

ORAL QUESTION—JULIE GREEN, MLA YELLOWKNIFE CENTRE

QUESTION 208-18(2): NWT FAMILY VIOLENCE SURVEY

June 13, 2016

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister responsible for the Status of Women. Does the Minister agree that the family violence survey from 2007 produced valuable insights into attitudes held in the NWT? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister responsible for the Status of Women.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, absolutely. The 2007 family violence survey provides really valuable information about the attitudes of people within our territories on family violence. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, thank you to the Minister for that answer. My next question is does the Minister agree that addressing attitudes towards family violence is the best way of preventing it?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: That is a very difficult question in all honesty. I think that attitudes are a part of it. Speaking as a child who came from a home with very severe family violence within that and a large family, I can say from personal knowledge and also professional knowledge, being a social worker for over 20 years, that family violence is a really complex issue. It is a really complex set of solutions to address it. It is not only attitudes. It is about services. It is about women's ability to take care of themselves. There is a whole complex list of needs that we need to address to be able to actually fully address family violence.

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the Minister for that answer. I agree that family violence is a complex problem, but in order to get to the fundamentals, I think that we have to address attitudes in the way, historically, attitudes have changed towards drinking and driving, towards wearing seatbelts and towards smoking. To that end, I am wondering whether the Minister will commit to updating the family violence survey by doing another one? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister responsible for the Status of Women.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Within this fiscal year, I don't see that we can do a new family violence survey due to the financial limitations that we have. Although, I will advocate and try to look into bringing it into the next fiscal budget because, as stated, it is a very valuable tool. There has been a lot of work within the Northwest Territories on family violence. Our coalition against family violence has done a really remarkable job on communities' attitudes with the "What Will it Take?" project that they have done. So we do need to evaluate that. We need to evaluate if we are on the right track or what else we need to do. Within that survey piece, I would also like to see a more comprehensive plan go forward. I am looking at bringing that in within this term of the government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. And Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Minister for that commitment to advocate for a repeat family violence survey in the next fiscal year. It is my understanding that the information it will provide will be a very useful planning tool to create promotion campaigns aimed at ending family violence.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: I am really pleased to hear that one of the MLAs is really taking this to heart because it is a serious issue. I would like to challenge all of our MLAs as well, as our Ministers actually, to take the "What Will it Take?" program in because I think it is something that all of us need to take, need to be aware of, and need to address and be role models within our constituency.