

VAW Advocate Case Review (VACR)

AN EMERGING BEST PRACTICE IN SEXUAL ASSAULT INVESTIGATIONS

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Improving Institutional
Accountability
Project

Introductions: Who Am I?

- 25 yrs in frontline, SA advocacy w survivors intersecting w the Criminal Justice System
- 20 yrs focus on CJS & SA, in policy, barriers, criminal codes/legal, best practices
- 10 yrs developing case review model w partners from frontline, legal & privacy
- Co-created “[Canadian Framework for Collaborative Police Response on Sexual Violence](#)” w investigators, privacy experts, and Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police
- Working under federal funding to support municipal police & communities in implementing VACR

Canadian Framework for Collaborative Police Response on Sexual Violence



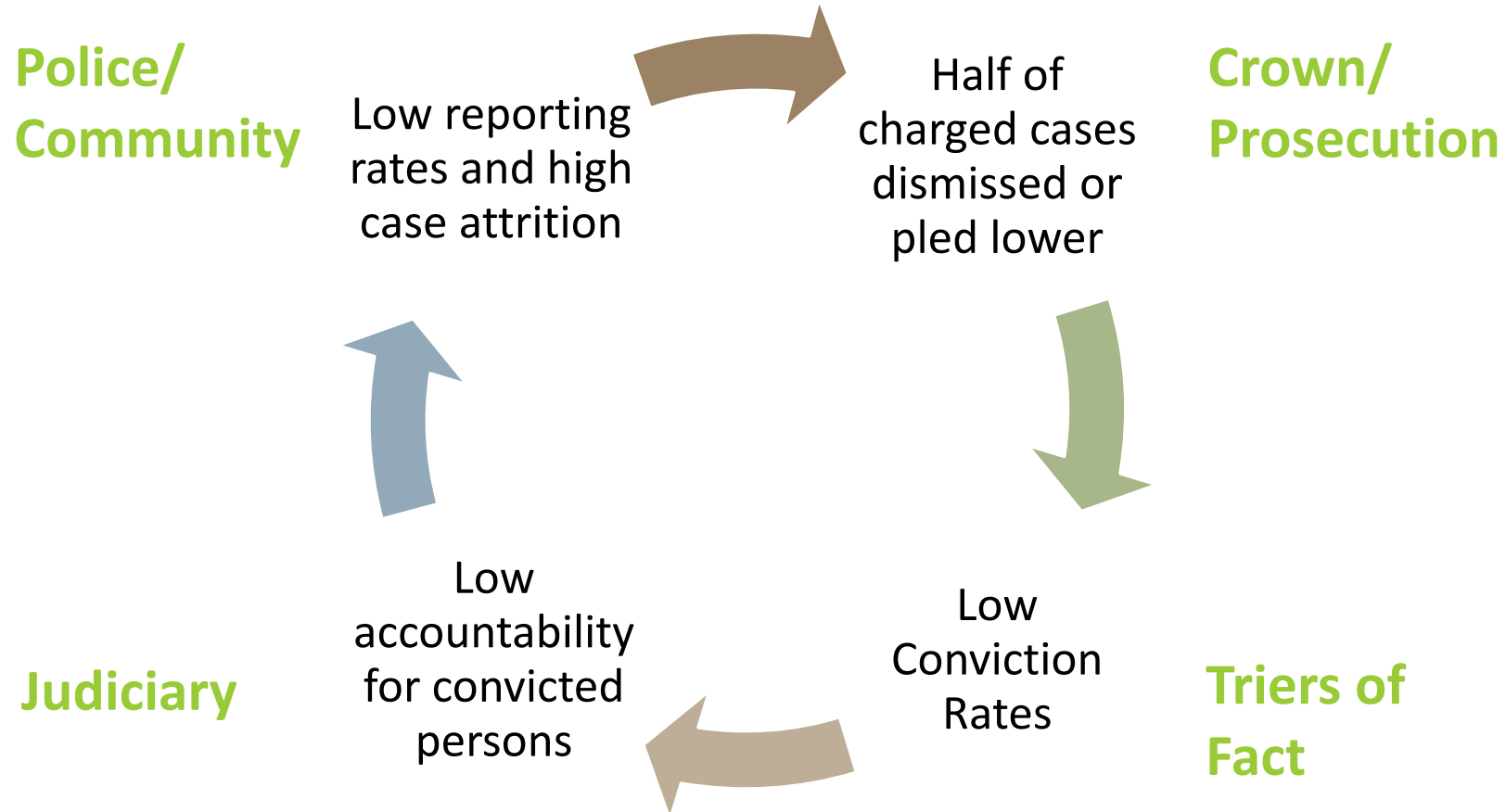
