



c/o Catholic Family Services of Peel-Dufferin
60 West Dr., Suite 201
Brampton, ON
L6T 3T6
T. 905-450-1608 ext. 175
F. 905-450-8902
www.peapn.ca

DEAR CARP MEMBERS:

We are PEAPN: Established in 2003, the Peel Elder Abuse Prevention Network (PEAPN) is a collaborative of 50+ community organizations that are working together to stop and prevent the abuse of older adults living in Peel region. Our service catchment area includes: Brampton, Mississauga and Caledon. Our membership includes a mix of non-profit community-based agencies and businesses that provide services to older adults.

Our Work

PEAPN provides community outreach and public education programs on the issue of Elder Abuse, ways it can be prevented and the resources available to victims of Elder Abuse residing in Peel region. We offer a number of community workshops, seminars and presentations to seniors and community organizations that focus on the detection and prevalence of Elder Abuse, prevention strategies, and healthy, active living and wellness strategies which become even more important as we age: Canadian seniors want to age well and live independently in the comfort of their own homes.

We are also involved in making informal referrals to our network members. We have a hotline in Peel Region for disclosing cases of Elder Abuse called the Peel Elder Abuse Support Program (PEASP), which is operated jointly by Family Services of Peel and Distress Centre Peel. Funded by the United Way, since 2007, the hotline has seen an exponential increase in the number of Elder Abuse cases called in, with it peaking today with over 1,200 calls from concerned family members or seniors in crisis. Anyone calling into this hotline can obtain free, confidential help and they are connected to various community resources, often available within our network, to help them with their individual circumstances.

As Elder Abuse is often the “hidden crime” that goes unnoticed and unreported, we anticipate many cases exist in our communities. Based on Canadian statistics, 10% of the seniors’ population is dealing with some form of abuse. If Peel Region’s seniors’ population is estimated to be approximately 150,000 people, that would translate into 15,000 seniors who are currently dealing with some form of abuse or mistreatment by someone close to them – possibly an adult child or a caregiver. While there are various types of abuse that a senior can be subjected to – physical or emotional abuse, or neglect – financial abuse is the most common form of abuse that we tend to see, involving the misuse and/or misappropriation of a senior’s finances, property or other assets. It could involve misuse of a Power of Attorney, forging cheques, or stealing. Financial abuse typically happens by the adult child or caregiver who has close interactions with the senior and feels a false sense of entitlement to the senior’s finances.

Often when a senior suffers from financial abuse, and potentially emotional abuse, the adult child or caregiver may try to force Mom or Dad out of the family home. When a senior has faced repeated abuse and is in crisis, there is no safe place for them to go. Many seniors end up in our hospitals’ Emergency rooms or at the local police station. We are currently working on introducing a 72-Hour StopOver Program which would provide emergency housing for up to 3 days for an abused senior in crisis. Some private retirement homes and Supportive Housing in Peel have expressed an interest in providing emergency housing – 72 hours enables our network partners to help the senior in crisis with counselling support, prescriptions, clothing, and nutritious meals while helping the senior with finding a permanent, safe home.

Our Fundraising Activities & Call to Government Action

PEAPN is hosting its 2nd Annual Wellness Walk and Community Fair in partnership with CARP (Mississauga and Brampton Chapters) on Saturday, June 15th, 2013, 9:30 am to 12:30 pm at the Flower City Seniors Centre in Brampton. Our goal is to raise \$10,000 to help provide more coordinated community services to victims of Elder Abuse, and to support the implementation of our 72-Hour StopOver program. Guest speakers include MPP Linda Jeffrey, Peel Regional Council Chair Emil Kolb and Deputy Chief Chris McCord with the Peel Regional Police. There will be great door prizes, continental breakfast, a Nordic pole walking clinic, and lots of live entertainment including Latin dancing demonstrations. While the objective is to raise awareness on this issue, and raise funds for our work, the event also marks a celebration of aging and wellness, and enjoying life to the fullest especially in our golden years!

June 15th is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day and communities across Canada and around the world will be commemorating this day, raising awareness about the prevalence of Elder Abuse and the importance of people around the world coming together to ensure the rights of older adults are upheld and honoured. The International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse, in support of the United Nations International Plan of Action, designated that June 15th, 2006 be the first World Elder Abuse Awareness Day as a time to share information about the state of Elder Abuse and to recognize the significance of it as a public health and human rights issue.

Our current operational funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation expires in August, and while we are in the process of applying for provincial and regional funding, we are in need of permanent funding for 2 staff positions to continue with public outreach activities and the implementation and training of the 72-Hour StopOver Program. If we do not receive sufficient funding by the fall, PEAPN's ability to continue operations could be in jeopardy.

Our politicians need to understand that abused seniors in crisis have no safe place to go to – shelters are not the answer as specialized care is often required for vulnerable, and often frail seniors who have been abused. For the 72-Hour StopOver Program, we are hoping to coordinate the integration of existing services with our network members and private retirement homes to provide a “win-win” for abused seniors and the community, ultimately reducing the burden on our hospitals and health care system. With Elder Abuse on the rise and our growing seniors' population, our politicians need to provide serious, permanent funding so that we are able to develop and implement solutions at the grass-roots, community level where they are needed the most.

Given our current funding crisis, we welcome donations of all amounts which can be made online at www.peapn.ca. More information about our fundraising Wellness Walk and Community Fair on June 15th can be found on at www.peapn.ca and www.carp.ca.

For more information, please contact:

Karen Sibal
Program Coordinator, Peel Elder Abuse Prevention Network (PEAPN)
905-450-1608 ext. 175
ksibal@cfspd.com

Murray Etherington
Chair, CARP, Mississauga Chapter
416-997-0919
murrayetherington@yahoo.com