

Appendix B

Guide for the Conversations with Service Providers

Interviewer: _____ Date: _____ Participant #: _____

Location of participant (city or town): _____

Type of interview (telephone or in-person): _____

I. Background/Demographic Information

1. Location of the shelter: _____
____ Indigenous
____ non-Indigenous
2. Occupation of participant: _____
3. Years in current position: _____
4. Do you identify as Indigenous? ____ Yes | ____ No
If so, are you ____ First Nation ____ Métis ____ Inuit ____ Non-Status ____ All of the above

II. Women accessing women's shelters

1. How would you describe women who seek help at your shelter?
2. Do you have Indigenous/non-Indigenous women seeking help at your shelter?
3. On any given day, what is the ratio of Indigenous and non-Indigenous women accessing your shelter?
4. Where do Indigenous women come from? (urban, rural, northern, reserve)
5. How do Indigenous women access your shelter? Are they usually referred by others? How far do they travel? Do women leave their home community to access your shelter? What is the cost of these trips, from your knowledge?
6. Of the Indigenous women you serve, what percentage have children (i.e., are mothers)? Do their children typically come with them?
7. How full are you on any given day? i.e. what percent of maximum capacity are you at?
8. How does the intake happen? What are the procedures?
9. How long can women stay at your shelter and how long do they end up staying? Do you typically have to request extensions for many women?
10. From your knowledge/experience, what challenges do Indigenous women face when accessing the shelter?
11. From your knowledge/experience, what challenges do Indigenous women face when residing at the shelter?

III. Working with other women's shelters

1. How do you work with other non-Indigenous/Indigenous women's shelters? Is there a difference in how you work with the Indigenous and non-Indigenous shelters?
2. Do you get referrals from Indigenous/non-Indigenous shelters? If yes, how do these referrals happen? What kind of challenges do you face in responding to these referrals?
3. Do you refer to other women's shelters and do you face any challenges in this process of referring women to other women's shelters?
4. Do you face difficulties when working with other shelters (Indigenous/non-Indigenous)? What are these difficulties if you could share with us?



IV. Women staying at women's shelters

1. What kind of supports do you provide for women at your agency? (advocacy, transportation, counselling, housing, accessing legal help, medical appointment assistance, court-related issues, social assistance, etc.)
2. Do you provide specific cultural supports to Indigenous women and their children? What are these? (access to Elders, ceremonies, traditional medicine, language-related supports, etc.)
 - a. What services lack at your shelter for Indigenous women and their children?
3. What are the needs of Indigenous women when seeking help?
4. Do you have any unique needs that you can't attend to? (2LGSBTQ+, disability, mental health issues, etc.). How do you address these gaps in your service provision?
5. How do you address substance use and mental health issues that Indigenous women may experience?
6. How is childcare arranged? Do you experience any challenges with taking care of children at your shelter?
 - a. Do you provide cultural supports for Indigenous children? If so, what are these?
7. What do you think works and does not work in supporting Indigenous women who come seeking help at the shelter?

V. Shelter workers' experiences supporting Indigenous women

1. What are the challenges that you face in your work? Probe: security, local Chief and council-related, ISC-related, funding-related, pets, communal violence/use of firearms, slow police response, burnout, relationship with other service providers, networking, etc.
2. Do you face any specific difficulties serving Indigenous women? (a lack of cultural knowledge, related to communication, language-related difficulties, addressing health-related concerns, racism, not meeting food and diet needs, ceremony-related needs, etc.)?
3. What are the difficulties that non-Indigenous service providers face when serving Indigenous women based on your knowledge and observation/experience?
4. Do you experience any challenges supporting Indigenous children staying at the shelter? Do you have a policy that prevents older male children from accompanying their mothers in the shelter? If so, in what ways does this create challenges or barriers for Indigenous mothers? How do you overcome these challenges?
5. Have you received training specific to Indigenous women's experiences with IPV, mental health, and substance use?
6. Have you been trained in cultural safety? Was this specific to Indigenous cultures? If so, how do you practice it in your work?

VI. Shelter Staff

1. Working at a crisis shelter can be difficult work (i.e., compassion fatigue/burnout, vicarious trauma), how do challenges supporting women and working at the shelter affect your well-being?
 2. Do you experience any safety and security issues in your work at the women's shelter?
 3. Have you experienced racism (or other forms of discrimination) while in your capacity as a shelter worker - from colleagues, leadership, or those working in other organizations or sectors. Please describe.
 4. Do you receive supports for any of the above challenges that you face at your workplace?
 5. What supports do you need to maintain your health and well-being at your workplace and from the management?
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- a. *For Indigenous staff only.* What supports do you need to maintain your health and well-being? Do these include traditional ways of healing? Do you receive traditional supports from shelter management?

If the service provider is in a management position:

VII. Shelter management

1. How do you build your relationship with CFS? Do you experience any challenges in building, maintaining these relationships?
2. How do you build your relationship with the RCMP/police? Do you experience any challenges in building, maintaining these relationships?
3. How do you fundraise? Do you experience any challenges in relation to funding your activities?

VIII. Recommendations

1. What are the ways one can improve services for Indigenous women at your shelter?
2. What needs to happen to improve the working experience of service providers supporting Indigenous women?
3. How can the inter-shelter referral system be improved?
4. What can be done to improve the accessibility of services to Indigenous women and their children who experience family violence?
5. What kind of support do you need to improve the work of your shelter? (prompts: training, supervision, networking, partnership, etc.)
6. What do you require from your shelter management team to support your health and well-being?

Is there anything else you'd like to share or think is important for us to know about the Indigenous women's experiences of violence and help-seeking, and your experience supporting them?

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Thank you for taking the time for having a conversation with me and for sharing your thoughts and experiences. Your responses are very valuable in helping us to understand the experience of Indigenous women and their children.