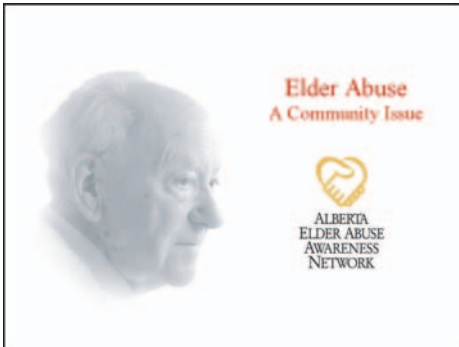


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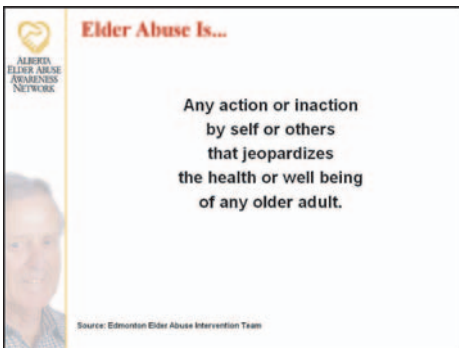
Slide 1 - Elder Abuse - A Community Issue

We live in an aging society. People 85 and older represent the fastest growing segment of the population. As the number of elderly Canadians continues to grow, so will the cases of elder abuse. Elder abuse is not always easy to detect and has many underlying causes.



Slide 2 - Today We Will Talk About...

In today's presentation we will discuss a growing social concern - Elder Abuse. We will define this issue, talk about the prevalence, highlight some of the indicators and contributing factors, and discuss why older adults may be reluctant to reveal this issue to outside helpers. Lastly, we will discuss the various resources that can assist an older adult in breaking the cycle of abuse.



Slide 3 - Elder Abuse Is...

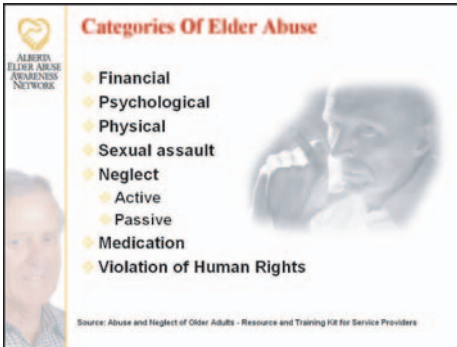
This definition: "any action or inaction by self or others that jeopardizes the health or well being of any older adult" is the one adopted by the Edmonton Elder Abuse Intervention Team. This is only one definition used in Alberta. In fact, the lack of a generally acceptable definition has spawned a wide variety of definitions of abuse and neglect across Canada. Despite this, most would agree that elder abuse is an action or inaction by someone in a position of trust; often a family member or unrelated caregiver.

Any elderly person may become the victim of abuse. Males and females of any income level, any cultural or ethnic group, persons in good health or persons incapacitated in some way may be abused by someone close to them.

Source: Elder Abuse Intervention Team

Elder Abuse: Speakers Notes

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Slide 4 - Categories Of Elder Abuse

Elder abuse can take several forms. Often more than one form of abuse is being inflicted onto the older adult. Statistics on both a national and provincial scale indicate that financial and emotional abuse are the two categories most often identified. The categories include:

Financial - This is "the misuse of an older person's funds or property through fraud, trickery, theft or force."

Psychological - This may take the form of "verbal aggression, humiliation, isolation, intimidation, threats and inappropriate control of activities. It can also include removal of decision-making power while the person is competent; withholding affection for manipulative purposes; refusing access to grandchildren and denying privacy in institutions."

Physical - This is "any kind of physical assault, such a slapping, pushing, kicking, punching or injuring with an object or weapon. It also includes deliberate exposure to severe weather and unnecessary physical restraint."

Sexual Assault - This includes all "unwanted sexual activity, such as verbal or suggestive behavior, fondling, sexual intercourse or a lack of personal privacy."

Neglect - This is "the intentional or unintentional failure to provide for the needs of someone. Active neglect is the intentional withholding of basic necessities or care, while passive neglect is not providing basic necessities and care because of a lack of experience, information or ability. Another area to consider is self-neglect where older adults, by choice or ignorance, live in ways that disregard health or safety needs, sometimes to the extent that the disregard also poses a hazard to others."

Medication - This is "the misuse of an older person's medications and prescriptions. It may include withholding medication, overmedicating or not complying with prescriptions refills."

Violation of Human Rights - This is "the denial of an older person's fundamental rights according to legislation, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms or the United Nation's Declaration of Human Rights. Examples of Violations of rights include withholding information; denying privacy, visitors, or religious worship; restricting liberty; unwarranted confining to a hospital or institution; or interfering with mail."



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National Statistics

- Statistics Canada (1999 GSS) states that approximately **7%** of older Canadians have experienced some form of emotional or financial abuse.
- Currently (2004), in Alberta **11%** of the population is over the age of 65
- Based on the statistics that interprets into **23000** Albertans

Slide 5 - National Statistics

The 1999 General Socialization Survey (GSS) "interviewed more than 4000 older Canadians about their experience regarding emotional and financial abuse as well as physical and sexual violence by children, caregivers and spouses. In total, approximately 7% of seniors reported they had experienced some form of emotional or financial abuse by an adult child, caregiver or spouse in the five-year period preceding the survey." If we take this statistic and apply it to the current senior population of Alberta it represents approximately 23,000 Alberta seniors who are experiencing one or more forms of abuse.

