

The BeFAIR Project Evaluation Summary & Research Report

EVALUATION

Per section 4. of the Project Funding Agreement, the objectives were to undertake a research initiative on financial abuse of the elderly in the Niagara Region, and develop an intervention program model to address and assist seniors who are victims of financial abuse.

The project successfully accomplished both objectives. A research report follows this section and the proposed model is detailed in the accompanying document, “The BeFAIR Project Report”.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The original methodology was to document stories of financial abuse of older adults by obtaining stories from the public and providers of services for seniors, including volunteers. The stories were to be provided in writing on a brochure and return envelope (attached), via a toll free phone line 1-888-553-4312, by posting in a form on the web site www.befairproject.ca. 7,000 brochures were printed and distributed through inclusion in The Seniors Alert newsletter (2,600), inclusion in the volunteers’ newsletter of Community Support Services of Niagara (500), and at presentations to seniors groups and display tables at conferences and Seniors Fairs. The brochures, toll free line, and website were promoted through an announcement of funding article in the daily newspapers in Niagara, a full page article in The Seniors Alert newsletter, an e-blast to 758 community organizations, and an article in The Seniors Review (circulation 20,000). 6,000 “Niagara We Need Your Help” flyers promoting the toll free line, website, and project email (theteam@befairproject.ca) were distributed. The flyer, the dailies newspaper article, The Seniors Alert newsletter and The Seniors Review article are attached.

This methodology was developed in consultation with the Brock University Niagara Observatory which is mandated to do sociological research in Niagara Region. This methodology was not successful in eliciting the volume of stories required. The brochures provided **2**, the toll free line **3**, and the website **3**.

This methodology continued throughout the project but in addition documented incidents of elder financial abuse were sought. The Niagara Region Police Services Fraud Unit provided documentation of **731** incidents (broken down as Fraud 195, Scam/Fraud 211, Theft 325) for the year 2013. The Ontario Public Guardian and Trustee provided statistics on the number of cases of abuse of seniors through Power of Attorney: **299** (broken down as Family Member 191, Friend 72, Neighbour 29, Service Provider 5, Residence Staff 2) for the year 2013. The Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care provided the number of reported incidents of financial abuse of seniors in Niagara Region Long Term Care Facilities (from Critical Incident Reports submitted from the facilities to the

ministry in the Hamilton Niagara Haldiman Brant Local Health Integration Network) as **12** over the period July 2010 to 2013, based on the percentage of Long Term Care Facilities that are in Niagara Region. Reported senior financial abuse calls from Niagara to the Ontario Senior Safety Line for the period July 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014 were **16** (based on the percentage population of Niagara to the rest of the 905/289 area code region). Information Niagara recorded **2** financial abuse calls to 211 from January 2013 to June 2014. All of these statistics are fully documented and thus are more valid than stories from individuals.

2,000 forms for gathering statistics on incidents of financial abuse were printed and distributed to seniors' services providers and via e-blast to 758 community service organizations (Niagara Elder Financial Abuse and Exploitation Statistics Form attached). They resulted in the collection of **28** incidents of financial abuse of older adults.

The total of stories submitted and documented incidents is **1,096**.

Other comparable regional municipal statistics:

Peel Region (PEAPN) 2013/14 - 434 reported incidents- (80%) involved financial abuse (statement from Network Manager)

Durham Region January to August/2014. 194 allegations and 61 (31%) primarily financial

(Email: On 8/12/2014 8:25 AM, Tammy Rankin wrote: I have year to date. I have received 194 allegations and 61 have been primarily financial. That does not include reports to police)

Hamilton Police Services 2013 - of 460 reports 118 (26 %) involved financial abuse (Hamilton Police Service: Responding to Seniors' Issues May 2013)

Ottawa Police Services 2005-2010 - of the 531 files reviewed, (62%) were financial abuse

"The most common type of abuse was financial" (A Review of files from the Elder Abuse Section of the Ottawa Police Service 2013)

Waterloo Regional Police Service - 2013 - of 111 investigations 38 (34%) involved financial abuse, (Detective Constable Melanie Schmidt: Elder Abuse Response Team)

MEETINGS/INTERVIEWS/CONFERENCES/SEMINARS/PRESENTATIONS

MEETINGS

Niagara Senior Services Network
Welland Seniors Committee
Niagara Region Chair
Brock University Observatory
Age Friendly Niagara
Niagara Region Community Services (Commissioner, Director of Seniors Services and Long Term Care and Manager of Seniors Community Programs)
City of St. Catharines Mayors Committee on Older Adults
Community Support Services of Niagara
Niagara Connects (Social Planning & Research Council)
Niagara Elder Abuse Prevention Network
Niagara Poverty Reduction Network
Centre de Santé Niagara
Peel Elder Abuse Prevention Network
Niagara Region Police Services Fraud Unit
Sudbury Elder Abuse Committee
Sudbury Police Seniors and Vulnerable Adults Liaison Officer, Linda Burns
Ontario Provincial Police, Seniors Assistance Team, Coordinator, Robin Sanders
Victim Services East and West Parry Sound, Ann Swallow, Executive Director

COMMUNITY RESPONSE NETWORKS CONTACTED/INTERVIEWED

Region of Durham, Elder Abuse Advisor, Tammy Rankin
BC Association of Community Response Networks (BCACRN), Sherry Baker, Executive Director
The Manitoba Network for the Prevention of Abuse of Older Adults, Dara Maternick, Coordinator
Alberta Elder Abuse Awareness Network (AEAAN), Raynell McDonough MSW RSW, Director

POLICE SERVICES ELDER ABUSE UNITS CONTACTED /INTERVIEWED

Durham Regional Police Services, Senior Support Coordinator, Sargeant John Keating
Hamilton Police Service - Crimes Against Seniors Unit, Constable Ingrid Boiago

CONFERENCES/SEMINARS/EVENTS

Legal/Ethical Issues

Niagara Elder Abuse Prevention Network/Elder Abuse Ontario

Seniors Fair Niagara Falls

Seniors Day St. Catharines

Peel Elder Abuse Prevention Network Presentation

Peel Elder Abuse Prevention Network Seminar

Ontario Society of Senior Citizens Organizations

PRESENTATIONS/PUBLIC EVENTS

Financial Abuse Information and Prevention Presentation Port Dalhousie Older Adults Centre

Financial Abuse Information and Prevention Presentation West St. Catharines Older Adults Centre

Financial Abuse Information and Prevention Presentation Dunlop Older Adults Centre

Financial Abuse Information and Prevention Presentation Niagara Housing Residence Grimsby

Press Conference with Rick Dykstra, MP St. Catharines Riding