

September 7th

Comments on the Danish authorities' implementation of recommendations on the Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence

Right to Outpatient Treatment

To help victims of violence it is crucial that there is adequate and qualified counselling and treatment for both children and parents. Today, victims of violence have a right to stay at a women's shelter where they can receive help and treatment. For many women and children, moving to a women's shelter is not the right solution. However, women, men and children who have experienced violence today have no legislative right to other forms of treatment. Mødrehjælpen (Mothers' Aid) believes, that we need to introduce a right for women, men and children to outpatient treatment by highly trained professionals with a specialty within the effects of violence. Thereby ensuring a crucial supplement or alternative to the acute safety-oriented protection offered by the women's shelters. By introducing this right there would also need to be focus on the amount and quality of these alternative treatments. Currently the demand is high – in Copenhagen, Mødrehjælpen's wait list is up to six months.

Given the need to have a right to treatment as an alternative to the women's shelters, we believe that there is a need to introduce an independent paragraph in the Social Affairs Act which should focus on the long-term treatment of the psychological trauma of being a victim of violence.

Right to protect children

For a child, who has witnessed or experienced violence, to receive treatment, the current legislature require both custodial parents to consent to the treatment, cf. the Health Care Act and Parental Responsibility Act. The legislation today prevents e.g. Mødrehjælpen from helping children through our treatment program for victims of violence – in some cases because the children are afraid to tell the violent parent that they need treatment, because they are afraid of the repercussions, and in other cases the violent parent will not acknowledge the violence.

The mothers are held back in recovering from living with a violent partner and are denied being able to protect their children from violence. All parents should have the right to protect their children from the consequences of violence by ensuring that parents have a right to help their children recover from experiencing violence where a violent parent cannot have the power to deny the child treatment.

Any questions to our comments can be directed to Political Consultant Clara Albeck Japsen at cja@moedrehjaelpen.dk.

Best regards,

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