

Reassurance protocol: a victim-centered approach to hate-motivated crimes and incidents

The five (5) key principles outlined below serve as a basis for the creation of a *Reassurance Protocol*. These principles are meant to be adopted — and adapted — based on the unique community needs of respective police services. This Protocol aims to promote a victim-centered approach by providing all victims of Hate-Motivated Crimes and Incidents (HMCIs) with appropriate supports to help abate the fear and anxiety experienced following HMCIs.






Purpose

The implementation of this protocol will serve to:

- ▶ Connect victims of HMCIs to support services capable of helping manage the negative impacts stemming from their victimization;
- ▶ Increase police presence through community-facing units in affected communities;
- ▶ Restore a sense of safety following HMCIs by mitigating the broader negative effects these events have on individuals and communities;
- ▶ Strengthen relationships between community members and local police services;
- ▶ Increase hate crime reporting; and,
- ▶ Deter perpetrators of HMCIs.

Key Principles

Below are five (5) key principles to guide the implementation of the Protocol:

-  All HMCIs should be properly documented, tracked, and thoroughly investigated;
-  All follow-ups with victims should be done in a timely manner in order to check on the physical and mental well-being of the victim(s);
-  Local support services should be offered and recommended at first contact with the victim and should be based on need;
-  Support partners should be identified in advance and efforts made to ensure they have the capacity and knowledge to respond effectively to HMCIs; and,
-  This protocol, its implementation, and any associated steps should be embedded and layered into relevant police directives; policies, and procedures.

Considerations

When implementing and instituting a *Reassurance Protocol*, adopting a community-centric approach is critical, as is the recognition that implementation will — and should — fulfil the needs of the community being served. Ideally, the responsibilities outlined herein should reside within a community-facing unit and, where possible, should be layered into organizational training.