Additionally, we know that the senior population is the fastest growing sector of our population. In fact, in 2000, the Alberta for All Ages - Directions for the Future report stated that "Between 1999 & 2016 the Alberta seniors' population will increase 60-70%, while the general population will only grow by 30%." Thus, in all likelihood the prevalence of elder abuse will also grow.

Source: Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile 2002 Alberta for All Ages: Directions for the Future

Annual Costs Of Family Violence in Canada

Health and Well-being	\$1.5 billion
Social Services/Education	\$2.3 billion
Criminal Justice	\$872 million
Labour/Employment	\$577 million
Health/Medical	\$408 million
Social Programs	\$385 million
Total Cost	\$6 billion

Source: "The Tip of the Iceberg" by Dr Tanis Day

Slide 6 - Annual Costs Of Family Violence In Canada

Being able to measure the economic impact of violence allows us to examine the issue from another vantage point. It gives us additional information when planning prevention and intervention efforts. However, we must not forget that economic measures do not take in to account the human cost of emotional suffering, decreased quality of life and in some cases the loss of life.

The figures in this slide come from a study titled *The Health-Related Costs of Violence Against Women in Canada: The Tip of the Iceberg*, by Tanis Day, Ph.D.

- The category "Health and Well-being" includes mental health
- The category "Social Services" includes SFI (Supports For Independence) commonly known as welfare.
- The category "Health/Medical" includes physical health
- The category "Social Programs" includes counseling, preventive services, addictions services, victims' assistance, as well as treatment and counseling for the batterer.

What these figures highlight is the need to ensure community response is multidisciplinary and multi faceted. Many professions and sectors have a role to play in addressing the issue of family violence which includes elder abuse.

Source: "The Tip of the Iceberg" by Dr Tanis Day (1995)



Elder Abuse: Speakers Notes Power Point Presentation (for a professional audience)



Slide 7 - Theories Of Abuse

Although elder abuse is not a new phenomenon it has only recently come to the forefront of our attention as another complex dimension of family violence. Despite research being in its early stages there are a few theories that address the cause of elder abuse. These include:

Learning Theory - "Learning theory or transgenerational violence theory states, that violence is a learned behaviour pattern in some families. A child observes violence as an acceptable reaction to stress which then becomes internalized as a behaviour. This, in turn, leads to a cyclical family pattern where the abused becomes the abuser." If elder abuse is a case of spouse abuse the situation can be reversed. "If the abusive spouse becomes ill or disabled the previously abused partner may retaliate and become the abuser."

Physical/Mental dependence (Impairment) - "The impairment theory states that elderly persons who have a severe mental or physical impairment are most likely to be abused. Whenever there is a relationship in which one person is dependent and another person has the helping or care giving role, there is the potential for misuse of power by the caregiver."

Pathologic Abusers - "This theory focuses on the abusers having personality flaws or character flaws that cause abusiveness. Overuse of drugs and alcohol on the part of the abuser as well as those with mental retardation or mental illness are far more likely to be abusive than those without these impairments." As caregivers, these people often do not possess the decision making capacity to make appropriate judgments for their elderly parents but nevertheless are thrust into this role.

Stressed Caregiver - "This theory proposes that internal & external stresses build and may erupt as violence. The stress may be due to the conflicting demand on the caregiver by various household members. If there is no escape for the caregiver, abuse may occur."

Societal Attitudes - "This theory states that negative attitudes dehumanize elders and make it easier for the abusers to victimize without remorse. The elderly are often stereotyped as frail, incompetent and powerless."

Source: Golden Years Hidden Fears by: Virginia Boyack, (1997)

Elder Abuse: Speakers Notes Power Point Presentation (for a professional audience)



Slide 8 - Video Segment # 1



Danny Returns

- ◆ Is there a truck driving course?
 - ◆ If not, what offense is Danny potentially committing?
 - ◆ Criminal code offense of Fraud
- ◆ What other "red flags" do you see here?
 - ◆ Danny has trouble holding a job
 - ◆ He uses guilt to manipulate his mom
 - ◆ He is not keeping track of money owed
- ◆ What could Mrs. Campbell do to protect herself?
 - ◆ Set clear boundaries and consequences
 - ◆ Kept her own records of money lent




Slide 9 - Danny Returns

Q.) Is There A Truck Driving Course? If Not, What Offense is Danny Potentially Committing?

A.) Criminal Code Offense Of Fraud: In the case of Danny and his mom, if Danny is lying about the truck driving course in order to obtain money from his mom, it may be a criminal fraud.

Some forms of elder abuse can be criminal in nature. Abuse that involves fraud, theft, forgery, assault, sexual assault, forcible confinement, uttering threats, intimidation, criminal harassment, and failure to provide the necessities of life are crimes under the Criminal Code of Canada. Some types of abuse are also offences under provincial legislation such as the Protection for Persons in Care Act.

Q.) What Other Red Flags Do You See Here?

A.) Abuse that has occurred once in a relationship will likely happen again. In this presentation we are going to talk about indicators or 'Red Flags' that highlight abuse as a possible issue. The following comments heard in this segment are indicators of potential abuse.

- At the front door of the house once Mrs. Campbell learns Danny has lost his job she states "Oh Danny, not again". From this statement, we can assume that **Danny has apparently had trouble in the past holding a job.**

As in most cases, abuse is a pattern of behavior that occurs over a period of time. In all likelihood Danny has been at his mom's door in the past asking for her assistance for the same problem.

- At the front door in response to his mom Danny states "Yeah, Danny gets shafted again, mom. It's not like I asked for it you know." The foundation of abuse is one person's use of power and control to influence another person's behavior. In this case, Danny is not taking responsibility for the situation; he is expressing frustration and blaming others. Additionally, **he is using guilt to manipulate his mom** to allow him to stay there.