The Globe & Mail

“Unfounded”
2017

VACR had 2 sites
underway;
Brantford ON
North Bay ON



CJS: Systemic & Cyclical



SEXUAL VIOLENCE CASE ATTRITION

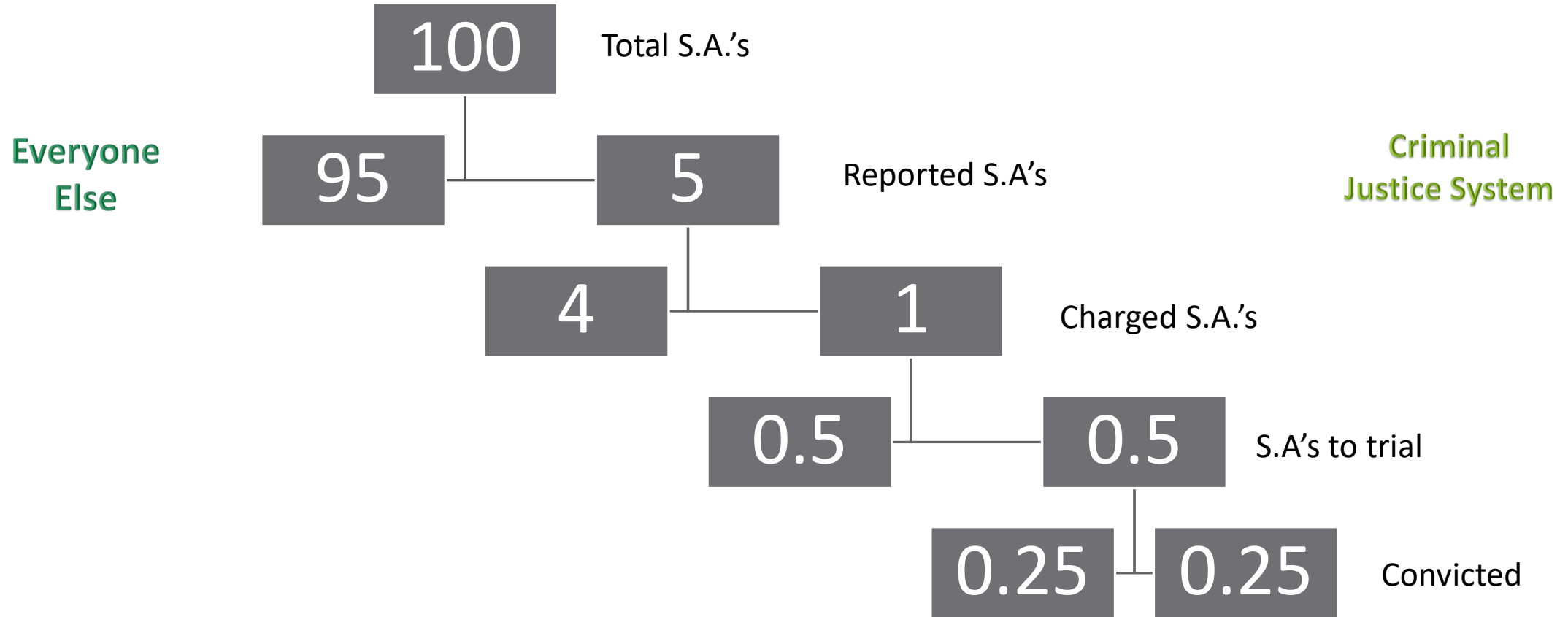
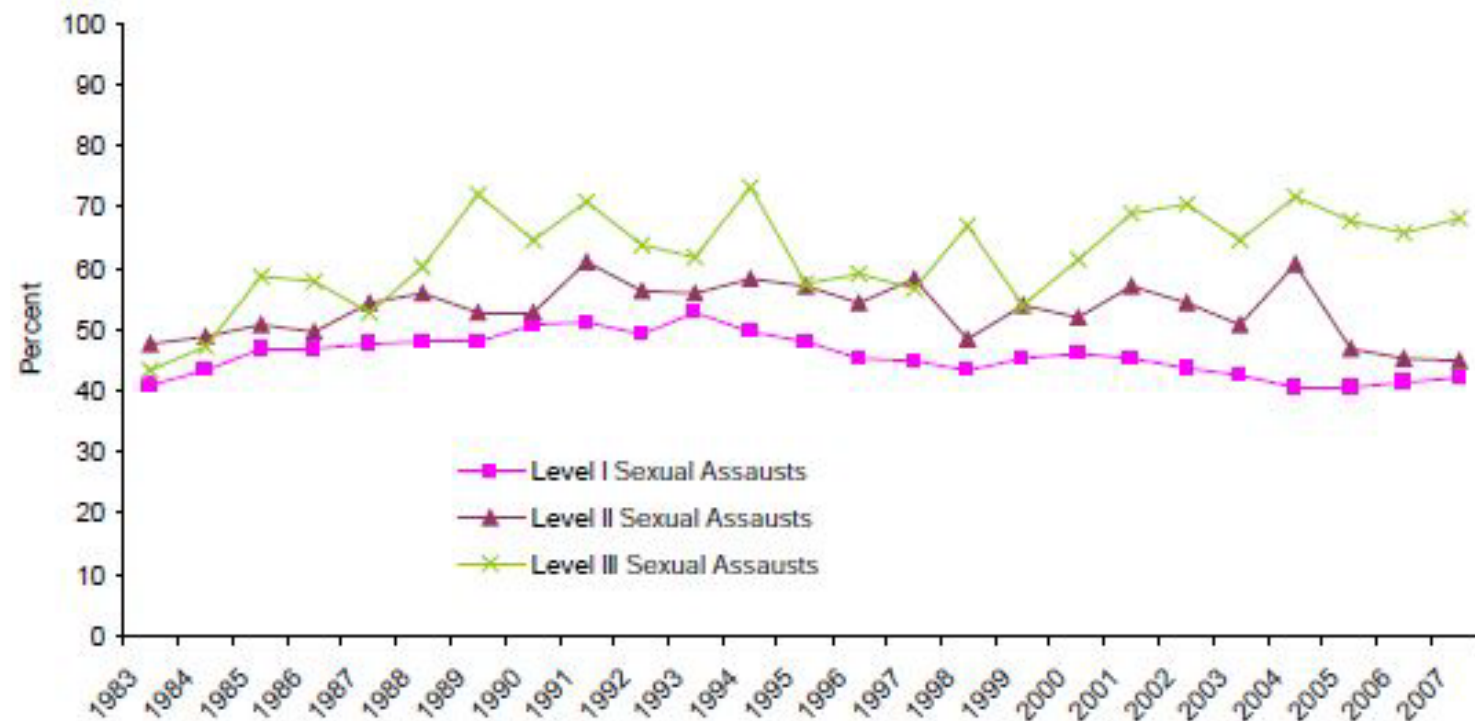
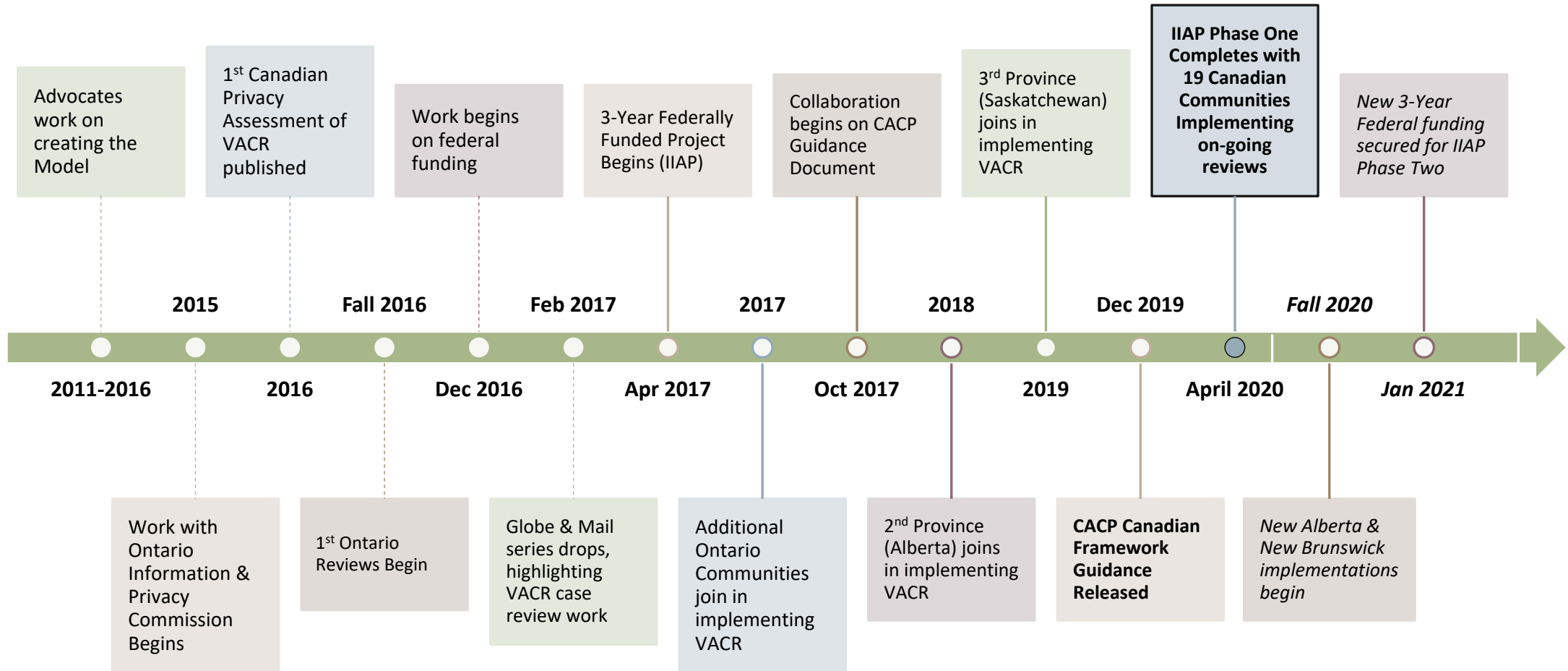


