



Elderly Clients in Community Care as Victims of Abuse

Research project conducted in
Norway & Australia

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Definition

- Any actions or omission of actions that occur within an informal relationship of trust, such as family or friends, that cause harm or distress to an older person living at home and is a client in community care.

Reference: The Toronto Declaration, WHO 2002 (modified)



Abusive actions can be

- physical
- psychological/emotional
- financial/material
- sexual
- intentional and unintentional neglect



Centre for Aged Care Studies

- ▶ Helping Hand Aged Care
- ▶ Centre for Research into Sustainable Health Care,
University of South Australia
- ▶ Group for Elderly Care Research, University of Oslo

The research is a part of my PhD program

- Supervisor: Marit Kirkevold, Professor, Uni Oslo
- Mentor: Alison Ballantyne,
Adjunct/Senior Research Fellow, UniSA



The project consists of 3 studies

1. Semistructured telephone-interviews of 53 nursing managers in Norway (completed 2006).
2. In depth interview of 10 registered & enrolled nurses in Norway (completed 2007)
3. In depth interview of 10 registered & enrolled nurses in SA (completed 2008)



The Research uses a Qualitative Interpretive Approach

- Purposeful sampling by recruiting information-rich participants' through the snowball method.
- Personal, semi-structured and interactive interviews.
- The data analyzed through an hermeneutic approach.



Research Aims

To gain knowledge about how community care

- identify older abused clients and those at risk
- intervene and provide appropriate service.

To explore how nurses

- evaluate their performance to meet the needs of elderly victims of abuse
- determine if practice changes are necessary.

Identify similarities and differences in managing elder abuse in community care in Norway & Australia.



Initial Findings

Victims of abuse

are not always identified

are often labelled as “difficult cases”

once identified the cases are very demanding to community care staff



Initial Findings (continued)

- Community care has not adopted any tools to assist them to identify abuse.
- Community care has not adopted any guideline or procedures to assist them in the intervention of abuse cases.



Initial Findings (continued)

- The Program Manager is important when intervention strategies are discussed and decided.
- Highly valued support from ARAS (SA) Elderly Protective Services (Norway; limited to 3 of 17 counties)



Initial Findings (continued)

- Residential care as an intervention –

In Norway elderly victims of abuse are at risk of being moved out of their homes.

South Australia?



Initial Conclusions

- The phenomena elder abuse are complex and complicated –

Community care cannot deal with these problems on their own.

Interdisciplinary and interagency collaboration/responsibility are strongly recommended.



Initial Conclusions (continued)

From my point of view & based on the data collected

- ☺ Australia/South Australia are on the right track but still there is a way to go to establish service responses adjusted elderly victims' of abuse needs.
- ☹ Norway was on the right track, but has slowed down.....