

ROW

RESOURCES FOR OLDER WOMEN

Newfoundland & Labrador Edition



NICE

National Initiative for the Care of the Elderly

Initiative nationale pour le soin des personnes âgées

We care together

Ensemble pour le bien-être des aînés

www.nicenet.ca

What Is This Information Booklet About?

This information booklet is for older women who feel uncomfortable or unsafe in their home because they are being treated badly by someone who lives or visits there.

The information will help you decide: if what you are experiencing is abuse, **why** you should seek help, and **how** and **where** to find the help you need to be safer.

If you think there is a good chance that your abuser might read the information inside and mistreat you further, do not keep the booklet.

Part One of this booklet was created in 2009 by a group of older Ontario women with ‘lived expertise’ of abuse. The project was supported by the National Initiative for the Care of the Elderly (NICE) and received financial assistance from Status of Women Canada (SWC).

Part Two of this booklet is a Newfoundland & Labrador adaptation of the resource list put forward by the NICE “Bridging Aging and Women Abuse” project team in Ontario. Inclusion of an organization/program in this resource directory does not imply endorsement, nor does exclusion imply lack of endorsement.

Funding assistance for this Newfoundland & Labrador directory was provided by New Horizons for Seniors, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada.

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Are You Being Abused?

The following six examples will help you determine whether you are experiencing abuse and what type of abuse it is.

“He was raised to believe spanking and strict rules are a part of running a home. With the kids gone he’s been more frustrated with me. He’s slapped me a few times but only when he was really angry.”

If anyone causes you physical harm by hitting, burning or rough handling you; or keeping you from moving about or leaving a room (using physical force, alcohol or medication), **this is physical abuse.**

“I moved here to help my daughter during her divorce. But, she’s so angry and depressed. I can’t have visitors and she keeps the phone from me. She rarely lets me go places without her and times my trips when I go alone.”

If anyone is controlling your comings and goings, your activities in or outside the home and/or who you talk to, **this is emotional abuse.**

“When my husband comes home drunk, he forces me to have sex. Saying ‘no’ doesn’t stop him. I’m his wife; maybe I shouldn’t say no.”

If anyone (including your husband) exposes him/herself or touches you against your will, or forces you to look at sexual material, have sex or perform other sexual acts, **this is sexual abuse.**

“I am grateful to my daughter-in-law, who’s been caring for me since my stroke. But, I wish she wouldn’t leave me alone so often without my lunch or medication or a way to use the bathroom.”

If the person providing your care consistently leaves you alone, without food, medication or a way to go to the bathroom, **this is neglect which is a form of abuse.**

“I try to cook nice dinners but my partner Maria ruins it by drinking too much and screaming that I’m a bad cook, a bad mother and can’t do anything right.”

If anyone does or says something to make you afraid, to make you uncertain about yourself or to cause you emotional pain by calling you names, yelling, insulting or threatening you, **this is emotional abuse.**

“My son helps me with my banking and when he deposits my cheque he takes a lot of money for himself. I don’t say anything because he’s my son and I’m supposed to help him, right?”

If someone close to you is taking your money, wrongly spending money you've given them access to, or making you feel like you have to give them money, **this is financial abuse.**

Why Take Action?

These are some of the reasons why you might not want to take action and get help, and why you should act to be safer.

You may not be seeking help because:

- You **don't want the abuser to get in trouble or go to jail**
- You **believe the abuse is not intentional** because it is by someone you trust and care for OR by someone who 'can't help' their behaviour
- You **think no one will believe you** because the abuse didn't leave a mark OR it only happened once
- You **believe the abuse will get worse** if you seek help OR you think it's not a big deal and **hope it will get better** over time.
- You **believe that you are not able to take action** because you provide care for someone, you depend on someone for care, you don't have money OR you don't know where to turn

- You **believe that what happens in your home is private and family comes first** so you are embarrassed OR you believe you must accept your situation so your family stays together

Abuse Is Not Your Fault, Is Always Wrong And There Are Ways To Get Help!

How Can You Be Safer Now?

These are actions that you can take yourself or with the help of people you trust.

If you are living with your abuser:

- Don't be ashamed - talk to people about what's going on
- Carry \$15 for a taxi and change for a pay phone
- Open your own bank account (\$5 to start) and request that no bank mail come to your home
- Get a cell phone, keep it charged and program numbers in speed dial
- Avoid the kitchen and rooms with one exit when abuse is possible
- Create a telephone code word with someone to signal danger and ask them to call 911 if they think you're in danger
- Ask someone to help you find services and go with you to appointments

- Have someone take photographs or notes as evidence of the abuse
- Join activities outside your home (art or fitness classes)

If you are leaving your home:

- Leave an emergency bag at a safe location or with someone you trust, with copies of your identification, prescriptions, phone numbers, health/credit/drug/bank cards and spare glasses/cane
- Bring a picture of the abuser to show police, neighbours and co-workers; record the abuser's licence plate number
- Make arrangements for dependent adult children, spouse/partner and pets because it may be difficult to get them out of the home once you've left

If your abuser lives outside your home:

- Change/strengthen the locks and install a peephole
- Inform your neighbours that your abuser shouldn't be around
- Change the places you go and consider changing your doctor, dentist and/or lawyer if shared with your abuser
- Carry restraining, custody and bail orders with you

How Can You Get The Help You Need?

