



SUPPORTING SURVIVORS
OF ABUSE AND BRAIN INJURY
THROUGH RESEARCH

The Honourable Uzoma Asagwara
Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care
Winnipeg, MB
August 15, 2025

Dear Minister Asagwara,

I am writing to call for the reinstatement of Winnipeg's intimate partner violence–brain injury (IPV-BI) clinic led by Dr. Mike Ellis at the Pan Am Clinic and unique in Canada. The clinic provided specialized, evidence-based assessment and care for survivors of IPV-BI, often from repeated blows to the head and face, or from strangulation. These forms of violence are well-documented red flags for severe and even lethal outcomes, and they carry lasting neurological consequences. Yet, in most healthcare settings, such injuries remain underrecognized and untreated. The clinic's closure leaves a devastating gap in care for survivors in Manitoba and Nunavut, which has some of the highest rates of intimate partner violence in Canada.

As the only organization in Canada with a singular focus on brain injury from intimate partner violence, SOAR has worked closely with Dr. Ellis, and knows well the critical role he and his clinic played. They offered survivors the medical attention they needed but also created a bridge to community support, documentation for legal processes, and culturally safe care, something survivors across the rest of Canada struggle to access. The loss of this program means survivors are left without a dedicated pathway to diagnosis and care.

Given almost half (44%) of women in Canada will experience violence at the hands of a partner in their lifetime, and as many as 92% of those may experience a brain injury as part of the abuse, governments and health care systems have a duty to address this invisible public health crisis. As such, we are calling on the Government of Manitoba to reinstate this clinic and to ensure it is integrated into the provincial healthcare system and funded sustainably.

SOAR is prepared to work alongside the government of Manitoba and the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority to share our research, training resources, and survivor-informed recommendations to ensure the clinic's return and long-term success. Manitoba has the opportunity to lead the country in delivering integrated, trauma-informed, brain injury–responsive healthcare for survivors of intimate partner violence, and we look forward to the opportunity to discuss how we can work together to make it happen.

Yours truly,

Karen Mason
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