- Both at the door and at the breakfast table we hear Danny's laissez-faire attitude about the living and financial arrangement. At the front door Danny states that he will be staying "only a few days, a week at the most, just till



Elder Abuse: Speakers Notes Power Point Presentation (for a professional audience)

Danny Returns

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I get back on my feet" – he has no clear time frame and apparently has no alternate plan. At the kitchen table he states that he is keeping track of the money he has borrowed from mom in his head - "It's all up here" (pointing to his head) – In all likelihood **he is not keeping accurate account** which is going to impact the amount he repays (if any).

Q.) What Could Mrs. Campbell Do To Protect Herself?

A.) Set Clear Boundaries

When Danny arrives at his mom's door Mrs. Campbell invites her son into the home with little discussion. It is important in situations such as this one to first discuss the needs and boundaries of both parties. We know that it is relatively easy to set boundaries in relationships that don't mean much to us – it is in the relationships that mean the most to us (such as with Danny and his Mom) that it becomes most difficult to set boundaries. Despite the difficulty, having a discussion around boundaries sets the necessary parameters for the situation. Mrs. Campbell could have taken the lead and informed Danny of the length of time he was able to stay with her.

Remember, setting a boundary is not trying to control another person's behavior, rather it is defining what is acceptable to us. It is not enough to set a boundary – it is also important to set consequences that we are willing to enforce. It is not always necessary or appropriate to share what these consequences will be with the other person, but it is important to know what the consequences will be and to be willing to enforce them.

A.) Keep Accurate Records Of All Monies Loaned

At the kitchen table Mrs. Campbell asks her son if he is keeping track of what he owes her. Danny replies "Ya Ya, I've got it all up here (pointing to his head) what do you think I am going to shaft you or something?" A loan between relatives, friends, and other persons you know can occur without undo strain on a relationship. The key is to establish expectations and limits. Mrs. Campbell could have taken the lead to keep track of the money being loaned to Danny. In writing down the amounts of money she had been providing him she is in a position to recognize the total amount she is owed. If able, a contract which each party reviews and signs is another way to avoid any misunderstanding in the future.



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Slide 10 - Risk Factors

Abuse of older adults is a complex issue, with no single explanation. Many factors seem to contribute to abuse and each case has its own unique mix of factors. Some of these risk factors include:

History Of Spousal Abuse: "Many older adults, who have been in troubled marriages characterized by abuse, will continue to be abused by their spouses."

Family Dynamics: "Values, habits and methods of handling problems and feelings are learned early in life, largely through family interaction. A child, who has been exposed to family violence while growing up, may become abusive."

Isolation: "Isolation can conceal and perpetuate abuse or neglect. An older adult, who lives alone, with few family members or friends nearby, may be at risk. If imposed, isolation can also be a form of mistreatment."

Troubled Relatives, Friends Or Neighbours: "People who abuse or neglect older adults are often functioning only marginally themselves and are ill-equipped to handle the responsibility of others."

Inability To Cope With Long-Term Caregiving: "Sometimes caregivers react to the stress of too many responsibilities in inappropriate ways such as abusing or neglecting the older adults in their care."

Institutional Conditions: "Some long-term care facilities maintain a workforce that is overworked, poorly trained and undervalued. This may lead to neglect or abuse of residents."

Ageism And Lack Of Knowledge About The Aging Process: "Abuse and Neglect can result from the negative stereotype of older adults having no useful role, combined with non-acceptance of the increasing dependence that accompanies old age."

Society's Acceptance Of Violence: "Canadians see violence in the news, in sports and movies and on television shows. This wide exposure often leads to a general acceptance or tolerance of violence as an acceptable way of venting frustration or anger. This tolerance creates an environment which can contribute to abuse and neglect of older adults."



Elder Abuse: Speakers Notes Power Point Presentation (for a professional audience)

Barriers To Disclosure

- ◆ Fear
- ◆ Love for the abuser
- ◆ Lack of / or impaired understanding
- ◆ Shame and / or guilt
- ◆ Unaware of resources / options
- ◆ Acceptance of abuse or neglect as normal

Source: Edmonton Elder Abuse Intervention Team
Abuse and Neglect of Older Adults - Resource and Training Kit for Service Providers

Slide 11 - Barriers To Disclosure

It is not always possible to know the full extent of abuse of older adults. Those who are being abused may be unwilling – or unable – to report it due to:

Fear:

- Of being punished for reporting
- Of institutionalization
- Of rejection or abandonment by other family members
- Of losing their caregiver or other family members including grandchildren
- That the disclosure will reflect poorly upon their family

Love For The Abuser: The senior often does not want to see the abuser criticized or face consequences for the behavior.

Lack Of / Or Impaired Understanding: This may be due to medical disability or mental impairment or inappropriate medication

Shame And / Or Guilt: The senior often blames him/herself for the behavior of the children even when the children are adults. The senior may also believe that it was something they did that brought on the abuse.

Unaware Of Resource Options: The senior who either believes abuse is a private family issue or who is unaware of the community supports and services available to assist them will be more hesitant to openly identify with this issue.

Acceptance Of Abuse Or Neglect As Normal: The abuse may be seen as a typical pattern of behavior in the family; abusers may learn to be abusive by witnessing or experiencing it. Additionally, the abuse is a product of society's general tolerance and acceptance of violence (i.e.) children's toys, movie content, and the methods used by nations to solve conflict.