Figure 3: Percent of Founded Sexual Assaults that Resulted in Charges Laid Against A Suspect



Source: Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Statistics Canada.

VACR HISTORY AT-A-GLANCE





Women and Gender
Equality Canada

Femmes et Égalité
des genres Canada

2016 – Created
IIAP
(2017 – 2024)

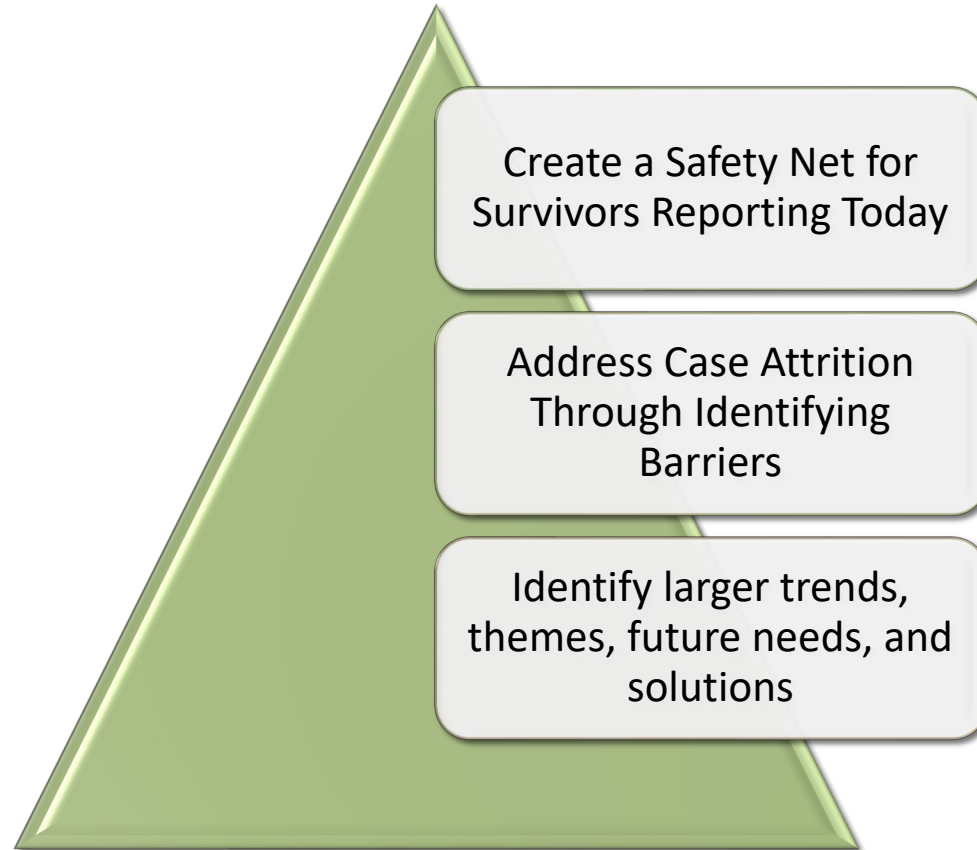
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GOAL: To implement a mechanism to reduce case attrition in police-reported sexual assault

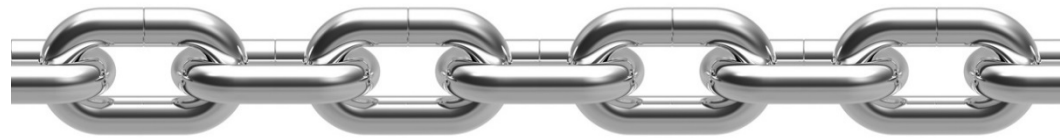
Activities: Implementing VACR reviews in communities across Canada + linking within national networks.

- Started with 4 communities/cities**
- 2 years in we had 14 ON sites, and growing**
- Expanded the goal to at least one city in every province/territory**
- Currently 30 Sites: ON, AB, SK, NB, PEI**

