

Sunshine Coast Seniors Planning Table
Abuse of Older Women Action Group
Update: February 2017

This group developed an action plan based on the work of Jill Hightower in the "Out of the Shadows" report on the abuse of older women on the Sunshine Coast, and accomplished the following:

1. Coordination of Services for Older Women

- Leaders Roundtable – forum for agency leaders with members from the Community Response Network (CRN), Violence Against Women in Relationship Committee, and the Seniors Planning Table
- Roundtable in Pender Harbour for all service providers serving this area
- Delivery of "Being Least Intrusive" to service providers on effective ways of working with First Nations clients

2. Education and Awareness

- Coordinated the delivery of five "It's Not Right" workshop on what bystanders can do in cases of abuse, and one Training the Trainer workshop for volunteer workshop leaders, with funding from CRN
- Inservice Training - joint workshop for health and violence against women service providers

3. Housing

- Two workshops on "Emerging Best Practices" on housing for older women fleeing abuse delivered for service providers staff and community members.
- Grant application submitted by Sunshine Coast Community Services to the federal government was approved. The grant is to provide targeted outreach to older women, raise awareness and conduct research about local services and housing needs for older women experiencing abuse, and report on the findings with recommendations.

4. Direct Services

- Ongoing review of information and referral material
- Outreach support service providers collaboration to enhance service

The term "abuse of older women" encompasses all forms of abuse and violence, including both gender based violence and elder abuse, and includes emotional, psychological, physical, spiritual, sexual, and financial abuse, as well as other forms of control and intimidation. We acknowledge that ageism can undermine effective response, and although some abuse of older women fits the definition of elder abuse, this term can conceal the life-long experience and role of gender in the dynamics of power and control.