Source: Edmonton Elder Abuse Intervention Team
Abuse and Neglect of Older Adults - Resource and Training Kit for Service Providers,
Health Canada 1994



Elder Abuse: Speakers Notes Power Point Presentation (for a professional audience)

Elder Abuse In Ethno - cultural Communities

- Family Violence exists in all communities and cuts across all ethno-cultural, racial, class, socio-economic and religious groups
- Some unique barriers for immigrant seniors:
 - Language Barriers
 - Social Isolation
 - Financially Dependent
 - Emotionally Dependent
 - Cultural Taboos

Source: Abuse in Ethno-cultural & New Immigrant Communities

Slide 12 - Elder Abuse In Ethno-cultural Communities

“Family Violence exists in all communities and cuts across all ethno-cultural, racial, class, socio-economic and religious groups. Victims of family violence in new Canadian, refugee and ethno-cultural communities which are not ‘main stream’ often face additional challenges and barriers in escaping family violence.” These include:

Language Barriers: “An inability to communicate in either official language could leave a senior susceptible to abuse and exploitation. Language barriers can result in dependence and isolation making both disclosure and access to services significantly more difficult.”

Social Isolation: “Physical limitations or an unfamiliarity with surrounding communities can leave New Canadian seniors vulnerable to abuse. In the absence of a social network, abuse may be more easily hidden and seniors are unlikely to seek help.”

Financially Dependant: “Many new Canadian seniors do not have savings or a pension when arriving in Canada. Often they become financially dependent on their children or caregiver - increasing the potential for neglect or exploitation.”

Emotionally Dependant: Adult children or other family members may take advantage of a senior’s emotional dependence through manipulation or neglect. “Threats to withdraw sponsorship can cause seniors to refrain from reporting. As well, fear of abandonment, deportation and institutionalization often deters seniors from disclosing abuse. These fears are often rooted in a lack of understanding of their legal and human rights or a fear of the Canadian Justice System.”

Cultural Taboos: “Cultural Taboos against revealing “private” family issues serve as another deterrent against reporting abuse - seniors are reluctant to ‘bring shame’ to their families.”

Source: Abuse in Ethno-cultural & New Immigrant Communities - Department of Community Service Government of Nova Scotia

Elder Abuse: Speakers Notes Power Point Presentation (for a professional audience)



Slide 13 – Video Segment # 2



Betty Is Concerned

- ◆ Does Betty have reason to be concerned – Why?
 - ◆ Seniors rarely are the 1st to identify the issue
 - ◆ Seniors who report will likely under-report details
- ◆ Contributing factors:
 - ◆ Dependency
 - ◆ Alcohol
- ◆ Why might Mrs. Campbell be in denial?
 - ◆ Embarrassed
 - ◆ Minimizing the situation
 - ◆ Sees situation as normal
 - ◆ Unfamiliar with support services

Slide 14 - Betty is Concerned

Q.) Does Betty Have Reason To Be Concerned – Why?

A.) Seniors Rarely Are The First To Identify The Issue:

Recognizing and divulging abuse is a difficult process for a senior. Often an outsider recognizes or labels the abuse before the victim does. The victim may deny or refuses to accept the behavior as abuse. They may be embarrassed, blame themselves or not want to disclose an issue that they see as private. In fact, in Edmonton in 2003, the Elder Abuse Intervention Team received over 700 calls regarding situations of elder abuse. The majority of these calls and the subsequent referrals came from concerned 3rd parties.

A.) Seniors Who Report Will Likely Under-Report Details:

When a senior does reach out for help, often it is done indirectly. The term “abuse” is not often used. Terms with lesser impact such as “being taken advantage of” are used or the issue is hidden beneath other presenting problems. For example, Mrs. Campbell may phone a local social service agency and ask for assistance for her son who has been unable to find a job.

A.) Contributing Factors:

Often there are factors that contribute to the risk of abuse occurring. These can include:

Dependency:

“Some researchers have suggested that there is an association between the abuse and presence of physical, emotional and financial dependencies between abusers and their older adult victims. For example, older adults who become more powerless, vulnerable and dependent on their caregivers may be at higher risk for abuse. Other research has shown the reverse — in some cases, abusers may, in fact, be dependent on the older adults they victimize — and the abuse may be linked to the abuser’s sense of powerlessness.”

Source: Abuse Of Older Adults: A Fact Sheet From The Department Of Justice Canada

Alcohol:

Alcohol or drug use which can lead to a break-down in a person’s inhibition. Thus, a person with an alcohol or drug problem may abuse the senior, either physically, psychologically or financially. According to Charmaine Spencer of Simon Fraser University “a study examining elder abuse case files from agencies across Canada found that severe drinking bouts by the abuser lead

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- Does Betty have reason to be concerned – Why?
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- Contributing factors:
 - Dependency
 - Alcohol
- Why might Mrs. Campbell be in denial?
 - Embarrassed
 - Minimizing the situation
 - Sees situation as normal
 - Unfamiliar with support services

up to the abuse in 14.6% of the cases. In another 18.7% of the client records, the clients indicated that the abuse was secondary to alcoholism.”

Source: Alcohol and Seniors Abuse Cases by Charmaine Spencer

In this scenario, Danny has become dependant on his Mom for housing and finances. Additionally, it seems that alcohol use is a large part of Danny’s life. With the presence of these two contributing factors the risk for abuse to occur is greater.

Q.) Why Might Mrs. Campbell Be In Denial?

