicians appreciated the Forum's focus, structure, and the ability to connect with fellow clinicians across the province.

A special acknowledgement to the Ministry of Health for their financial support of this educational opportunity, and the Planning Committee for their efforts to organize and facilitate the Forum: Ashley (Sudbury), Sarah (Hamilton), Linda (Mackenzie Health/Network), Darcy (Toronto), Rekha (Toronto), Rebecca (Niagara Region), Lorena (Network), Emily (Network), Janelle (Network), Bria (Network), and Sheila Macdonald (Network).

INDIGENOUS CULTURAL SAFETY TRAINING

As an ongoing education initiative of the Network's commitment to enhancing collective knowledge and understanding of Indigenous peoples' experience of healthcare and to ensure SA/DV services are provided in a manner that is safe and supports their health and well-being, the Network continued to allocate education funds to support Indigenous cultural safety training offered to all SA/DVTC staff.

The San'yas Anti-Racism Indigenous Cultural Safety Training Program continued to be offered through registration and salary support for those employed casual/on call.

NURSING EDUCATION

VIRTUAL SANE TRAINING

The Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Training, consisting of 5 days of virtual training, held every four months. Trainings were provided once weekly over the dates: April 29 – June 3, September 9 – October 21, 2025, and January 20 – February 24, 2026. In total, 41 nurses from across the province attended Virtual SANE Training. Requirements for attendance continued to include completion of program-specific orientation, Providing Care to Sex Trafficked Adolescents and Adults eLearning module, Trans-Affirming Care modules, SANE Online modules, and clinical shadowing experience. As an additional resource, nurses were provided with presentations, resources, and assigned homework activities via a Course Package and accompanying course on the eLearning Platform.

Several Network forensic nurses and social workers continued to provide Virtual SANE Training, as well as external guest speakers from the Centre of Forensic Sciences and a Deputy Crown Attorney. As programs receive enhanced funding which enables a restructuring of program staffing, we expect to see an increase in the number of full-time or part-time nursing staff attending. Enhanced staffing models may also result in fewer trainees as retention rates improve.

CANADIAN SYMPOSIUM ON ADVANCED PRACTICES IN CHILD MALTREATMENT, NOVEMBER 10 & 11, 2025 - TORONTO, ON

In 2025, the Network offered to support the registration, travel, and accommodation of 2 nurse per centre to attend the Canadian Symposium on Advanced Practices in Child Maltreatment hosted by SickKids. Clinicians had to have attended SANE Training (either in-person or virtually) and completed the Network's Paediatric Sexual Abuse/Assault Training Course or are SANE-P certified through the IAFN and see the majority of paediatric cases in their centre. Physicians who saw paediatric sexual abuse/assault cases at their centre were also offered the opportunity to attend. In total, 42 clinicians attended. The Network also supported the attendance of 5 regional clinical practice leaders (CPLs) to enhance paediatric support to SA/DVTCs.

SA/DVTC NURSE EDUCATION DAY MARCH 3, 2026

The Network held a virtual training day to explore complex topics of evolving patient care as well as provide a review on various aspects of clinical care. In total, approximately 90 clinicians from 33 SA/DVTCs attended the day long training, with the Network providing salary support where requested.

The first half of the day provided an overview of SA/DVTC data trends by Heidi, CPL for the West region, and then focused on Mental Health Complexities with a Trauma and Violence informed Approach presented by Dr. Yusra Ahmad, followed by a panel discussion featuring various perspectives such as ethics, Dr. Ruby Shanker, healthcare privacy, Katherine Kresta, psychiatry, Dr. Yusra Ahmad, and the Ontario Network of SA/DVTCs, Sheila Macdonald, moderated by Jane, CPL for the East region.

Additional topics included safety planning approaches by Suzanne (WCH), Considerations for STBBI treatment by Dr. Andrea Chittle, and Self-Care Strategies by Ingrid (WCH). The training also included small group case discussions and an interactive art-based self-care strategy session facilitated by Ingrid (WCH).

PROGRAM EDUCATOR WORKSHOPS

Monthly Program Educator Workshops continued to be held during the fiscal year (with the exception of July and August). These meetings were geared to highlight specific nurse orientation topics, in alignment with the updated core SANE Online modules. Each workshop featured two presentations, one per online module for a brief refresher of the learning objectives for review as well as an opportunity to strategize how to teach or practice each skill within SA/DVTC teams. Resources and materials were then available on the Program Educator page of the eLearning Platform.

Following meetings for the remaining of the fiscal year included a review of the new roles across the province, the Network Database, the updated Network nursing documentation, and supporting SA/DVTC nurses during SANE Training. Meetings continue to be well-received as educators are able to connect with colleagues and share program practices across the province.

