

The four main objectives or components of the program are on-site education (including workshops, courses and presentations), group facilitation (including leading self-help and community discussion groups), community organizing (including coalition-building, organizing self-help groups, and establishing telephone crisis lines and shelters) and a resource base (including video and audio tapes, pamphlets and manuals, as well as acting as the end-of-phone support for front-line volunteers).

Anecdotal evidence suggests that this program has been successful, with visits to physicians and other mental health professionals having decreased as a result of the program.

### **3. Research**

Research was identified by some witnesses as a priority for the future. For example, a need was identified for research focusing on the relation of stress to farm accidents, and on stressors as they relate to the changing context of farming in Canada. Further knowledge is also needed about various farm stress programs and their effectiveness, and gender-specific research should be undertaken. The Centre for Agricultural Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan was identified by some witnesses as the ideal agency to coordinate such research.

### **4. Federal Support**

Enhanced federal support was also recommended by witnesses. This support could take the form of a Department of Human Services within such agencies as the Farm Credit Corporation to oversee the needs of clients and staff in relation to farm stress. Such an initiative might be of benefit to clients of these agencies and to the employees whose actions increase the stress level of farmers. Departmental activities could include education and skills training for field officers in such areas as communication, assessing and dealing with crisis situations, and handling stress.

Federal support could also be given to a collaborative clearinghouse or central repository, within Agriculture Canada, for programs, research and support services related to farm stress.