A.) Embarrassed:

Seniors often find it difficult to admit to experiencing abuse when the abuser is a close family member or caregiver. If the abuser is an adult child the senior may be embarrassed and blame themselves for the abusive behaviour. They may want to protect the adult child from consequences, and think that they as a parent can invoke a change in behavior. When Mrs. Campbell called Danny into the kitchen to inquire if he had applied at the grocery store Danny entered the kitchen stating “Yeah, yeah. What is it now, mom? God, I’m getting’ tired of all your -- (when he notices Mrs. King his attitude changes) -- Oh, hi, Mrs. King.” Before Danny leaves the kitchen he asks for an additional \$30.00 dollars. When his mom questions why he needs more money so soon Danny gets upset saying “It’s not cheap looking for a job, mom. You gonna give me the thirty bucks or not?” Mrs. Campbell seems to be embarrassed by Danny’s behaviour and quickly rummages through her purse for money.

A.) Minimizing The Situation:

Seniors may have difficulty facing the reality that the situation is abuse. They may instead see it as a minor conflict or as a set of unfortunate circumstances. When speaking to Betty at the kitchen table, Mrs. Campbell appears troubled over the situation with Danny but minimizes the circumstances by stating “You worry too much, Betty. Danny’s going to get a job. He’s really trying. He told me he has plans to become a truck driver. Wouldn’t that be wonderful? I hear they make a lot of money.”

A.) See Situation As Normal:

In some cases, elder abuse may be part of a long standing cycle of violence in the family. The person who abuses an elderly parent may have experienced abuse themselves at some level. In this scenario, it seems that Danny has experienced job loss in the past and may have sought his mom’s assistance; this may not be the first incident of financial and emotional abuse.


A.) Unfamiliar With Support Services:

Empowerment is the first step towards stopping the abuse. The abused senior needs to be informed that they have the right to live life free of abuse and that there are services that can assist them to break the cycle of abuse. If a senior believe they are alone in addressing abusive behavior the situation can seem insurmountable.

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Slides 15– 20 – Indicators

Given the reluctance of seniors to disclose an abusive situation it is vital that we be alert to the possible indicators of abuse. In assessing any situation, it is important to realize that an indicator may be present for reasons other than abuse or neglect. However, if a combination of the following indicators are present there is a need to further explore why those indicators are present.



Indicators Of Physical Abuse

- ◆ Unexplained injuries such as bruising, burns, fractures, or lacerations
- ◆ Medical attention sought from a variety of doctors or clinics
- ◆ Injuries have not received proper medical attention
- ◆ History of accidents/injuries

Source: Edmonton Elder Abuse Intervention Team Abuse and Neglect of Older Adults - Resource and Training Kit for Service Providers

Slide 15 – Indicators Of Physical Abuse

- Unexplained injuries such as bruising, burns, fractures, or lacerations
- Medical attention sought from a variety of doctors or clinics
- Injuries have not received proper medical attention
- History of accidents/injuries

Source: Edmonton Elder Abuse Intervention Team Abuse and Neglect of Older Adults - Resource and Training Kit for Service Providers, Health Canada 1994



Indicators Of Emotional Abuse


- ◆ Changes in affect
 - ◆ Fear, Passive, Withdrawn
- ◆ Low self esteem
- ◆ Reluctance to talk openly
- ◆ Inconsistent statements (not from mental confusion)
- ◆ Waits for caregiver to respond
- ◆ Insomnia, fatigue, listlessness
- ◆ Notable behavioral changes
 - ◆ Appetite, Social Interaction

Source: Edmonton Elder Abuse Intervention Team Abuse and Neglect of Older Adults - Resource and Training Kit for Service Providers

Slide 16 – Indicators Of Emotional Abuse

- Changes in affect
 - fear, passive, withdrawn
- Low self esteem
- Reluctance to talk openly
- Inconsistent statements (not from mental confusion)
- Waits for caregiver to respond
- Insomnia, fatigue, listlessness
- Notable behavioral changes
 - appetite, social interaction

Source: Edmonton Elder Abuse Intervention Team Abuse and Neglect of Older Adults - Resource and Training Kit for Service Providers, Health Canada 1994



Indicators Of Financial Abuse

- ◆ An older adult has signed a document (i.e. property deed) without full understanding
- ◆ An older adult has a lack of financial choices / decisions
- ◆ Family members moving in without agreement / shared costs
- ◆ Unexplained discrepancy between known income and standard of living
- ◆ Unusual bank / ATM activity
- ◆ Possessions disappearing

Source: Edmonton Elder Abuse Intervention Team Abuse and Neglect of Older Adults - Resource and Training Kit for Service Providers


Slide 17– Indicators Of Financial Abuse

- An older adult has signed a document (i.e. property deed) without full understanding
- An older adult has a lack of financial choices / decisions
- Family members moving in without agreement / shared costs
- Unexplained discrepancy between known income and standard of living
- Unusual bank / ATM activity
- Possessions disappearing

Source: Edmonton Elder Abuse Intervention Team Abuse and Neglect of Older Adults - Resource and Training Kit for Service Providers, Health Canada 1994


Elder Abuse: Speakers Notes

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Indicators Of Neglect (Active or Passive)

- ◆ Malnutrition, Dehydration, Weight Loss
- ◆ Medical treatment being withheld
- ◆ Missing dentures, glasses, hearing aid
- ◆ Necessities of life not being met
- ◆ Lack of safety precautions or supervision if necessary
- ◆ Clothing threadbare / inappropriate



Source: Edmonton Elder Abuse Intervention Team Abuse and Neglect of Older Adults - Resource and Training Kit for Service Providers

Slide 18 - Indicators Of Neglect (Active & Passive)

