



Elizabeth Fry Society

of Saskatchewan

June 20, 2017

We Believe the Women, Despite Police Denial of Human Rights Watch Findings

Saskatoon, SK – The Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan is deeply concerned with the formal police reactions to the Human Rights Watch investigation of police violence and misconduct against Indigenous women and girls in Saskatchewan. The report was released on June 19, 2017 at Station 20 West in Saskatoon, SK.

“As an agency operating on the ground, and working with Indigenous women throughout the province of Saskatchewan, we have listened to countless stories of police abuse from women that are consistent with the findings of this investigation,” said Sue Delanoy, Executive Director of the Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan. “It is imperative that we continue to listen to and advocate for structural, systemic change within policing institutions across the province and entire country. This is especially important within the context of colonial gender violence in Canada – both past and present – and the culture of impunity that has made it possible for Indigenous women to be targets of horrific violence without consequence,” she added.

While police agencies may be working towards making some substantive change in policing practices, Indigenous women continue to feel threatened and unsafe, and many fear retaliation from the police thus stopping them from reporting experiences of violence.

“The women who participated in the Human Rights Watch investigation have experienced police officers as perpetrators of violence themselves,” said Patti Tait, Cultural Advisor at Elizabeth Fry Society. “We find it deeply troubling that despite the opportunity this report presents for municipal law enforcement and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to engage in a serious dialogue with Indigenous leaders and community organizers about the findings, their reactions remain largely defensive,” added Sue Delanoy.

The Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan will continue to engage in advocacy on these issues for the foreseeable future, and welcome meetings with city police and the RCMP to further discuss the findings and recommendations of this investigation.

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205-1120 20th Street West, Saskatoon, SK S7K 1M4

Telephone: (306) 934-4606 | Fax: (306) 652-2933 | www.elizabethfrysask.org

