



Elder Abuse Ontario

Stop Abuse - Restore Respect

Financial Abuse by Relatives and Caregivers



Top Scams by Strangers Against Older Adults

www.elderabuseontario.com

Financial Abuse by Relatives and Caregivers

Unlike strangers, relatives, caregivers, neighbours and friends are in positions of trust and have ongoing relationships with the older adult.

Financial exploitation is when the offender steals, withholds or misuses the older adult's money, property or valuables for personal advantage or profit to the disadvantage of the older adult.



The tactics offenders use, include; *deceit, coercion, intimidation, emotional abuse, empty promises of lifelong care and they usually isolate the older adult from friends, family and others.*

They prevent others from asking about the older adult's well-being, prevent them from seeking advice from others on important decisions and sometimes may give the older adult the impression that no one else cares about their well-being.

Their methods can include:

- Taking (sometimes by force) the older adults money, property or valuables
- Borrowing money without any intention of paying it back
- Denying services or care to save funds
- Giving away/selling the older adult's possessions or property without permission
- Signing or cashing pension cheques without permission
- Misusing bank and credit cards

Relatives, Caregivers, Neighbours and Friends Can Sometimes Exploit the Following Financial and Legal Arrangements

Joint bank accounts: Under the guise of helping the older adult with their financial affairs, the offender may withdraw or transfer funds.



Deed or title transfer: The older adult transfers ownership of homes or cars to the offender.

Power of attorney and continuing power of attorney: These legal arrangements give a person the authority to manage the older adult's affairs on their behalf. When used properly, the legally appointed agent makes decisions that are in the best interest of the older adult.

Misuse occurs when the agent takes actions which benefit the agent to the detriment of the older adult, uses the power after it has been terminated or uses the power for purposes other than that for which it was intended.

Living Trust or Will: the perpetrator may coerce an older adult to change his or her will.

Successful Frauds Share Some Common Elements

- The offenders gain the trust and confidence through their charisma.
- The offender(s) use a business name similar to a well-established company.
- The offender(s) communicate a concern for the older adult.
- The offender(s) create the impression that the older adult is special, lucky and is chosen to receive the offer and that such offers are rare.
- The offender(s) encourage their victims to make an immediate decision or commitment to purchase products and services, which limits consultation with others.
- Since the special offers are only for a select group of customers, the scammer asks the victim to not discuss the details and thereby decrease the chance of discovery by a family member, neighbour or others.

According to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the top scams involving older adults are...

Telemarketing Fraud: Many companies use the telephone to distribute information about their goods and services. Hiding behind anonymity, some criminals take advantage of seniors by sounding exactly like legitimate businesses.



The telephone is also used to commit prize and sweepstake frauds. These frauds generally involve informing the victim that he or she could win, or has already won, a valuable prize or large sum of money. The victim is required to send in money to cover the taxes, shipping or processing fees and the prize may never be delivered or it is costume jewelry or cheap electronic equipment worth less than the money paid to retrieve it.

Identity Theft: A voice on the phone may ask, "Please verify the last three digits of your social insurance number, we believe that there has been fraudulent activity with your credit card." By invoking fear, scammers take full advantage of the elderly to obtain the necessary information, and exploit their identity

Charity Contribution: The scammers call you, and ask for a donation on behalf of their charitable organization. Criminals succeed at deceiving people as they often use names of charities that sound extremely similar to distinguished ones. They play on the older adults' desire to help others.

Medical Fraud: Qualified health care providers are the only ones eligible to provide medical treatment and sell medical supplies. Criminals will often try and offer medical services over the phone and or by mail. Many scammers have been receiving free treatment by assuming someone else's identity, and using their health care.

The Prize Scam: *Someone calls to tell you that you have won a prize such as money or a car, but you must submit a payment to cover costs such as taxes or shipping in order to obtain the prize.*

Where to Get Help

Business/investment opportunities: Scammers will call you proposing a once in a lifetime opportunity, promising high returns after you send a registration and or investment payment.

Home and automobile repairs: Scammers may recommend fraudulent emergency home repairs, often requiring an advance deposit and they may Financial Abuse By Relatives And Caregivers not do any work, start but not finish the work or do substandard work that requires correction. Common frauds include roof repairs, driveway resurfacing, water-proofing and pest control.

The offenders are often transient, moving among neighbourhoods, cities or even provinces. Dishonest auto mechanics may falsely inform the older adult that certain repairs are needed or they may bill for services or repairs that were not required or were not completed.

Loans and mortgages: Some older adults might experience cash flow problem, especially if they lend money to friends and family.

Predators may provide loans with very high interest rates, hidden fees and repayment schedules exceeding the older adult's means, often at the risk of their home, which has been used as collateral.



Funeral and life insurance: Many older adults are concerned about having enough funds to pay for a proper burial or to be given to loved ones upon death.

Predatory sales people take advantage of these concerns by selling older adults policies that duplicate existing coverage, do not provide the promised coverage or are altogether fake.

For more information contact

Elder Abuse Ontario
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Telephone: 416-916-6728
admin@elderabuseontario.com

Seniors Abuse Line (SLL)

The Seniors Safety Line is a safe, confidential place for older adults and those who care about them to talk to someone about situations where they feel they are being abused or mistreated, or to receive information about elder abuse services in their local areas.

Interpreter services are available in more than 150 languages upon request.

- **Available 24 hours a day/7 days a week in over 150 languages**
- **Toll-free: 1-866- 299-1011**
- **Website: www.eldeabuseontario.com**

Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre

If you suspect that you may be a target of fraud, or if you have already sent funds, don't be embarrassed - you're not alone. If you want to report a fraud, or if you need more information, contact The Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre:

- **Telephone: 1-888-495-8501**
- **www.antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca**

Crime Stoppers

Crime Stoppers is a civilian, non-profit, charitable organization that brings together in a trip are relationship, the police services of a community, the media and the community in the fight against crime For the closest Crime Stopper Program to you, [use this link to obtain the closest Crime Stoppers Program to you](#) to submit your information.

- **You will remain anonymous.**
- **Toll Free: 1-800-222-TIPS (8477)**
- **Website: www.canadiancrimestoppers.org**

Reporting to the Police

You may wish to report elder abuse or neglect to the police. Police respond to reports of persons in immediate danger or possible criminal offences including assault, and theft of property.