- Malnutrition, Dehydration, Weight Loss
- Medical treatment being withheld
- Missing dentures, glasses, hearing aid
- Necessities of life not being met
- Lack of safety precautions or supervision if necessary
- Clothing threadbare / inappropriate

Source: Edmonton Elder Abuse Intervention Team Abuse and Neglect of Older Adults - Resource and Training Kit for Service Providers, Health Canada 1994



Indicators Of Medication Abuse

- ◆ Reduced Mental or Physical Capacity
- ◆ Depression
- ◆ Heightened / Reduced / or Absent therapeutic response
- ◆ Prescriptions not being filled or being filled too often



Source: Edmonton Elder Abuse Intervention Team Abuse and Neglect of Older Adults - Resource and Training Kit for Service Providers

Slide 19 - Indicators Of Medication Abuse

- Reduced Mental or Physical Activity
- Depression
- Heightened / Reduced / or Absent therapeutic response
- Prescriptions not being filled or being filled too often

The following are possible factors for why medication abuse is occurring. A family member or caregiver may be over or under medicating:

- To control difficult behavior of the senior

OR


- To confuse the senior in order to gain control of finances, or speed the admission to a care facility

A family member or caregiver may not be filling prescription(s) for

- Financial reasons – they may be keeping the seniors money for themselves.


Medication may be stolen for self use or resale

Source: Edmonton Elder Abuse Intervention Team Abuse and Neglect of Older Adults - Resource and Training Kit for Service Providers, Health Canada 1994



Indicators Of Sexual Abuse

- ◆ Unwanted sexual suggestions, comments, materials
- ◆ Lack of personal privacy (watched)
- ◆ Unnecessary help with dressing / hygiene
- ◆ Unwanted sexual activity



Source: Edmonton Elder Abuse Intervention Team Abuse and Neglect of Older Adults - Resource and Training Kit for Service Providers

Slide 20 - Indicators Of Sexual Abuse

- Unwanted sexual suggestions, comments, materials
- Lack of personal privacy (being watched)
- Unnecessary help with dressing / hygiene
- Unwanted sexual activity


Source: Edmonton Elder Abuse Intervention Team Abuse and Neglect of Older Adults - Resource and Training Kit for Service Providers, Health Canada 1994

Elder Abuse: Speakers Notes

Power Point Presentation (for a professional audience)





Slide 21 - Video Segment # 3



Seeking Assistance

- ◆ Who can assist? How?
 - ◆ Family / Friends / Neighbours
 - ◆ The Police
 - ◆ Other Professionals
- ◆ What did Mrs. Campbell tell the police?
 - ◆ "I'm having a problem with my son"
 - ◆ she did not say "I have been assaulted"
- ◆ Mrs. Campbell received information & help in at least 3 areas – What are they?
 - ◆ a) Setting boundaries
 - ◆ b) Safety planning
 - ◆ c) Protection order information

Slide 22 – Seeking Assistance

Q.) Who Can Assist? How?

A.) Family / Friends / Neighbors:

Those in regular contact with a senior are normally more aware of the seniors' regular routines and are better equipped to identify changes that may suggest abuse is an issue. Those closest to the senior are able to identify concerns, provide emotional support and assist the senior to reach out to services and resources.

A.) The Police:

Victims don't always realize that they can get help, believing that it is not a criminal matter where police can intervene. Calling the police is an important part of protecting yourself or others who may be experiencing abuse. Police can assist callers to clarify if the situation is criminal in nature and can provide information on other community resources.

If a crime has been committed, police can lay charges. Some victims of elder abuse may not be physically or mentally capable of taking the initiative to charge their abuser. Some victims are more likely to support prosecution of an abuser if they are not personally responsible for the abuser's arrest.

Additionally, police can assist a senior to access a protection orders based on their needs and connect the senior to other health or social services as needed.

A.) Other Professionals:

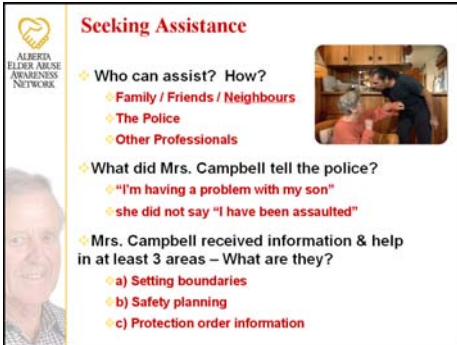
If you are being abused, or if you know someone who may be being abused, you can seek information and support from health and social service professionals.

They can:

- Connect the senior with services that can assist them to be more independent, particularly from their abusers.
- Assist the social isolated senior to reconnect with family, friends and community supports.
- Provide caregivers with information and connect to services that will lessen caregiver stress.

Elder Abuse: Speakers Notes

Power Point Presentation (for a professional audience)



Seeking Assistance

- Who can assist? How?
 - Family / Friends / Neighbours
 - The Police
 - Other Professionals
- What did Mrs. Campbell tell the police?
 - "I'm having a problem with my son"
 - she did not say "I have been assaulted"
- Mrs. Campbell received information & help in at least 3 areas – What are they?
 - a) Setting boundaries
 - b) Safety planning
 - c) Protection order information

- Advocate for the safety and well being of cognitively impaired clients
- Provide information and support to the senior through the court process if charges have been laid.
- Refer the abuser to services that can assist with understanding and managing their behavior, or address other concerns like finances, housing, drug and alcohol abuse etc.
- Support the senior who wants to maintain a safe relationship with his or her abuser.