SEXUAL ASSAULT IN COMMUNITY EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS:

Improving sexual assault care and treatment access in community Emergency Departments (EDs)—including hospitals such as North Shore Health Network in Blind River, Timmins & District General Hospital, and St. Mary's Memorial Hospital in Huron-Perth—starts with strengthening the supports already in place. Expanding access to trained forensic nurses, whether on-site or through regional on call models, helps ensure survivors receive timely, trauma and violence informed care close to home. Clear referral pathways, consistent evidence collection protocols, and strong partnerships with local advocacy and mental health services further reduce gaps in care. By building on the dedication of these community EDs and enhancing the resources around them, survivors can receive compassionate, comprehensive support without needing to travel long distances during an already vulnerable moment.

SEXUAL ASSAULT CARE IN NORTHERN NURSING STATIONS

The nursing stations have been working diligently to meet the demands in the northern region. Initiatives are currently underway to streamline processes and enhance the delivery of care. A policy for SAEK transfer is being developed in collaboration with CFS to improve storage procedures and provide survivors with more options by partnering with SA/DV centers. In addition, nurses have completed a SAEK collection training review and a virtual session to ask questions, led by CPLS with future sessions booked. Nursing station educators have also requested “train-the-trainer” sessions to better support frontline staff along with ongoing use of the Navigation Line. These efforts will help strengthen leadership capacity and increase confidence among nursing station leaders in supporting nurses providing sexual assault and domestic violence care.

SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

As part of an ongoing initiative to support the educational needs of SA/DVTC social workers, the Social Work Community of Practice developed an education plan. From this plan, the following training was organized for 2025-2026.

DIALECTICAL BEHAVIOUR THERAPY

In the previous fiscal year, the Network supported SA/DVTC social workers in accessing an advanced education opportunity in Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) training, provided virtually by Equilibrium Health. The training consists of four-full day sessions delivered over Zoom, with one session completed during the previous fiscal year and the remaining three sessions held in September and October 2026. Ongoing consultations support skill integration. In total, 52 participants attended the training and self-registered for consultations.

EYE MOVEMENT DESENSITIZATION AND REPROCESSING TRAINING (EMDR)

Three social workers attended Virtual EMDR training by the Niagara Stress and Trauma Clinic. EMDR is an internationally recognized effective treatment for symptoms of stress and trauma, including PTSD, anxiety, and depression. The virtual program is delivered over eight days consisting of four training 'weekends' of two days each. Given the practical components of the training program, social workers can apply this evidence-based treatment immediately within their practice.

EYE MOVEMENT DESENSITIZATION AND REPROCESSING (EMDR) CONSULTATIONS WITH VICKI VOPNI

The Network continues to provide monthly EMDR consultations, facilitated by Vicki Vopni, to all the Network's EMDR trained Social Workers. Clinicians were invited to self-register for a minimum of two sessions throughout the year. Conducted on Zoom, these sessions offered the opportunity for EMDR-trained social workers to continue to develop their skills and knowledge with this therapeutic intervention. After positive feedback last year, consultations are now dedicated to specific topics, and included sessions dedicated to Intimate Partner Violence, Pediatric Cases, IFS informed approaches, the legal system, addictions, attachment focused approaches, mental health diagnosis's, neurobiology, and traumatic brain injuries.

ELEARNING PLATFORM

SUMMARY OF ELEARNING PLATFORM FEATURES

The Network's eLearning Platform continued to support access to training, resources, and key documentation across centres. The platform houses a range of eLearning modules and materials that support clinical practice, leadership development, and ongoing education.

Over the past year, new content was added, including a Program Leader/Manager Orientation Module to support onboarding and clarification of the Network. A Leadership Meetings page was also introduced to provide a centralized location for meeting Agendas, Minutes, and related materials. The eLearning Platform remains an important tool for delivering education, organizing resources, and supporting consistent practice across the Network.

THE NETWORK WEBSITE

WWW.SADVTREATMENTCENTRES.CA

The Network Website remains an essential resource for training, navigation, and access to resources that support care for individuals who have experienced sexual assault or domestic violence/intimate partner violence. The site features a range of training modules, including our updated HIV PEP module, alongside the Find a Centre Map, which helps users locate their nearest treatment centre. In addition, the resource library continues to offer a comprehensive collection of tools for healthcare providers, community partners, and individuals seeking information and support.

Website analytics collected from the site's creation to the end of this fiscal year provide valuable insight into how it is being used, mainly identifying areas of greatest interest to visitors. The following charts summarize total website activity up to the end of this fiscal year.

Analytic Overview:

NETWORK WEBSITE



The Network Website is visited by people from all over the world. However, the top three are...

