CAEFS’s proposal for a pilot project to end segregation for women (Nov 2, 2016)

1. CSC, CHRC and CAEFS will participate in a pilot project, the purpose of which is to work towards the end of segregation for women in federal prisons.

2. A small working group will be formed in relation to each women’s institution that can respond quickly to individual and systemic situations to find alternatives to segregation, and also to act preventatively to avoid the need for segregation.

3. The working group will be made up of a representative from the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies (CAEFS), a representative from the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC), and the Warden of the respective institution. The Deputy Commissioner for Women will also be available as a resource for the working group.

4. Each member of the working group will be committed to being available and responsive on short notice in urgent situations, including weekends and after regular working hours.

5. The purpose of this pilot project is:
   a. to work to end the use for segregation for women by taking steps including the following:
      i. the working group will be consulted at the earliest stage possible (before incident - for example, as soon as the Correctional Service Canada (CSC) receives 3rd party or institutional security information, the working group will be advised of potential issues or incidents) using individualized
and systemic approaches to identify and implement alternatives to segregation. This step may be activated by any of the working group members upon receipt of information that there is a need for intervention. This may include drawing on a panel of external expert resources to assist in developing and implementing supports and alternatives, such as NWAC, DAWN, Indigenous and mental health experts, et cetera;

ii. early identification of women at risk and early intervention to address issues before placing them in positions of conflict;

iii. recommend changes to conditions of confinement including related policies;

iv. recommend and, where appropriate, participate in the development and delivery of training to CSC employees.

b. to review what CSC has done to reduce the numbers of women in segregation and the length of segregation placements over the last 12 to 18 months, in order to learn from these changes and to work to have these changes systemized, so that they persist into the future.

c. to consult with internal and external experts regarding best practices related to reducing and ending the use of segregation, and to make recommendations regarding changes to CSC practices and policies.

6. Decisions will be made by consensus of the group. It is recognized that the statutory obligation for institutional decisions will remain with the Warden. Ultimately, if the working group is not able to reach consensus, the CAEFS and the CHRC will, where possible, provide the reason(s) for their disagreement in writing. The CAEFS may choose to share the reasons for their disagreement with the affected woman/women.
7. Prisoner privacy will be protected. Prisoners will need to authorize the advisory working group to have access to information from their correctional and/or medical file.

8. The pilot project will be for an initial term of four months, with the option, if all parties agree, to extend this time period and/or expand the project. The pilot project may also end earlier if one or more of the parties withdraw from the project. A party may choose to make its withdrawal from the project and the reasons for the withdrawal, public.

9. The pilot project will be announced publicly through a tripartite announcement, developed jointly by CAEFS, CHRC and the Government of Canada, as represented by the Minister of Public Safety.