

Newfoundland and Labrador Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (NLNPEA)



World Elder Abuse Awareness Day: June 15th

In 2006, the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse proclaimed June 15 as World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD).

The purpose of the day is to remind us that elder abuse and the neglect of the elderly is a problem around the world and that it is often not recognized or treated.

This year in our province, the NL Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (www.nlnpea.ca) will be marking the day by holding an open public meeting on June 15 at 9:30am (island time). The meeting will be held in St. John's (details on next page), but will be accessible provincially by teleconference and webinar.

This WEAAD meeting will feature several short presentations on a variety of issues related to elder abuse, including: the Neglected Adult Act, the new Adult Protection Act which will replace this legislation, financial elder abuse, and more.

For more information on World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, please see: <http://www.cnpea.ca/WEAAD.htm>

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Marking WEAAD in Newfoundland and Labrador

Please join the NL Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse on:

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

JUNE 15, 2012

When: June 15, 2012 from 9:30 to 11:30 am (island time)

Where: Bethesda Pentecostal Church (Multi-purpose room), 1 Escasoni Place, St. John's (near the intersection of MacDonald Drive and Portugal Cove Road)

Connect with other professionals and members of the public interested in preventing elder abuse. Find out what is happened provincially and nationally to end elder abuse. All are welcome to this public meeting. Refreshments will be served.

Featuring several short presentations, including:

- ◆ "The Adult Protection Act" by Suzanne Brake, Director, Office for Aging and Seniors
- ◆ "The Neglected Adults Welfare Act" by Norman Matthews, Social Worker for Neglected Adult Community Support Programs, Eastern Health
- ◆ "Financial Abuse: Being Aware and Knowing Where to Seek Assistance" by Stephen Walsh, Counsellor, Credit Counselling Services of Atlantic Canada
- ◆ and more...

Can't attend in person? Please join us by teleconference or webconference!

To join us by teleconference:

Dial: 1-866-613-5223 When prompted, enter conference access code: 7360114
Once you've joined us by teleconference for the sound portion of the meeting, you are also welcome to join us by **webconference** to access any presentation slides we have. All you need is a computer with an internet connection (and a phone for the audio portion).

Just go to: <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/join/304461938>

Meeting ID: 304-461-938

Elder Abuse – It's not right!

By Jorge VanSlyke BSW, RSW

The World Health Organization defines elder abuse as “a single or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust, which causes harm or distress to an older person. It can be the result of intentional or unintentional neglect.”

Delving deeper, the dichotomous use of action or lack of action, intentional or unintentional, single or repeated, resonated with Thompson's (1997) having “no middle ground with oppression, that social work intervention either adds to oppression, condones it through non-action, or does something to ease or break oppression.”

Any form of abuse involves power over a disadvantaged group and is an inherent aspect of oppression. However, it is not the explicit form of abuse that I would like to focus on but the implicit form, the unconscious recognition of biases and prejudices against older people, the hands-off attitude that regards elder abuse as “other's” concern and “not in my backyard”, and the ageist attitudes that exist.

Hughes and Mtezuka (1992, as seen in Thompson, 1997) defined ageism as a “social process through which negative images of and attitudes towards older people, based solely on the characteristics of old age itself; result in discrimination.” We have been socialized to view aging as becoming useless, asexual, unintelligent, and incapable. Being old has also been equated to being child-like and yet, we may not consider older adults' issues as important as that of children's especially in terms of protective services. If we stop for a moment and look within ourselves with complete honesty, how much of these prejudices have unknowingly affected our decisions, our words, and our actions? How often have we passed around and laughed at ageist jokes, especially during coffee breaks, and not fully understanding that this is perpetuating ageism?

When I graduated from university in 2000, I remembered thinking how I would never work with the seniors' population because, in hindsight, I viewed this stage of life as the end, that nothing more could be done, that my newly acquired repertoire of interventions did not fit the “old and the dying.”

