Sexual Violence Prevention & Response: A Framework for Addressing Gender-Based Violence in Post-Secondary Institutions

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Equity & Inclusion
McMaster University is located on the traditional territories of the Haudenosaunee and Mississauga Nations and within the lands protected by the Dish with One Spoon wampum agreement.
GBV in PSIs

Gender Equity and Justice Framework

Social Equity/Justice
- Anti-Oppressive Framework: Systemic Equity/Justice – Individual (Micro), Institutional (Meso), Societal (Macro)

Gender Equity/Justice
- Anti-Discrimination/Harassment:
  - based on gender-related grounds (sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation)
  - Requires examining systems (structures and cultures) as well as interpersonal behaviours
  - patriarchy, misogyny, sexism, heterosexism, homophobia, transphobia (intersecting with other -isms)

Gender-Based Violence
- A continuum of harmful behaviours
  - rooted in and facilitated by systemic gender inequity and systems of oppression
- All forms of GBV are human rights violations and illegal in terms of administrative/human rights law
- Some forms of GBV are illegal in terms of the criminal code (e.g., sexual assault, criminal stalking,
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Government Directives

- 2001-2015 separate **Sexual Harassment** Policy and Anti-Discrimination Policy
- 2015-2017 **combined** Discrimination, Harassment & Sexual Harassment Policy
- Ontario (March 6, 2015) *It’s Never Okay: An Action Plan to Stop Sexual Violence & Harassment*
- Ontario (March 8, 2016) **Bill 132** (Sexual Violence and Harassment Action Plan Act)
- MTCU Act (January 1, 2017) **O. Reg. 131/16** (Sexual Violence at Colleges and Universities)
- 2017 **first stand-alone Sexual Violence** Policy
- 2019 campus-wide consultation to revise **Sexual Violence Policy**, approved January 2020
- OUSA (2020) *Gender-Based and Sexual Violence Prevention & Response* (advocacy)
- MCU (January 27, 2021) Proposal to Amend O. Reg. 131/16 (two additional requirements)
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Policy Response and Prevention Education

Policy Response Best Practices

- Statement of commitment to violence-free environment
- Continuum of behaviour (improper to illegal, human rights/criminal law)
- Transparent, fair, confidential, and timely procedures
- Trauma-informed, anti-oppressive, intersectional, culturally relevant
- SVPRO intake personnel with critical analysis and clinical skill-set
- Disclosure protocols – recognize, respond, refer
- Duty to report, duty to care, duty to accommodate
- Policy is also a preventative measure

Prevention Education Best Practices

- Evidence-informed pedagogical approaches – what works for difference audiences and contexts?
- Early and sustained awareness-raising and training (attitudes, knowledge, skills) – orientation/transition programs and beyond
- Initiatives to change individual behaviours vs shift the culture
- Continuum of behaviour (threshold of socially/legally unacceptable?)
- Communication plan to foster disclosure/help-seeking and learning
- Education is also remedial policy response
EIO Annual Report
September 1, 2019 – August 31, 2020 Sexual Violence Statistics

121 Disclosures
1 Voluntary Resolution
46 Complaints
35 DHP
25 SVP
14 both
75% investigated
87% Policy violation
When there is a finding of a policy violations, outcomes vary, depending on the circumstances of each case. Examples in 2019/20: remedial educational initiatives; mandated training; professional coaching; no contact orders; designating PNG (persona non grata) prohibition from campus; documented discussions; and termination of employment.