Goals of VAW Advocate Case Reviews



A New Link in the Investigative Chain



Report

Investigation

Clearance

Review

VACR Fundamentals At-A-Glance

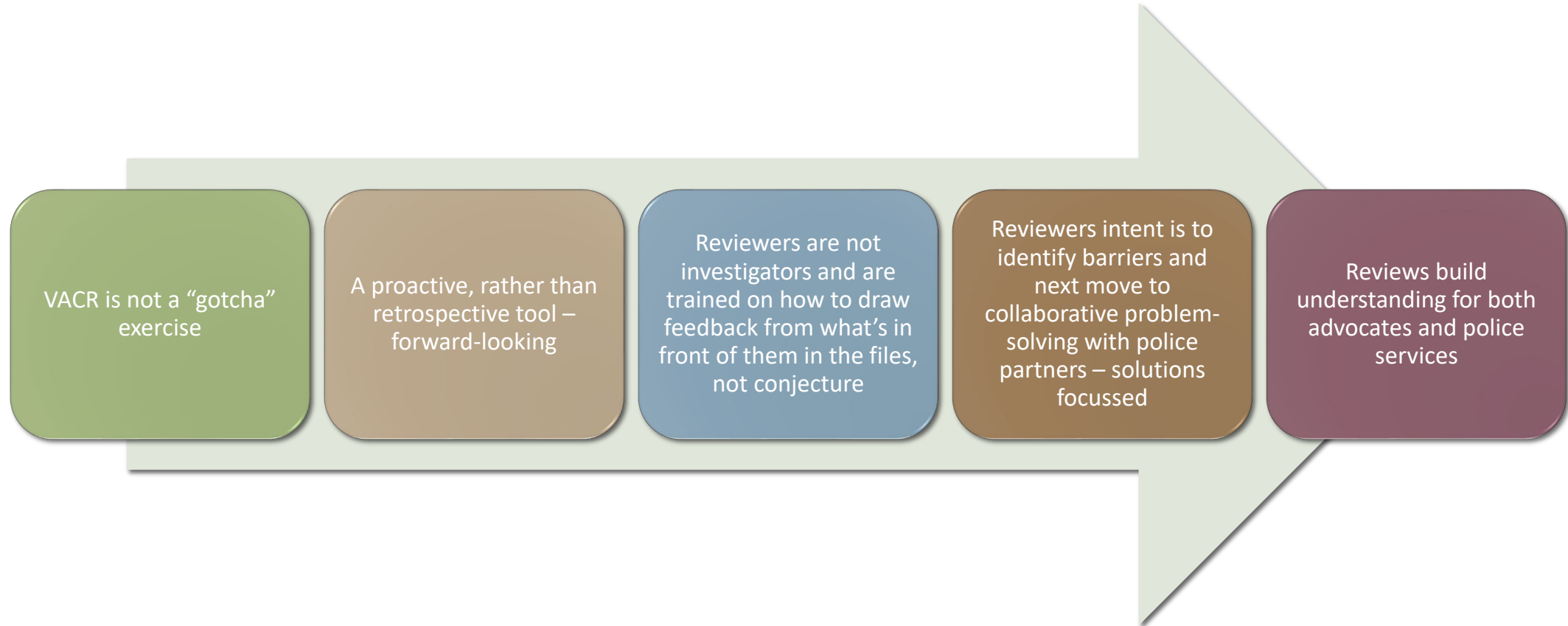
VACR Basics

- ▶ Review all cases not cleared by charge
- ▶ Review quarterly
- ▶ Review all documents- videos notes etc.
- ▶ Reviews focus on 12+ victims and subjects over 18
- ▶ Consistent criteria and tools used