Q.) What Did Mrs. Campbell Tell The Police?

A.) Mrs. Campbell likely told the Police **I'm having a problem with my son" she did not say "I have been assaulted."** Had Mrs. Campbell explained that her son had been demanding money and has now escalated to physically grabbing her, the response would have been different. It is important to remember that most seniors will not fully disclose a situation of abuse for a variety of reasons. All professionals need to remember to speak with the senior in a private setting, take the time to understand the situation fully and often may have to directly ask if abuse is an issue.

Q.) Mrs. Campbell Received Information & Help In At Least Three Areas – What were they?

A.) Setting Boundaries:

The purpose of boundaries is to protect and take care of ourselves. We need to be able to tell other people when they are acting in ways that are not acceptable to us. No one deserves to be treated abusively and saying "no" to abuse is a vital step in taking back control in an abusive situation. Since we last saw Mrs. Campbell someone, likely Betty, has assisted her in setting a boundary and knowing what to do (call the police) when it is violated.

B.) Safety Planning:

The most important step you can take with an abused senior is to build a safety plan. The purpose of safety planning with any victim of abuse is to identify risks relevant to their situation and to build strategies to reduce those risks and increase safety. Remember, abuse is often a pattern and therefore when abuse has occurred once it is likely to happen again and may escalate. The main focuses of a safety plan is to highlight strategies and resources the senior can use to escape or avoid further abuse.

C.) Information On Protection Orders:

An important step in intervention is ensuring to connect the senior to those supports and services that can assist them to maintain their decision to live free of abuse. In this case, the Police informed Mrs. Campbell about an Emergency Protection Order. This is an order that police can assist a victim to obtain from the court to provide for immediate protection to an abused family member by placing restrictive conditions on the abuser.

There are other protection orders available that might be more appropriate in other situations depending upon the circumstances. If a person has questions about which order is most appropriate for a given situation it is important to talk to the police or a lawyer.

Elder Abuse: Speakers Notes

Power Point Presentation (for a professional audience)

Where Might Help Be Available?

- ◆ Family Physicians
- ◆ Seniors Outreach Workers
- ◆ Healthcare Workers
- ◆ Home Care
- ◆ Public Health Nurse
- ◆ Social Workers
- ◆ Office of the Public Guardian
- ◆ Office of the Public Trustee
- ◆ Mental Health Workers
- ◆ Shelter Workers
- ◆ AADAC
- ◆ Income and Other Support Services
- ◆ Housing Services
- ◆ Support Groups for Caregivers
- ◆ Etc.

When the abuse is against the law (i.e. theft, assault, etc.) the police are the most appropriate resource and should be contacted immediately.

Slide 23 - Where Might Help Be Available?

As you have heard to this point, the issue of elder abuse is a complex problem and the dynamics in each case can be different. Therefore, the response has to be individualized and may require a number of resources. Consider the list of agencies and professionals on this slide as a starting point. Your community may have a direct response to the issue of elder abuse or may have other agencies that are not listed here where help may be available. Remember, given the various types of elder abuse and the number of possible contributing factors, a multi-disciplinary approach to prevention and intervention is often considered the best way to deal with the problem.

Intervention Tools

- A**cknowledge
- B**arriers
- U**rgency
- S**creen
- E**mpower
- R**efers

Source: Council Against Abuse Of Older Adults et al.

Slide 24 - Intervention Tools

The following six steps can guide the response any professional who is involved with a senior where abuse is suspected.

Acknowledge: “Suspicion of abuse may develop over time.” It is important to document what we are told and what we observe. As someone who is external to the situation we have the ability to step back and look at the situation over time. After listening carefully to the senior it is often possible to develop a timeline of abusive events or situations. This allows us to highlight for the senior the role abuse has played and possibly how it has escalated. Often, when a senior is provided with this picture they are more able to accept the situation as abuse and move forward with change.

Barriers: We need to be cognizant that seniors who have experienced abuse are faced with many barriers that may be preventing them from openly acknowledging the issue. These include “fear of retaliation, withdrawal or caregiver support, confidentiality.” We need to be sensitive to these barriers and attempt to address them. When we can address and possibly alleviate the barriers we will be better able to support the senior to break the cycle of abuse.

Urgency: In any situation of abuse we need to assess “immediate risk of physical harm or if basic necessities of life are provided.” If either of these is an issue the senior needs to be supported to connect with the police or other services that can help them address these immediate needs.

Screen: “We need to assess the person’s ability to help themselves.” If competency is a concern we need to advocate for further assessment to better understand what decisions the senior is capable of making on their own. Additionally, if the senior is unable to meet their daily care needs we should be assisting the senior to connect with those support services that are appropriate.

Empower: Every senior deserves to know that they have the right to live life free of abuse and should be supported to develop their own safety plan. Additionally, they have the right to know and be connected to those services that can assist them to break the cycle of abuse. Knowledge is power and change begins with understanding the resources and options.

Refer: The issue of elder abuse is complex and we can not expect to be able

Elder Abuse: Speakers Notes

Power Point Presentation (for a professional audience)

to address the issue alone. It is important to “seek support or consultation from other professionals” and services. Remember, the best response to elder abuse is a multi-disciplinary approach.

Source: Council Against Abuse Of Older Adults et al., Hamilton Ont.



Older Adult Knowledge Network (OAK-NET)

- ◆ www.oak-net.org
- ◆ Describes types of abuse within fictional stories
- ◆ Provides a guide to definitions, legal processes, legal action and prevention measures
- ◆ Provides listing of resources for both major Alberta cities and province wide

Slide 24 – Older Adult Knowledge Network (OAK-NET)

This website describes different types of abuse in non-institutional settings and how Canadian law protects older adults. The information provided on this site will give you a general understanding of the issue and possible legal actions. Additionally, the site contains an index of resources across the province.



