Elder Justice:

The Musical

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We Are Family
Elder Abuse: Where do I begin?

- 1975 “Granny Battering” article
- 1989 Establishment of the NCEA
- 1992 Government mandated National Elder Abuse Incidence Study
- 2003 National Academies Report; EJA introduced
- 2005 First RFA from the NIA on elder abuse
- 2010 Elder Justice Act passes
Federal Funding for Family Violence

- Child Abuse: $6 billion
- DV: $649 million
- Elder Abuse: $19 million
Elder Abuse: Tragedy

- Physical, sexual or psychological abuse, as well as neglect, abandonment and financial exploitation of an older person by another person or entity,
- That occurs in any setting (e.g., home, community or facility),
- Either
  - In a relationship where there is an expectation of trust; and/or
  - When an older person is targeted based on age or disability.

Cite: DOJ/HSS Elder Justice Roadmap Project
• Abuse cuts across all races, religions, ethnicities, gender, sexual orientation, and socio-economic groups
• Includes, in many states, adults with disabilities
• Different ethnic groups and cultures may define abuse differently
• Legal definitions of abuse vary by state
2-5 million victims of elder abuse in the last year
Nearly 1 in 2 people with dementia experience some form of abuse by others.

An estimated 5.2 million Americans have Alzheimer’s disease.
Abuse of Long-term Care Residents

In a study of 2,000 NH residents, 44% said they had been abused.

Over 50% of NH staff admitted to mistreating older residents.
Abuse of Adults with Disabilities

30% of adults with disabilities who used Personal Assistance Services for support of ADLs reported one or more types of mistreatment by their primary provider (Oktay & Tompkins, 2004)

In an anonymous sample, 68% of 305 adult women with disabilities reported experiencing one or more types of abuse in the preceding year. Of those abused, 30% experienced sexual abuse in the preceding year (Curry, et al, 2009)
Theme from Titanic

Figure 2-1. Iceberg theory of elder abuse
3 times more likely to die
Financial Impact

$2.9 billion lost to financial elder abuse
Common Characteristics

- In 66% of all reports of abuse, the victim is a woman.
- People over 80 years of age are 2 to 3 times more likely to be victims.
- Victims are often confused.
- Victims are often isolated.
- Abusers are most often family.
Multidisciplinary Responses: It Takes a Village
Local responses

- Multi-disciplinary Teams
  - Complex abuse cases reviewed
- Financial Abuse Specialist Teams
  - Financial abuse cases reviewed
- Elder Death Review Teams
  - Suspicious deaths reviewed
- Elder Abuse Forensic Centers
  - MDT on steroids
Local Elder Justice Coalitions

- Public awareness
- Professional education
- Coordinated response
- Advocacy
National Initiatives

- First use of ACA Prevention Fund for elder abuse research in 5 states
- Consumer Financial Protection Bureau
- Elder Justice Coalition
- APS national data collection system
- Elder Justice Coordinating Council
- Elder Justice RoadMap Project
National Center on Elder Abuse

- Elder abuse listserv for professionals in the field
- List of local coalitions
- Database of published articles on elder abuse
- Handouts for the public and professionals
- Standard Power Point slides
- E-newsletter: Elder Abuse Bytes
Building a national movement that gives a voice to everyone who cares about elder justice

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