

New website for Healthcare Professionals

Vital Signs: Elder Abuse Awareness for Healthcare Professionals

In Canada, 4 -10% of adults report experiencing abuse during their senior years. Healthcare professionals can play a key role in recognizing potential signs of abuse and can help seniors by providing options and resources that can support them. Raising the subject of abuse is not easy.

Recognizing this important role of healthcare professionals, the Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia (LISNS), working in collaboration with the Nova Scotia Centre on Aging, Mount Saint Vincent University and the Nova Scotia Department of Seniors, has developed several resources to improve access to information about abuse of older adults for healthcare professionals.

The resources include a website that helps healthcare professionals test their knowledge of abuse of older adults and provides information about signs of abuse. It also provides information on laws that seek to protect against and deal with abuse and community resources that may offer information and assistance to older adults experiencing abuse.

The website provides information on competency and capacity within the context of who can make decisions about an individual's healthcare and/or finances. It also has tips on communicating about abuse and what to do if abuse is suspected.

Funding for the project was provided through the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Senior Program. In addition to the on-line tool, the project developed a workshop and facilitator's guide and piloted the workshop with healthcare professionals across the province.

You can access the website and find out more about the project at www.legalinfo.org/ElderAbuse/ Information is available in English and French.

This project complements the LISNS' other resources on elder abuse including the very popular *It's in Your hands – legal information for seniors, their families and caregivers* which is focused on providing seniors with information about financial abuse and ideas of ways to arrange their financial affairs to help reduce opportunities for abuse.

LISNS is a not-for profit charity dedicated to improving access to justice through the provision of legal information programs and complementary services.

If you have questions please contact Maria Franks
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