

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Funding for Family Service Ontario Conjoint Counselling Pilot Project One-year extension to four project sites announced**

**May 3, 2017 (Toronto, ON):** Family Service Ontario, an association representing 43 Family Service agencies in Ontario, together with the Ministry of Community and Social Services announced the one-year funding extension to the Conjoint (Couple) Counselling Pilot Project today.

Retroactive to April 1, 2017, the extension is an addition to the previously ministry approved two-year funding from March 2015 to provide joint counselling programs for couples experiencing situational couple violence. The pilot study is assessing the effectiveness of conjoint counselling for lower-risk situational violence and whether early intervention will lead to a reduction of violence against women.

Currently operating in four sites across Ontario, the project uses clinical expertise and industry approved assessment tools to ensure the safety of women who want to actively support their partners in a change process to maintain their relationship.

“Based on research from the project, Family Service agencies are making significant—and potentially groundbreaking—advances in helping to reduce the risk of violence using the Conjoint Counselling model. The pilot is also demonstrating solid results in terms of couple satisfaction in combination with this reduced risk of domestic violence,” said Board Chair Alan McQuarrie.

The project is part of a strategy to reduce the stress on the justice system by preventing criminal offences before they happen and ensures those without the means to pay for help with their relationships will have access to services.

Family Service Ontario represents 43 Family Service agencies across the province who serve more than 250,000 Ontarians with mental health, trauma and addiction challenges each year. A core competency of Family Service agencies is offering evidenced-based structured psychotherapy services, provided by highly qualified, graduate level psychotherapists. For more information, visit [www.familyserviceontario.org](http://www.familyserviceontario.org).

– 30 –

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