Continued on next page

Elder Abuse – It's not right! (Continued)

My current work in long-term care has shown me otherwise. I have developed a better understanding and appreciation of the complexities of issues that seniors face, from individual needs, to challenges within the family context, and systemic barriers. Issues are compounded with various forms of disabilities, emotional and psychological issues of separation, losses, and grief, and the increasing number of dementia diagnosis.

Over 13 percent of Newfoundland and Labrador's population is over the age of 65 and it is projected to increase up to 27 percent by 2026 (DHCS, 2006). This significantly impacts the social work profession as our clientele landscape changes. We can no longer set aside geriatric issues and consider it as an optional skill, but as something that we need to have as professional foundation if we want to continue being relevant and responsive to societal needs. We also need to become familiar with the resources that exist in addressing and preventing elder abuse.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (NLNPEA) was officially launched in October 2011 during a symposium that focused on the "Prevention of Elder Abuse: A Shared Responsibility". Diverse stakeholders within the province came together to discuss existing policies, various forms of abuse towards older adults, and most of all, to discuss the next steps that the organization should take in initiating a network of responses that will address this issue.

The only provincial policy that partially addresses elder abuse is the Neglected Adults Welfare Act of 1973, which will remain in effect until the new Adult Protection Act is proclaimed. This is a cause for celebration because our province is formally putting mechanisms in place to better protect the rights of older adults from various forms of abuse.

References:

1. Department of Health and Community Services. NL. (2006). Healthy Aging for All in the 21st Century – Senior's Profile. Retrieved November 10, 2011 from <http://www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/publications/seniorsprofile.pdf>.
2. Thompson, N. (1997). *Anti-discriminatory Practice* (2nd ED.), Basingstoke: Macmillan.
3. World Health Organization. (2011). *Ageing and Life Course*. Retrieved November 13, 2011 from http://www.who.int/ageing/projects/elder_abuse/en/

NLNPEA NEWS

Public Meetings

The NLNPEA meets on the last Tuesday of every month (except in July, August, and December). Meetings usually take place in St. Johns, but are accessible provincially by teleconference and webinar. Our next meeting date is September 25th. Watch our website for further details: http://www.nlnpea.ca/Event_postings



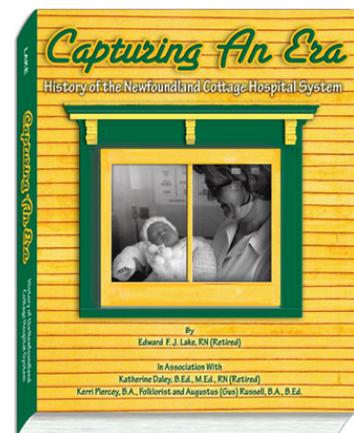
Our Newsletter

Our newsletters are published quarterly. They are also available on our website at www.nlnpea.ca/newsletters_resources. If you have any news to be included in our newsletter, would like to contribute an article, or have a suggestion or comment for us, please let us know. Content deadline for the next newsletter is August. 7. We also accept news and event listings for our website anytime. Please send your content to eanetwork@seniorsresource.ca. We would love to hear from you!



Support the NLNPEA with a purchase of *Capturing an Era: History of the Newfoundland Cottage Hospital System*

Produced by the Health Archives and Museum of Newfoundland and Labrador, this 496-page book tells the history of the Newfoundland cottage hospital system. This book makes a great present for anyone who grew up with this system. Books are \$25 each (plus shipping if applicable) and all proceeds go to the NL Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse. For more information call the Seniors Resource Centre at 1-800-563-5599 or email eanetwork@seniorsresource.ca.



Programs/Services from our Members

The Drive Wise Program

By Cst Kevin Foley, RNC, and Sgt. Wayne Newell, RCMP

Drive Wise is a free seminar that introduces a shopping basket of tips, suggestions and driving strategies, which are preventive measures against the most likely causes of collisions and mishaps faced by mature Canadians on the road.

Drive Wise attendees receive important handout materials at each presentation. These materials promote suggestions for a safer and more enjoyable driving experience.

