

MOTION ON NOTICE

5. Vancouver General Hospital's Outpatient Domestic Violence Program

Vancouver City Council, at its meeting on October 5, 2010, referred this matter to the Standing Committee on Planning and Environment meeting on October 7, 2010, in order to hear from speakers.

MOVER: Councillor Ellen Woodsworth

SECONDER: Councillor

WHEREAS:

1. Violence against women persists as both a pervasive violation of human rights and a significant impediment to achieving gender equality on a global and local level. Locally the recent Pitt Meadows assault serves as an example;
2. Gender inequality remains one of the root causes of violence against women while violence against women serves as both an acute manifestation of gender inequality and a means of perpetuating it;
3. Vancouver is a city that believes in dignity, respect, gender equality, and creating a safe city for women and girls;
4. Domestic Violence Programs are crucial resources to the people who access them and are an essential part of our health care system;
5. Before its closure on August 20, 2010, the well-respected Vancouver General Hospital (VGH) Outpatient Domestic Violence Program had been serving the community for 18 years. Twenty to 25 people experiencing violent relationships accessed the program each week;
6. There has been no public consultation about the closure and community support groups are calling for the decision to be reversed, as they are already dealing with long wait lists and do not have the capacity to absorb any new clients;
7. As well as providing expert care, the program saved the health system thousands of dollars for every violence-related emergency room visit prevented. The program closure will result in much higher health costs for the region; and
8. The City of Vancouver's Women's Advisory Committee requests that Vancouver City Council support citizens of Vancouver affected by domestic violence by advocating the continuation of VGH's Domestic Violence Program.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the City of Vancouver call on the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority to maintain Vancouver General Hospital's Outpatient Domestic Violence Program, and that a letter be sent from the City of Vancouver to both President and CEO of Vancouver Coastal Health, Dr. David N. Ostro and Kevin Falcon, Minister of Health Services.

* * * * *