- 1) CANADA
- 2) UNITED STATES
- 3) CHINA

Top Website Referrals

1.  Organic Google Search
2.  Ontario.ca
3.  Canada.ca

Most Visited Page

'Find a Centre'

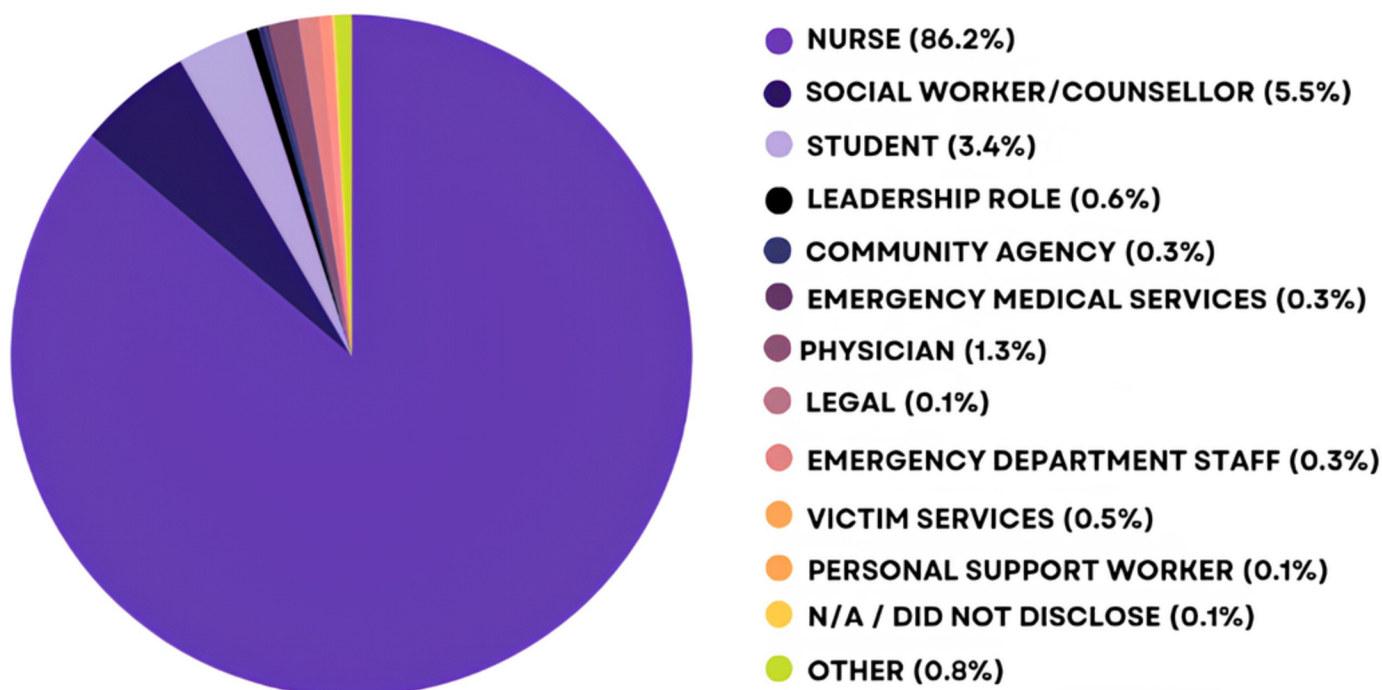


EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT TRAINING

Available on the Network Website, our Emergency Department Staff Training Module provides education and instruction on the care of victims/survivors of sexual assault in emergency departments. The training includes an overview of the established procedures for collaborating with Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centre Staff, provincially relevant resources, information on HIV PEP and the Network's Navigation Line. Work to update the modules to ensure the most current resources and references are included is still underway.

To date, 2'296 people have completed this training.

PROFESSION:



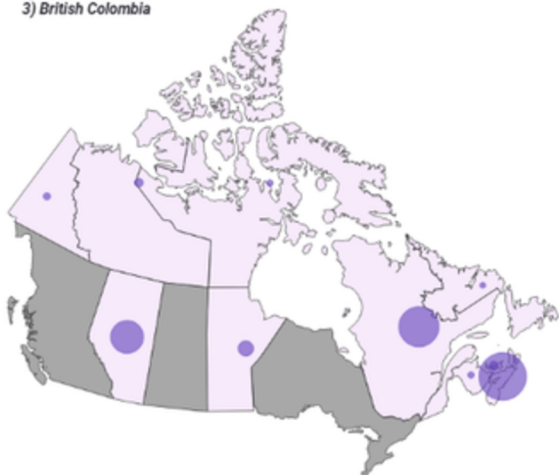
Other: First Aid Instructor, Research Assistant, CSA, Teacher, Civilian, Laborer, Social Services, Life Coach, Police Services, Security, Patient, Unit Care Aid, Senior Orthopedic Technologist, RPN, Medical Radiation Technologist, Mental Health/Addictions Professional, Cleaner, Chief Patient Experience Officer, Administration, Human Resources, and Peer Mental Health/Harm Reduction.

EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT TRAINING

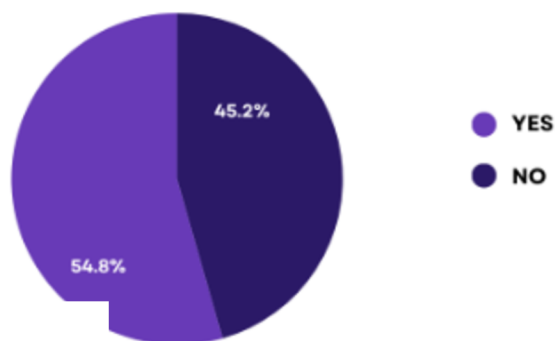
Location:

Canada

- 1) Nova Scotia
- 2) Québec
- 3) British Columbia

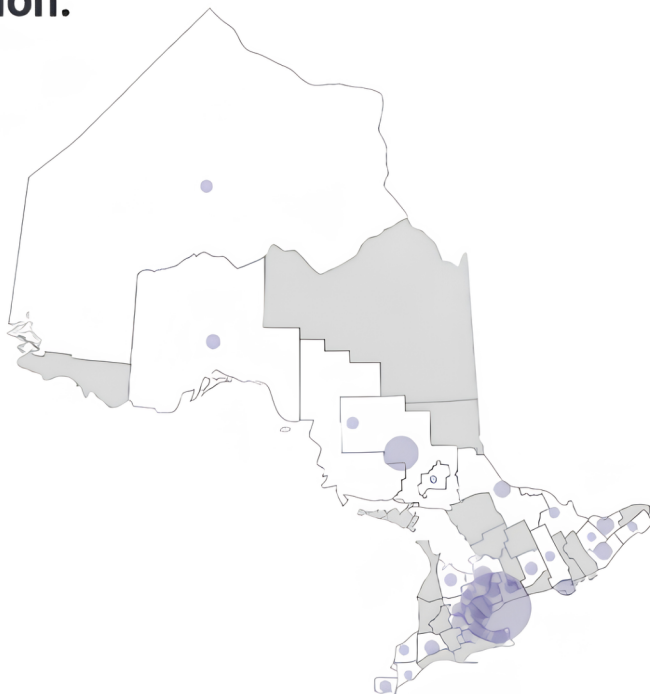


DO YOU WORK IN AN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT?



Location:

Ontario



SOCIAL MEDIA & OUTREACH

The Network participated in several awareness campaigns during 2025-2026. Here are some of the top highlights of the year!

AWARENESS MONTHS

#SEXUALASSAULTAWARENESSMONTH

During Sexual Assault Awareness month, the Network leveraged its social media platforms to share information, raise awareness, and highlight available supports for those impacted by sexual assault. Throughout the month of May, content included messages of support, educational posts, and amplification of other organizations' work through reposts and shares.

In addition to online engagement, the Network participated in an in-person booth event held in the lobby of Women's College Hospital alongside several other community organizations. This event created the opportunity to connect with the public, foster relationships with other organizations, and increase awareness of the Network's 37 treatment centres and the services they provide across the province.

Activities taking place across the Network in recognition of Sexual Assault Awareness Month were also highlighted internally through The Link (internal newsletter), helping to share the initiative internally.

#DOMESTICVIOLENCEAWARENESSMONTH

In November, in recognition of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, the Network used its social media platforms to share information, raise awareness, and highlight available support for individuals affected by domestic violence. Posts throughout the month included messages of support, curated resources from across Ontario, and promotion of the Network's "Find a Centre" page to support access to care.

Key messages and resources were also shared internally through The Link, helping to reinforce awareness and collaboration.

#ELDERABUSEAWARENESSDAY

In recognition of Elder Abuse Awareness Day, the Network used its social media platforms to highlight its Violence Against Older Women Learning Modules. Over the course of the week, one of the five modules was featured each day through social media posts. These modules were developed to support increased awareness and provide strategies to address violence against older women.

SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

SOCIAL MEDIA STATISTICS



Instagram



2574 views across content



Non-account followers
mostly engage with
content



Engagement is highest
through story posts



559 accounts reached



Facebook



1.0K views across content



Non-account followers
mostly engage with
content



80 profile visits



47 interactions

@SADVTC

THE LINK: THE NETWORK'S INTERNAL NEWSLETTER



The Link

The Link is the Network's monthly internal newsletter, distributed to clinicians across the province of Ontario. Over the past year, it has served as a central communications tool, supporting connection, knowledge sharing, and alignment across the Network.

The newsletter provides updates related to clinical practice, program initiatives, and Network priorities, while also acting as an avenue for announcements, resource sharing, and the promotion of external webinars and learning opportunities. Regular features such as "Mindful Minutes", which focus on wellness and vicarious trauma, and our "Heart Warming Headlines," where centres can share successes and contribute. Our "What's on Your List" offers more of an informal and engaging space where clinicians can share what they are reading, watching, or listening to, encouraging connection through shared interests.

The Link continues to be a valued and evolving resource and will be further refined in the coming year to meet the needs of the Ontario Network.

RESEARCH

The decades-long partnership between the Ontario Network of Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centres (SA/DVTCs), Dr. Daisy Kosa, Research Lead, for the Network, and Dr. Janice Du Mont, Senior Scientist, Women's College Research Innovation Institute, Women's College Hospital, has led to many innovations in SANE-led services. Founded on an integrated Knowledge Translation (iKT) approach, the partnership's iterative program of research has advanced knowledge, policy, and practice to optimize care for diverse survivors of sex trafficking, sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and elder abuse across Ontario. iKT emphasizes that knowledge users, including Network Program Managers/Leaders, clinicians, and/or staff, should be involved in different stages of the research process, from initial visioning through to dissemination of the findings. In the past year, this partnership has continued to make significant strides in research in several ongoing projects to enhance the experiences of clients of SA/DVTCs.