Future Direction

- ◆ Elder Abuse is a growing issue
- ◆ We must continue to create awareness
- ◆ We must collaborate on community driven, sustainable initiatives

Slide 25 – Future Direction

Awareness: As you have heard, elder abuse is a growing issue; therefore, we need to continue to create awareness. Knowledge is power. If older adults are aware that they do not have to accept abuse and know where to turn for help it allows them to protect themselves.

It is especially important for professionals to be able to identify when seniors are abused and to intervene constructively and appropriately. Education and training of professionals is a critical prevention effort.

Additionally, it is essential to promote public awareness of elder abuse. It is everyone's responsibility to take action against this growing issue and to offer support to victims in a manner that encourages them to get help.


Community Driven Initiatives: Communities come in all sizes and shapes; therefore each community response needs to be tailored to the community's needs. A common thread however, is the need for collaboration. It is very important to assist each other in addressing the complex needs that most clients have. No one agency can do it all. We need each other to “intervene” successfully with the issue of elder abuse



Slide 26 – Video Segment # 4


Elder Abuse: Speakers Notes

Power Point Presentation (for a professional audience)



Intervention & Prevention

- ◆ Why is Mrs. Campbell reluctant to report?
 - ◆ She's afraid of her son
 - ◆ Does not want her son jailed
 - ◆ Hopelessness of finding solutions
- ◆ What should the response include?
 - ◆ Conduct a full investigation
 - ◆ Arrest Danny / Ask for "no contact" conditions
 - ◆ Review Safety Plan
 - ◆ Provide Information / Connect With Community Resources



Slide 27 – Intervention & Prevention

Q.) Why Is Mrs. Campbell Reluctant To Report?

A.) She's Afraid Of Her Son:

Fear is often a barrier for seniors experiencing abuse. They may be fearful of further abuse or of losing their family connections. In some situations if the abuser is also a caregiver, senior may be fearful of losing the independence they have and being placed into a care facility if the caregiver is removed and unable to provide the care the senior needs.

A.) Does Not Want Her Son Jailed:

Many victims of abuse are concerned about what will happen to the abuser. As the abuser is often a loved one, it is difficult for the senior to know that speaking out may lead to legal consequences. Seniors often don't want to see their loved one punished for their behavior; they simply want the behavior to change.

A.) Hopelessness Of Finding Solutions:

Abuse is generally perpetrated behind closed doors, in isolation, which heightens the abuser's power and control over the victim. Seniors may not be aware that there are resources in the community that can assist them to break the cycle of abuse. If a senior is not aware of what help is available, they will not seek assistance; choosing to live in a situation that feels hopeless. Mrs. Campbell, seemed distressed about the situation with Danny, however she also seems reluctant to reach out for assistance. Mrs. Campbell may not be aware of the resources available to assist her.

Q.) What Should The Response Include?

A.) Conduct A Full Investigation:

Police officers are being trained to deal with issues of elder abuse more effectively. Elder abuse has moved from being a private family matter to being a public issue, which can be criminal in nature. Police officers are becoming more aware of the indicators, contributing factors and intervention strategies. If criminal in nature, a report of elder abuse deserves the same attention as other criminal matters.

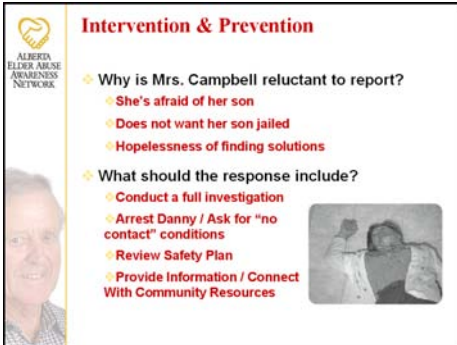
A.) Arrest Danny / Ask For "No Contact" Conditions:

The most important factor when addressing an issue of elder abuse is that of the senior's safety. Through the arrest process police officers have the ability to request no contact conditions to be instated. This will allow restrictions to be placed on the abuser to not contact or try to communicate with the person they have abused until they appear in court to deal this the charges.

A.) Review Safety Plan:

A safety plan must be fluid and change with the situation. Even though the senior has left the situation or had the abuser removed and a court protection order is in place; safety is still a concern. Often the abuser will attempt to contact the senior to re-establish the relationship and their control over the senior. Therefore, great attention needs to be given to reviewing and reinforcing the safety plan. The senior should be prepared for this possibility

Elder Abuse: Speakers Notes Power Point Presentation (for a professional audience)



Intervention & Prevention

- ◆ Why is Mrs. Campbell reluctant to report?
 - ◆ She's afraid of her son
 - ◆ Does not want her son jailed
 - ◆ Hopelessness of finding solutions
- ◆ What should the response include?
 - ◆ Conduct a full investigation
 - ◆ Arrest Danny / Ask for "no contact" conditions
 - ◆ Review Safety Plan
 - ◆ Provide information / Connect With Community Resources

and know what they will do in such a situation.

A.) Provide Information / Connect With Community Resources:

No one agency will have all the relevant supports and services needed. Therefore, a multi-disciplinary approach is often the best way to address cases of elder abuse. Supports and services may include legal aid and court support, counseling, housing, transportation, financial assistance, and mental or physical health services. With the appropriate supports and resources in place a senior is better able to continue living a life free of abuse.

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