When you call for help it is very important that the person you speak to understands the type of abuse, and the most important help you need right now.

When contacting someone for help:

- **Say that you are experiencing abuse and name it** - physical, sexual, financial, emotional or neglect
- **Make sure voice messages are very specific** - name the kind of abuse, what you need help with and whether it is safe to call you back/leave a message
- Tell them if you have **dependent adult children, spouse/partner or pets who will need care** if you are not around
- **Ask them to make the call for/with you** if they suggest you contact another agency
- **Don't stick with services that aren't helpful** - don't let a bad experience stop you from continuing to look for help
- **Know you have the right to consent, or not, to share your information** with others without losing your service provider's support (but know this may limit their ability to connect you with other services)

Where can you find help?

This directory includes services to help older women throughout Newfoundland and Labrador who are experiencing abuse to find the help they need.* Agencies listed should be able to direct you to appropriate services in your own community. Be aware that services change, and programs you are referred to may have wait lists, eligibility requirements and restricted service areas and hours.

Guide To Using This Directory

Phoning: Be sure you are in a safe location. All 1-800 numbers (i.e. 866, 877, 888) are free long-distance calling numbers serving all Newfoundland and Labrador.

Internet: For your safety, do not use your home computer when seeking helping resources. If you don't have or use a computer, ask a trusted person to help you search online. Public libraries generally have computer access.

Who can you call if you are in immediate danger?

DIAL **911** where the service is available or dial “o” for the operator and you will be connected to emergency response.

For your nearest **RCMP** detachment call 1-800-709-7267, TTY 1-800-563-2172 or for the **RNC** St. John’s: 709-729-8000, TTY 1-800-363-4334; Corner Brook 709-637-4100 TTY 1-800-363-4334; Labrador City 709-944-7602; Churchill Falls 709-925-3524.

If using a cell phone, be sure you can reach 911 or other emergency numbers from your calling location. Be sure that you can clearly specify where you are. **Texting 911 will not work -- always call.**

Who can you call 24/7 when in a crisis or feeling distressed?

Sexual Assault Crisis Line 1-800-726-2743

Mental Health Crisis Line 1-888-737-4668

National Residential School Survivors

National Crisis Line 1-866-925-4419 also helps family members.

Who can you talk to about getting the help you need?

St. John's Women's Centre 709-753-0220 connects you to your nearest women's centre.

Seniors Resource Centre Seniors Information Line
1-800-563-5599

Caregiver Line 1-888-571-2273 Information and support for unpaid caregivers.

If you are concerned about Elder Abuse call:

Eastern Health (Rural Avalon) 709-786-5245

Eastern Health (St. John's) 709-752-4885

Eastern Health (Bonavista/Clareville/Burin Peninsula) 709-466-5707

Central Health 709-651-6340

Western Health 709-634-5551 ext226

Labrador-Grenfell Health 709-454-0372

Where can you get help in a language other than English?

Association Communautaire Francophone de St Jean
709-726-4900

**Multicultural Women's Organization of
Newfoundland and Labrador St. John's**
709-726-0321

Association for New Canadians St. John's
709-722-9680

Who can tell you about replacing your ID?

Government Services, Provincial Office, St. John's
709 729 4834 for provincial I.D.

Motor Vehicle Registration, Mount Pearl
709-729-2519 to replace your driver's licence

Motor Vehicle Registration, Goose Bay
709-896-5428 to replace I.D. in Labrador

Seniors Information Line 1-800-563-5599 directs
you to the appropriate agencies for other I.D.

Where can you get advocacy and/or legal assistance?

Legal Aid Commission 1-800-563-9911 legal representation for people with low income; must meet certain eligibility requirements.

Public Legal Information Association of Newfoundland 1-888-660-7788 answers general legal questions; offers a lawyer referral service.

Victim Services St. John's 709-729-7970 (collect calls accepted) free help for adult victims of crime regardless of whether a charge is laid; also supports child victims or witnesses required to testify in a criminal matter; 11 offices province wide.

Where can you find out about finding a place to stay?

Emergency shelter and assistance for women and children of all ages (unless otherwise noted)

Iris Kirby House, St. John's

753-1492 or 1-877-753-1492

Shanawdithit Shelter, St. John's

709-726-5970 open to aboriginal and non-aboriginal women and men.