THE TRANS-LINK CANADA NETWORK: PARTNERING TO CREATE AND EXCHANGE KNOWLEDGE ON SUPPORTING TRANS AND GENDER DIVERSE SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT AND INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

Under the co-leadership of the Ontario Network of SA/DVTCs, trans and gender diverse survivors, and over 60 other partnering organizations, we have secured a 7-year SSHRC Partnership Grant to further grow the provincial trans-LINK Network with the goal of connecting Ontario's SA/DVTCs with other hospital-based violence treatment services and community organizations across the country to improve sexual assault and intimate partner violence care. This past year, we have been advancing collaborative research and activities across our five working groups comprised of our co-investigators, collaborators, partner organization representatives, and peer leader advisors (www.translinknetwork.com/working-groups):

Connection Working Group

Building the national network through:

- Monthly, online Regional Forums as a means of sharing perspectives, experiences, and resources on supporting trans and gender diverse survivors of intimate partner violence and/or sexual assault and identifying ways in which the national network could support organizations and service providers in their work (40 held)
- An enhanced national directory reflecting growth in national network membership, as well as creation of five regional directories that list trans-positive healthcare, community, and social services and supports within each specific region
- An Interactive Map of services and supports comprising the national network (www.translinknetwork.com/interactive-map)
- A Social Network Analysis survey of national network members to explore their connections

RESEARCH

Context Working Group

Developing a national survey dedicated to examining intimate partner violence and sexual assault against trans and gender diverse persons, including magnitude, severity, risk and resilience factors, consequences, and associated help-seeking. These data are critical to the development of evidence-informed gender-based violence interventions and a coherent system-wide response.

Advocacy & Accessibility Working Group

Conducting French interviews with trans and gender diverse survivors of intimate partner violence and/or sexual assault on their experiences accessing supports.

Education & Training Working Group

Educating professionals across sectors about effectively addressing the needs of trans and gender diverse survivors:

- Mobilized findings through presentations and a research brief of our environmental scan of sexual assault and intimate partner violence trainings in Canadian universities revealing a lack of trans and gender-inclusive, strengths-based education on campuses
- Planning key informant interviews to build on the findings of the environmental scan with the goal to subsequently develop a toolkit for universities that could help guide trans and gender diverse-inclusive sexual assault/intimate partner violence trainings/education
- Supporting the development of an online, interactive version of Salal's blueprint for queer and trans inclusive practices in the anti-violence sector

Knowledge Sharing & Exchange Working Group

Knowledge mobilization through:

- Expansion of our freely accessible national knowledge hub which focuses on supporting trans and gender diverse survivors of sexual assault and intimate partner violence
- Launch of French language version of the trans-LINK Canada WebPortal (www.translinknetwork.com/fr/accueil)
- Coordination of a National Webinar series as a platform for educational opportunities and showcasing national network outputs and the work of network and members and others (7 hosted)
- Development and distribution of newsletters which share project activities and team updates

RESEARCH

ENHANCING TRANS-AFFIRMING CARE FOR INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE SURVIVORS THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN E-LEARNING CURRICULUM FOR SA/DVTC STAFF AND OTHER RELEVANT SERVICE PROVIDERS

As part of the Ontario Network of SA/DVTCs' commitment to optimize care for diverse survivors of gender-based violence, we have undertaken a multi-year project, funded by the Government of Ontario, to develop, implement, and evaluate an innovative e-learning curriculum focused on enhancing trans-affirming care for survivors of intimate partner violence. The approximately 1.5 hour e-learning curriculum, developed in Articulate 360 Storyline, is asynchronous, accessible on multiple devices, narrated, and closed captioned.

Following evaluation of the curriculum in 2024-2025, the findings were shared extensively, including:

- in a trans-LINK Canada Webinar and video (25 participants; www.translinknetwork.com/national-web)
- in a trans-LINK Canada Education and Training Working Group (14 members)
- at a Women's Health Meeting (100 attendees) (<https://www.translinknetwork.com/presentations>)

The curriculum is available on the trans-LINK Canada WebPortal

(<https://www.translinknetwork.com/curricula>) with descriptions of the curriculum overall and each section in both English and French. Five information sheets about the curriculum have also been created (e.g., 'Trans & gender diverse key terms and definitions'; 'Supporting trans and gender diverse survivors of intimate partner violence'; 'Soutien des personnes transgenres et de genre divers victimes d'agression sexuelle et de violence conjugale') and an infographic 'Supporting trans and gender diverse survivors of intimate partner violence: An e-learning curriculum' (www.translinknetwork.com/publications).