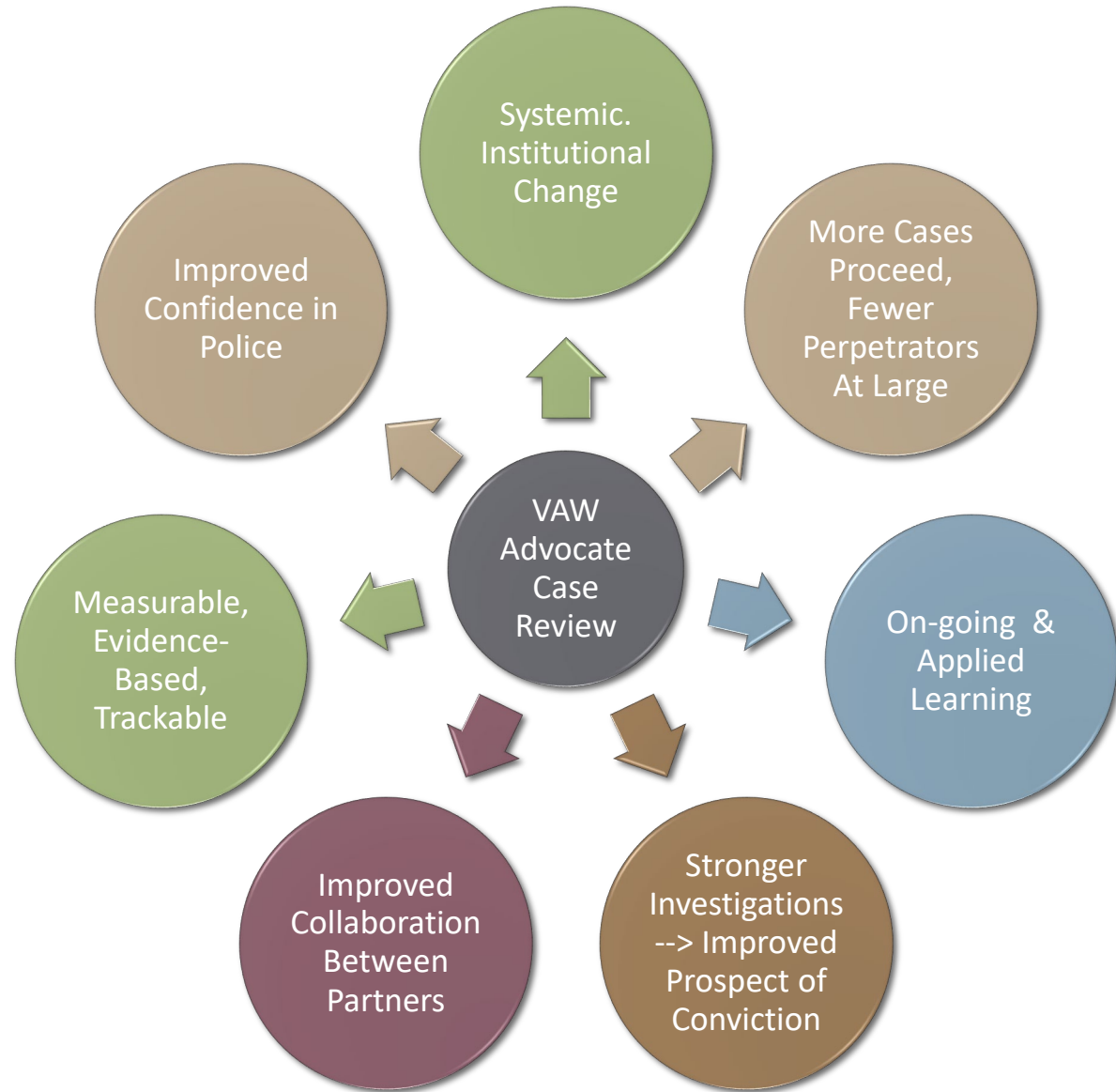
Reviewing Organizations

- ▶ Frontline Sexual Assault Advocates
- ▶ Understand unique community context
- ▶ Expertise in working with survivors directly
- ▶ Review independently of police & collaborate in findings stage
- ▶ Use MOUs to solidify partnership

Solutions-Focussed & Forward-Looking



VAW ADVOCATE CASE REVIEW (VACR): The Benefit Cycle



Sites Using VACR as of May 2022

1. Kingston, ON
2. Stratford, ON
3. Ottawa, ON
4. Brantford, ON
5. Timmins, ON
6. London, ON
7. Peterborough, ON
8. Barrie, ON
9. Peel, ON
10. Sudbury, ON
11. North Bay, ON
12. Durham, ON
13. Niagara, ON
14. Calgary, AB
15. Edmonton, AB
16. Camrose, AB
17. Regina, SK
18. Saskatoon, SK
19. **Kennebecasis Valley, NB**
20. **Saint John, NB**
21. Charlottetown, PEI
22. Waterloo, ON
23. Hamilton, ON (*adapted*)
24. Halton, ON (*adapted*)
25. Kentville, NS (*development*)
26. Lethbridge, AB (*development*)
27. Moose Jaw, SK (*development*)
28. Prince Albert, SK (*development*)