Tommy Sexton Centre, St. John's

1-800-563-1575 open to women and men. (The AIDS Committee of Newfoundland and Labrador)

O'Shaughnessy House, Carbonear

596-8709 or 1-888-596-8709

Grace Sparkes House, Marystown

279-3560 or 1-877-774-4957

Cara Transition House, Gander

256-7707 or 1-877-800-2272

Corner Brook Transition House

634-4198 or 1-866-634-4198

Hope Haven, Labrador City

944-6900 or 1-888-332-0000

Libra House, Happy Valley-Goose Bay

896-3014 or 1-877-896-3014

Nukum Munik, Sheshatshui

709-497-8869

Nain Safe House

709-922-1229

Kirkina House, Rigolet

709-947-3333

Hopedale Safe House

709-933-3420

(crisis line only; shelter opening soon)

Natuashish Safe House

709-478-2390

Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation

St. John's 709-7214-3000 for information about subsidized housing province wide. For assistance through the **Victims of Family Violence Policy** ask for a social worker from NLHC in your area.

Seniors Resource Centre 1-800-563-5599 lists apartment buildings in the St. John's area; provides information about community-based housing province wide.

Where can you get help with money?

Under 65: Contact the provincial **Department of Human Resources Labour and Employment** for financial assistance, emergency food and housing:

Avalon: 1-877-729-7888 **Central:** 1-888-632-4555

Western: 1-866-417-4753 **Labrador:** 1-888-773-9311

65 and over: Contact **Service Canada** at 1-800-277-9914, TTY 1-800-255-4786 to find out about pensions or to have your cheque redirected; priority timing for women fleeing abuse. See “Under 65” above if waiting for pension income, or if not eligible for federal pensions.

See www.canadabenefits.gc.ca for information on federal and provincial benefits.

Community Sector Council Public Access

1-866-753-9860 for help with social assistance applications, case reviews and appeals.

Credit and Debt Solutions 1-888-738-3328 for help with credit and debt problems.

Seniors Resource Centre 1-800-563-5599 for help with government forms.

Where Can You Get Health Care?

For all health services in your area call your **Regional Health Authority:**

Eastern Health 709-752-4800

Central Health 709-651-3306

Western Health 709-637-5000

Labrador-Grenfell Health

St Anthony 709-454-3333; Labrador 709-897-2000)

Newfoundland and Labrador Health Line

1-888-709-2929, TTY 1-888-709-3555 (24-hour) for free health advice and information from a registered nurse.

Health Canada, Non-Insured Health Benefits

Atlantic Region 1-800-565-3294 for registered status First Nations

Where can you get counselling or emotional support?

Mental Health Crisis Line 1-888-737-4668

(24-hour) for people with mental health problems who need immediate help.

For local mental health services contact your **Regional Health Authority** (see above)

Problem Gambling Help Line 1-888-899-4357

(24-hour) for people in crisis as a result of their gambling, and for their families.

Recovery Centre St. John's 709-752-4980 counseling, education and self-help meetings for those with alcohol or drug problems. In other parts of the province contact your local hospital or family physician.

Newfoundland and Labrador Sexual Assault Crisis and Prevention Centre 1-800-726-2743. Support and essential services to anyone impacted by sexual violence.

Where can you find accessible transportation and disability support?

Medical Transportation Assistance Program 709-729-0628 financial assistance if you have to travel over 200km for necessary, insured medical services.

Hope Air 1-877-346-4673 free air transportation to recognized facilities for medical care not available in your home community.

Wheelway Transportation St. John's 709-753-2877 Para-transit system for people with disabilities. New users call 709-570-2131, TTY 709-576-8576

For volunteer driving programs call your local council office or the Seniors Information Line 1-800-563-5599

Independent Living Resource Centre

1-866-722-4031, TTY 709-722-7998 supports persons with disabilities to make informed choices.

Department of Human Resources Labour and Employment provides assistance in obtaining health equipment and supplies including glasses and dentures:

Avalon: 1-877-729-7888 **Central:** 1-888-632-4555

Western: 1-866-417-4753 **Labrador:** 1-888-773-9311

Canadian Red Cross HELP Program St. John's

709-758-8400 short-term health equipment loans; 20 depots province wide (referral necessary)

Who to call if you are concerned about a woman unable to act on her own behalf?

Call your **Regional Health Authority:**

Eastern Health 709-752-4800

Central Health 709-651-3306

Western Health 709-637-5000

Labrador-Grenfell Health

St. Anthony 709-454-3333

Labrador 709-897-2000

This is one in a series of tools in the NICE tool kit designed to detect, intervene in, and/or prevent abuse of seniors. For more information about this, or any of the other tools and related training events, please visit **www.nicenet.ca**

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*Inclusion of an organization/program does not imply endorsement, nor does exclusion indicate a lack of endorsement. This card is for information purposes only. It is an adaptation (Oct 20 2010) reflecting the recommendations put forward by NICE “Bridging Aging and Women Abuse” project team in Ontario.

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