Extensive efforts have been made to mobilize this curriculum, as its' uptake has the potential to enhance care for trans and gender diverse intimate partner violence survivors in Ontario and beyond, ensuring that survivors can access affirming, quality care that honours who they are as trans and gender diverse people.

RESEARCH

ENHANCING CARE FOR DOMESTICALLY SEX TRAFFICKED SURVIVORS THROUGH DEVELOPMENT OF E-LEARNING CURRICULA FOR SA/DVTC STAFF

With partial funding support from the HART (Human Anti-Trafficking Response Team), we developed Providing care to sex trafficked adolescents and adults: An e-Learning curriculum for forensic nurses. The curriculum was evaluated among our nurses from September 2023 to March 2024 and in 2025 was made available to providers across Ontario and beyond on the Addressing Sex Trafficking Through Education and Research (ASTER) WebPortal. The findings were presented at several conferences (e.g., Nursing Undergraduate Society Global Health Conference, University of Toronto) and are under review in an open access journal which, once published, will be available to researchers, service providers, and policy makers worldwide. A separate 2-hour curriculum, Providing supports to persons sex trafficked: An e-learning curriculum for social service and mental health providers was developed and is currently being evaluated with SA/DVTC social work and social service providers. Additionally, an e-learning curriculum designed specifically for emergency department staff is currently underway.

PERCEPTIONS AND PRACTICES OF PROFESSIONALS WORKING WITH DOMESTIC SEX TRAFFICKED PERSONS IN CANADA

With the support of the HART, we launched a national survey to better understand the training needs, identification practices, and knowledge of those working with domestic sex trafficked persons. The survey was informed by a scoping review of literature and findings from in-depth interviews with social service and healthcare providers in Ontario, with validated measures used to capture relevant training and expertise on sex trafficking and perceptions of and capacity to respond to sex trafficking. The findings which were shared at several conferences in the past year (e.g., Nursing Network on Violence Against Women International; 7th Global Conference on Women's Studies) as well as in four reports (two published, one under review, one in preparation) have implications for improving our and others' responses to sex trafficked persons.

Strengthening the response to sex trafficking through cross-sector collaboration

Intersectoral, collaborative, and coordinated supports enable the smooth and rapid referral of sex trafficking survivors to what is needed; ensure a continuum of care; reduce barriers to access; and facilitate safety planning, knowledge sharing, and collective advocacy. In June 2025, seven regional meetings were held in Toronto, Scarborough, Mississauga, London, Ottawa, Sudbury, and Thunder Bay. In total, there were 159 attendees, including 114 representatives from 83 independent healthcare, social service, and community organizations, 20 lived experience consultants, and four research trainees. Several attendees took part in more than one regional meeting. These meetings represent the first step in the Lifecycle Model of network development, which includes the following stages: planning, formation, maturation, and sustainability.

RESEARCH

At these meetings we focused on:

- Education and Awareness: Our two sex trafficking curricula were introduced to enhance providers' awareness and capacity to meet the needs of domestically sex trafficked persons while also meeting providers' needs for more education and training.
- Community Planning and the Integration of Services: Discussions were facilitated on meeting the needs of sex trafficked persons, mitigation strategies, and developing new relationships among health, social service, and community attendees as the basis for a new provincial network and enhanced care. Partnerships established through ASTER Network will facilitate long-term cross-sectoral collaboration regionally and provincially, improve the quality and frequency of interactions among service providers, enable the smooth and rapid referral of persons who are sex trafficked to needed supports and safety planning, enhance knowledge sharing and collective advocacy, and ensure an appropriate continuum of care.

To further build the network and share knowledge, working with our advisory group, we have:

- Created a meeting brief on developing the mission, vision, and values for a provincial intersectoral network focused on better addressing sex trafficking
- Distributed a Network Formation and Evaluation Survey to explore the connections between members
- Hosted four webinars with partners (Aura Freedom, Region of Peel Anti-Human Trafficking Program, Voice Found) on key areas of interest identified by network members including
 - Beyond 101: A Nuanced, Real-Life Look at Sex Trafficking;
 - From Data to Narrative: Grant Writing Tips and the Gaps Data Leave Behind
 - Trauma and Violence Informed Care in Actions: Practical Approaches to Supporting Sex Trafficked Persons
 - Strengthening Peer Support Systems in Anti-Human Trafficking Work
- Expanded the interactive directory of Ontario services
- Designed and implemented #CareThatEmpowersSupportsThatRestore, a multi-week social media campaign highlighting practical strategies to better respond to sex trafficked persons
- Developed further knowledge translation tools including an information sheet on intersectionality and contributing factors in sex trafficking
- Designed and distributed an ASTER Network newsletter highlighting project activities, members, and the team
- Presented the network model and early planning at conferences (e.g., Keynote address at Women's Health Collective Scholar's Summit: Undergraduate Women's Health Research Symposium, University of Toronto)
- Drafted a report on the findings for publication and sharing open access related to planning the network

For more information and to access the following resources, please visit www.translinknetwork.ca and www.asterforchange.com

LOOKING AHEAD

In 2026-2027, we will continue to build our capacity as a Network and as individual programs with the enhanced funding received from the Ministry of Health in alignment with our Strategic Plan for 2024-2029.