The philosophical core of Drive Wise encourages seniors to take a preventative, go-slow and common sense approach to driving. "Drive Wise gives concrete advice on how to avoid the most likely scenarios causing collisions," says Drive Wise Director of Logistics and Communications James Pasternak.

Drive Wise can be traced back to mid-2002 when Sgt. Bob Paterson (now retired) of the OPP's Caledon, Ontario detachment observed a growing demand for driver education for mature Canadians. And for good reason. Drivers 50 years of age and over have become the fastest growing demographic on the roads. This group has become concerned about preserving their independence through the safe operation of a motor vehicle.

In June 2003, CARP, Canada's Association for the Fifty-Plus was awarded the OPP's prestigious Partners in Community Safety award for its commitment to Drive Wise. Sgt. Paterson was awarded the 2003 Ministry of Transportation of Ontario Road Safety Achievement Award for his work on Drive Wise.

Drive Wise is a free driver refresher seminar for mature motorists.



The Drive Wise Program (Continued)

For the past nine years, communities have hosted the Drive Wise education seminar. This 45-minute presentation provides valuable safe-driving strategies for Canadians of all ages. It can also be a fun social event. Studies indicate that as Canadians age they face an increasing number of challenges behind the wheel.

In fact, while mature motorists on a per capita basis are not involved in more accidents than other age groups, once involved in a traffic mishap they are at greater risk of serious injury or death. Many older drivers are also concerned about the increased scrutiny of licensing authorities, incidents of aggressive driving on the road, and rising insurance rates.

The RNC and the RCMP can deliver this informative and enlightening 45-minute presentation in your area. There is no cost to attend a Drive Wise seminar for your area! To arrange a presentation, please contact your local RNC or RCMP Detachment today.

Provincial Events

Conference: Aging Research in NL – Achievements and Prospects

Theme: This conference will showcase research of relevance to aging in Newfoundland and Labrador

Date: September 24-25, 2012

Location: Pepsi Centre, Corner Brook, NL

For more information, go to: <http://www.nlcahr.mun.ca/news.php?readitem=128>

Join Us!

Membership in NLNPEA is free to any interested individual or group. To register, please visit our website at www.nlnpea.ca/membership_form, email us at eanetwork@seniorsresource.ca, or call the Seniors Resource Centre of NL at 1-800-563-5599.

Benefits of NLNPEA membership include:

- Free participation in monthly network meetings (attend in person in St. John's or via teleconference/webconference from another location in the province)
- Opportunity to network and connect regionally, provincially, and nationally
- Quarterly network newsletters
- Option to register for regular email announcements on elder abuse-related events
- A 15% discount on registration for network conferences and/or other educational events where there is a charge
- Opportunities to provide input on the direction of the network

NLNPEA members are individuals, community and government organizations, and private businesses with an interest in preventing elder abuse. Our members include:

CARP – NL
Central Health
Coalition Against Violence Avalon East
College of Licensed Practical Nurses of NL
Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy
Department of Health and Community Services
Dietitians of NL
Eastern Health
Eastern Long Term Care Association
Fédération des francophones de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador
Independent Living Resource Centre
Kenny's Pond Retirement Residence
Labrador Friendship Centre
Labrador Grenfell Health
Labrador South Homecare Inc.
Labrador West Status of Women Council
MUN, Department of Social Work

Newfoundland Aboriginal Women's Network
Newfoundland Labrador Housing Corp.
Nunatsiavut Department of Health
NWT Seniors' Society
Office for Aging and Seniors, Government of NL
Public Legal Information Association of NL
Réseau Santé en français de TNL
Royal Canadian Mounted Police
Royal Newfoundland Constabulary
Salvation Army Glenbrook Lodge
Seniors Wellness Committee, Western
St. Patrick's Mercy Home
Thistle Financial Services
Tiffany Village Retirement Residence
Transition House Association of NL
Victim Services
Violence Prevention Labrador
Western Health

NLNPEA would like to thank the Rotary Club of St. Johns Northwest for helping to make this newsletter possible. Development of NLNPEA was supported by funds from New Horizons for Seniors.