

News Release – For Immediate Release

Office of the Seniors' Advocate Newfoundland and Labrador

June 15, 2023

Seniors' Advocate Recognizes World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

June 15 is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. The Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging reports that the prevalence of elder abuse in Canada is increasing, which appears to be the practice experience in Newfoundland and Labrador as well. This increase is a significant concern given the under-reporting of abuse of older persons.

Elder abuse, which includes emotional, physical, sexual or financial abuse, unfortunately couples with ageist attitudes and beliefs, and people with ageist attitudes tend to believe their actions are justified. Older adults who are physically, cognitively or emotionally vulnerable, living in poverty and/or members of an underrepresented group are at increased risk.

There are actions you can take to prevent and help eradicate elder abuse. If you have concerns that a senior is experiencing abuse, report it by calling 1-855-376-4957 or contacting your local police.

Further, research shows that having social supports is a strong protective factor to guard against elder abuse, so consider:

- reaching out to offer support to the seniors in your life who may be more isolated;
- addressing ageist attitudes when you hear them; and
- promoting the value seniors have contributed, and continue to contribute, to our communities.

Quote

“Under the **Adult Protection Act**, we all have a legal responsibility to report suspected abuse. We must also work toward the prevention of abuse of older adults through: creating age friendly communities that enable social inclusion; educating on impact of elder abuse and ageism; and promoting services, policies and programs that respect the dignity of older adults.”

Susan Walsh
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