A key initiative is to increase access to care across the province for survivors when the distance to a SA/DVTC is too far. Our Regional Clinical Leads in collaboration with SA/DVTC Team Leads will be reaching out to community emergency departments to offer training and support to clinicians who are willing to be trained to provide care to sexual assault survivors who do not want to leave their community. Continuing to build our internal capacity as programs will increase our ability to provide outreach, awareness of our services, and be a resource for community partners.

Other initiatives to complete include; implementation of standardized nursing documentation and processes for release of information in legal proceedings, update and implementation of the OHA Guidelines for Persons who have been Sexually Assaulted and enhancing vicarious trauma/secondary traumatic stress support across the programs.

We will also continue to support advanced training for our social workers/counsellors to provide them with the most current therapeutic interventions for our clients.

On November 23 and 24, 2026, we will be holding our in-person clinical education forum! It will be held at the Courtyard Marriott Hotel in Toronto. The agenda is currently under development. The implementation of the Network database (in REDCap) is an ongoing priority, and more SA/DVTC programs have signed the DataSharing Agreement (DSA), and clinicians are being onboarded. Once data quality is confirmed by our data analyst, SA/DVTC programs are able to stop reporting their data in Excel and only use the database. A monthly report (mirroring the manual excel report) will be run through REDCap for those programs.

And finally...I will be retiring on June 30, 2026. I have been a nurse for 45 years and 36 years with the SA/DVTC/Network! I am so grateful to have had a career that has been inspiring, rewarding, and challenging. I have learned so much from our clients, our community partners, and all of you as colleagues. I don't ever remember a day of not wanting to come to work.

Thank you for the opportunity to work with all of you. A special thank you to my Network Team – Dr. Janice Du Mont, Janelle, Bria, Dr. Sarah Kosa, Emily, Theo, Shenae, Lorena, Jane, Linda, Shannon, Leah, Diana, and Heidi. There's more to do, but we have come so far!

Wishing everyone the very best in the future!



Thank you to all SA/DVTC staff and clinicians
for your dedication and commitment to
excellent patient care



Brantford | Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Care Team, Brantford General Hospital

Brockville | Assault Response & Care Centre of Leeds and Grenville, Brockville General Hospital

Burlington | Nina's Place, Joseph Brant Hospital

Chatham-Kent | Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centre, Chatham-Kent Health Alliance

Cornwall | Assault and Sexual Abuse Program (ASAP), Cornwall Community Hospital

Dryden | Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Program, Dryden Regional Health Centre

Durham Region | Durham Region Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Care Centre, Lakeridge Health Oshawa

Guelph | Guelph-Wellington County Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centre, Guelph General Hospital

Hamilton | Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Care Centre, McMaster University Medical Centre

Hawkesbury | Care Program for Victims of Assault, Hawkesbury and District General Hospital

Kenora | Sexual Assault/Partner Abuse Program, Lake of The Woods District Hospital

Kingston | Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Program, Kingston Health Sciences Centre (Kingston General Hospital)

Lanark County | Lanark County Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Program, Perth and Smiths Falls District Hospital

London | Regional Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Treatment Centre, St. Joseph's Hospital

Manitoulin | Sexual & Domestic Violence Services - Ka Naad Maa Go, Noojmowin Teg Health Centre

Mississauga | Chantel's Place, Trillium Health Partners (Mississauga Hospital Site)

Niagara Region | Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Program, Niagara Health System (St. Catharines General Site)

North Bay | Sexual Assault Domestic Violence Program, North Bay Regional Health Centre

Orangeville | Headwater Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Care and Treatment Program, Headwaters Health Care Centre

Orillia | Regional Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Treatment Centre, Orillia Soldiers' Memorial Hospital

Ottawa | Sexual Assault Partner Abuse Care Program, The Ottawa Hospital

Ottawa Pediatric | Ottawa Pediatric Sexual Assault, Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario

Owen Sound | Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Care Centre, The Grey Bruce Regional Health Centre

Peterborough | Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Care Centre, Women's Health Care Centre (Peterborough Regional Health Centre)

Renfrew County | Regional Assault Care Program, Renfrew Victoria Hospital

Sarnia | Sexual Assault/Domestic Assault Treatment Centre, Bluewater Health

Sault Ste Marie | Sexual Assault Care Centre/Partner Assault Clinic, Sault Area Hospital

Scarborough | Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Care Centre, Scarborough and Rouge Hospital

Sioux Lookout | Sexual Assault Care and Domestic Violence Treatment Program, Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre

Sudbury | Violence Intervention & Prevention Program, Health Sciences

North

Thunder Bay | Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centre, Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre

Toronto | Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Care Centre Women's College Hospital

Toronto Pediatric | Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect Program (SCAN), The Hospital For Sick Children

Trenton | Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Response Program, Quinte Health Care (Trenton Site)

Waterloo | Waterloo Region Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centre, St. Mary's General Hospital

Windsor | Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence and Safekids Care Centre, Windsor Regional Hospital Metropolitan Campus

York Region | Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault Care Centre, Mackenzie Health

APPENDIX A

Coelho, M.C., Hallet, G.K., Kosa, S.D., & Du Mont, J. (2026, March 21). Leveraging intersectoral partnerships to enhance care for trans and gender-diverse survivors of sexual assault and intimate partner violence. Presented at Fierté Canada Pride 2026 Annual Conference. Calgary, AB.

