



## **Creating Safe Communities for Older Adults**

**N'dilo & Dettah, NWT**

**Workshop Report**

Community Wellness Center

April 2, 2014

Prepared by: Barb Hood, Executive Director, NWT Seniors' Society

## Introduction

Through the *Leading the Way, Networking to Prevent the Abuse of Older Adults* project, the NWT Seniors' Society, in partnership with the NWT Network to Prevent the Abuse of Older Adults is sponsoring a series of workshop on older adult abuse. Funding for this work is provided by Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) formerly HRSDC, New Horizons for Seniors Program and the GNWT's Department of Health and Social Services.

The *Creating Safe Communities for Older Adults* workshop was held in Dettah with older adults, caregivers and service providers from N'dilo and Dettah was part of this larger project.

The goal for the workshop is:

- To create a safer community for older adults in our communities – N'dilo and Dettah

The agenda for this one day workshop is attached for reference as Appendix A.

### **Wednesday, April 2, 2014**

The workshop came to order at 10:30, with 8 participants gathering at the Community Wellness Center (see Appendix B for the Participant List).

Everyone was welcomed to this one-day event, and a round of introductions was made, with everyone stating their name.

Berna Martin was the translator for the day and Bonnie Henderson and Alice Abel took photographs of the group throughout the day.

### **Overview – NWT Seniors' Society and NWT Network to Prevent Abuse of Older Adults (NWT Network)**

Barb Hood, Executive Director of the NWT Seniors' Society welcomed everyone. She gave a brief overview of the NWT Seniors' Society and its work over the 30 years of this organization to address abuse of older adults. Barb gave a brief description of the *It's Not Right* presentation. Barb also talked briefly about how older adults need to feel safe in their communities and that many communities struggle with issues that affect to older adults.

Barb went through the *It's Not Right* presentation. There were a brief discussion after the presentation.

Some of the service providers who dropped in talked about the issues in the community. These issues include:

- Financial, i.e., visiting only when money is available
- Physical abuse
- Neglect including: lack of care, lack of family involvement, loss of sharing, no time for the older adult and isolation
- Verbal abuse
- Emotional, which includes: social isolation, manipulation (“Do this or else...”), lack of choice, bullying, power inequity
- Drug and alcohol abuse in the seniors home and in the community
- Lack of trust with health care providers, community members and RCMP
- Shame and guilt because of past experiences
- Loss of traditions, culture and sense of community from when they were younger

## **LUNCH**

A delicious lunch was prepared by Marilyn Colin . Judy Charlo gave the blessing before the lunch was served.

During the lunch session there was more discussion about how older adults are affected by the things that are happening in the community.

Although there was no formal process for developing an action plan, many of the participants identified issues in the following summary:

1. Safety:
  - Physical, financial, housing
  - Emotional, value, independence
  - Medical, spiritual, cultural
2. Awareness:
  - Community gatherings, media, information handouts
  - Family Nights in the community, community feasts, meeting with the Chiefs and Elders Council for the two communities
3. Education:

Targeting all service providers, identify when there are signs and symptoms of elder abuse, roles of individuals and agencies such as the RCMP, Municipal Enforcements, ongoing community education
4. Training:

- The Wellness Coordinator and others at the Community Health Center will provide ongoing training and remain involved with the NWT Network to Prevent Abuse of Older Adults to get ongoing training.

### **Developing Action Plans – Top Two Priorities**

The top priority areas as expressed by the service providers at the end of the workshop was to:

1. Continue to meet with the NWT Network to Prevent Older Adult Abuse representatives such as Barb Hood and Greg Towler, and,
2. Continue to build capacity within the community to recognize and address the issues of abuse specific to the community.

#### **Priority # One: Who will take the lead on this priority?**

- Bonnie Henderson, Alice Abel and other workers in the community will take the lead in this action plan.

#### **Priority # Two: Who will be involved in this priority?**

- Chiefs, Elders, community leaders, service providers, RCMP

#### **Priority # 1 & 2: What are the steps to achieve these priorities?**

- Gather leaders
- Engage in discussion re: issue to promote change
- Build rapport and trust amongst those involved
- Allow group to come up with solutions and actions
- Discuss existing resources
- Develop relationship with the community be implementing plans identified
- Connect with existing groups that are affected by issue or can work with the group

#### **Priority # 1 & 2: Where will this take place?**

- Community Wellness Center
- Seniors centres
- Band Offices

#### **Priority # 1 & 2: When will this be done / completed?**

- Ongoing

The workshop closed with a prayer offered by Muriel Betsina.

## APPENDIX A

### **NWT Seniors' Society Workshop on Creating Safe Communities for Older Adults April 2, 2014; Community Wellness Building, Dettah, NT Agenda**

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

- 10:30 am     **Call to Order**  
                  **Opening Prayer**  
                  **Welcome – Chief Sangris**  
                  **Introductions – Round Table**  
                  **Agenda, Format, Housekeeping** (Bonnie Henderson)
- 10:45 am     **Neighbours, Friends and Families - *It's Not Right!*** - Barb Hood, Executive Director, NWT Seniors' Society will give a presentation using this powerful tool.  
  
                  **Feedback on Presentation** – each participant completes the *It's Not Right!* evaluation sheet/general discussion on the approach in whole group.
- 11:15 am     **What does Abuse of Older Adults Look Like in Dettah & N'dilo?**  
                  Draw a picture to illustrate what abuse of older adults look in Fort Smith
- 11:45 am     **Older Adult Abuse in Dettah & N'dilo**  
                  Small groups report back to whole group
- 12:00 pm     **LUNCH** – a light lunch will be provided on site
- 1:00 pm      **A Whole Community Approach to Addressing Abuse of Older Adults –**  
                  A presentation with Q & A'S on a whole community approach to the issue.
- 1:45 pm      Constable Greg Towler, RCMP, Presentation on Financial Abuse, Scams and Other Financial Abuses. Question and Answer Session
- 2:30 pm      **BREAK**
- 3:00 pm      **What Can the Older Adults in N'dilo and Dettah Do to Be Safe**  
                  Round Table Discussion – Action Plan and Commitments
- 3:30 pm      **Wrap-up and Closing Comments**  
                  **Closing Prayer**

## APPENDIX B

### Creating Safe Communities Participant List

The following is the list of participants who signed into the workshop. Please note, for privacy purposes, only the name and organization are included. If anyone wishes to contact a participant, please contact the NWT Seniors' Society for this information.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>
<b>Bonnie Henderson</b>	<b>Community Wellness</b>
<b>Alice Abel</b>	<b>Community Wellness</b>
<b>Cst Greg Towler</b>	<b>RCMP</b>
<b>Elders</b>	
Judy Charlo	
Noel Crapeau	
Rose Betsina	
Muriel Betsina	
Madeline Beaulieu	
John Evans	
Shirley Sangris	
Helen McKenzie	
Louise Drygeese	