



Research on mistreatment of older adults in Quebec:

summaries of scientific articles



When Seniors Are Abused: An Intervention Model.

REFERENCE

Reis, M. & Nahmiash, D. (1995b).
When Seniors Are Abused: An
Intervention Model. *The Gerontologist*,
35(5),
666-671.

TEXT TYPE

Format: Scientific article

Content: Description of an intervention
model

DISCUSSED THEMES

Extent of the phenomenon, forms
of abuse in the community-dwelling
population, risk factors, vulnerabilities,
gender concept, profile of the abused
person, authors of abuse, detection,
intervention, groups support, education
on human rights and on abuse,
volunteering / support.

GOAL OR RESEARCH QUESTION

This article aims to further the understanding of three innovative elements
proposed by the CARE project, concerning intervention in situations of elder
abuse: the toolkit, volunteers and empowerment groups.

PROBLEM

Abuse is a social phenomenon that has increased in recent years. It is estimated
that currently, 3-5% of seniors are abused. Abuse can manifest itself in different
forms: physical, financial, material, psychosocial, or neglect. The perpetrators of
abuse are often people with whom the senior is in a relationship of trust, be it
family members or other caregivers.

METHODOLOGY

This article is based on the CARE intervention program, already established
as part of the in-home support services offered by the Notre-Dame-de-Grâce-
Montreal-West CLSC (Local Community Service Center). In this program, there
are a total of 218 people who are over 60 years old, receiving regular assistance
and who have been victims of abuse. Approximately thirty volunteers of all
ages, both male and female, were recruited and trained to make friendly visits
to the abused seniors or to the perpetrator of the abuse. Groups composed
of six to ten abused seniors have also been formed, and meetings were held
weekly under the supervision of volunteers (a nurse and a social worker), for a
total duration of 12 meetings.

RESULTS

This program is based on a collaborative approach and multidisciplinary intervention. It relies on three main tools, two of which are used for the detection of abuse in new clients and to assess the results at the end of the intervention, and the third is used to plan the specific strategies of the intervention. Volunteers must complete a report following their visits, in order to identify the main activities of the client and his problems and needs. In addition, they help practitioners by alerting of new problematic situations that have been encountered during the visits. As part of this program, groups of abused seniors were set up in order to inform them about abuse, their rights, possible courses of action, resources to break their isolation, as well as to teach them how to respond appropriately to problems and to increase their sense of personal control. Participants appreciated the opportunity to express their feelings, to increase their self-esteem and to benefit from peer support. This aspect of the intervention is based on control theory, which puts forward that care recipients who are victims of abuse may have a low sense of control, and therefore a group focused on empowerment could help them, and on the activity theory which proposes that regular activities increase the sense of control and reduce social isolation.

DISCUSSION

The discussion is integrated in the results presented above.

CONCLUSION

Three components of the CARE project were described and a guide has been developed for students and practitioners who want to learn to intervene in situations of elder abuse. This guide outlines the various policies and procedures for the use of the toolkit.

AVENUES FOR PRACTICE AND RESEARCH

The intervention model presented by the CARE project may be reproduced in any home support services. Some elements of the model can be adapted to the specific environment that implements it.

DRAFTING DATE

August 28, 2013