Du Mont, J., & Rogers, C. (2025, October). ASTER Progress and Impact Report. Available from: www.asterforchange.com.

Du Mont, J., & Rogers, C. (2026, March 23). Challenges and opportunities in supporting survivors of domestic sex trafficking. Keynote address at Women's Health Collective Scholar's Summit: Undergraduate Women's Health Research Symposium, University of Toronto.

Du Mont, J., Forte, T., Kosa, S.D., Macdonald, S., & Mason, R. (2025, July 25–27). A Canadian cross-sectional survey of service providers' capacity to respond to sex trafficked persons [Poster presentation]. The 7th Global Conference on Women's Studies, Copenhagen, Denmark.

Du Mont, J., Kosa, S.D., Brouillard-Coyle, S., Alfonso, M., Macdonald, S., & Mason, R. (2025, July 25–27). Improving care for trans and gender diverse survivors of intimate partner violence: Preliminary findings from an evaluation of an interactive e-learning curriculum. Presented at the 7th Global Conference on Women's Studies, Copenhagen, Denmark.

Du Mont, J., Kosa, S.D., Fan, S., & Macdonald, S. (2026, March 17). Enhancing the capacity of nurses to respond to sex trafficked persons. Keynote address at Nursing Undergraduate Society Global Health Conference, University of Toronto.

Du Mont, J., Kosa, S.D., Fan, S., Pereira, R., Mason, R., & Macdonald, S. (2025, April 10). Evaluation of nurses' capacity to care for domestically sex trafficked persons before and after completing an e-learning curriculum [Poster presentation]. Women's College Hospital's Day of Excellence in Academics 2025, Women's College Research and Innovation Institute, Women's College Hospital.

Forte, T., Kosa, S.D., Macdonald, S., Mason, R., & Du Mont, J. (2025). Canadian cross-sectional survey of healthcare, social and community service providers' capacity to respond to sex trafficked persons. *BMJ Open*, 15, e094447. <https://doi.org/10.1177/11786329251348295>

Kosa, S.D., Forte, T., Macdonald, S., Mason, R., & Du Mont, J. (2025, October 8). Impact of policies and protocols on delivery of services to sex trafficked persons: Results from a Canadian cross-sectional survey. Presented at the 26th Nursing Network on Violence Against Women International Conference, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON.

Liu, K., Pecjak, E.M., Kosa, S.D., Du Mont, J., & Education & Training Working Group. (2025, April 10). Trans and gender-diverse specific content in sexual violence and intimate partner violence education: An environmental scan of Canadian universities. Presented at Day of Excellence in Academics 2025, Women's College Research Institute, Toronto, ON, Canada.

APPENDIX A

Liu, K.J., Kosa, S.D., Wright, J.J., Du Mont, J., & Education & Training Working Group, trans-LINK Canada Network. (2026, January). An environmental scan of trans and gender diverse content in sexual violence and intimate partner violence training in Canadian universities [Research Brief]. Available from: www.translinknetwork.com.

Rogers, C., Subramaniam, S.V., Bruder, R., Mason, R., & Du Mont, J. (2025). Healthcare providers' perceptions of vulnerability to domestic sex trafficking in Ontario: A qualitative study. *Health Services Insights*, 18, Article 11786329251348295. <https://doi.org/10.1177/11786329251348295>

Simmons, H., Kosa, S.D. (presenters), & Du Mont, J. (2025, October 10). The trans-LINK Canada Network Project: Partnering to create and exchange knowledge on supporting transgender and gender diverse survivors of sexual assault and intimate partner violence. Invited presentation at the Mobilizing Queer Joy & Challenging Anti-2SLGBTQ+ Hate Conference, Edmonton, Alberta.

Zhang, J., Rogers, C., Kosa, S.D., Mason, R., Macdonald, S., & Du Mont, J. (2025, August 14). Developing the mission, vision, and values for a new provincial network to enhance care for sex trafficked persons [Poster presentation]. WCH Summer Student Research Symposium Day, Women's College Research and Innovation Institute, Toronto, ON, Canada.

Zhao, L., Rogers, C., Kosa, S.D., Macdonald, S., & Du Mont, J. (2025, August 14). Providing supports to persons sex trafficked: Development of an e-learning curriculum for emergency department staff [Poster presentation]. WCH Summer Student Research Symposium Day, Women's College Research and Innovation Institute, Toronto, ON, Canada.