



Working with Healthcare Organizations to Support Elderly Female Victims of Abuse, WHOSEFVA

<http://whosefva-gbv.eu/>

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 - MTÜ Naiste Tugi- ja Teabekeskus / Women's Support and Information Center NPO (WSIC, EE)
- **Partners:**
 - University of Tartu (UT, EE)
 - Kilcooley Women's Centre (KWC, UK)
 - Union of Women Associations of Heraklion Prefecture (UWAH, GR)
 - Resource centre for women MARTA (MARTA, LV)
 - The Austrian Women's Shelter Network (AÖF, AT)
 - Women against Violence Europe (WAVE, AT)
 - Women's Line Finland (WLF, FI)

Background for the project

- Increase of aging population: challenge for structure and quality of services
- Feminization of ageing, especially in the oldest old age groups
- Abuse of older persons is a worldwide concern - touches on human rights, women's rights, gender equality, domestic violence
- Special situation of older women: gender discrimination over the lifespan, sexism, ageism
- “Older women face greater risk of physical and psychological abuse due to discriminatory societal attitudes and the nonrealization of the human rights of women”.

(Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, MIPAA 2002)

Background for the project

- Data on the prevalence of elder abuse/gender based violence in older age is inadequate and underreported - many prevalence studies cover age up to 74 years
- Older women sink into the cap:
 - gender neutralism: gender based violence has been rarely issue in elder abuse research and elderly care and services - this perspective ignores the issues of power and control that are central especially in violence in older age
 - absence from discussions about shelters and hotlines, lack of debate on the circumstances and special needs of older women victims of abuse that might affect help-seeking behaviour

The aims and activities of WHOSEFVA

- Aim: to improve the knowledge of health care professionals on how to recognize and treat abused older women via an updated training programme
- Activity: development of a curriculum based on
 - findings from research and other knowledge on violence against older women
 - evaluation of training of medical professionals in emergency and primary health care settings and key stakeholders (Mutual Learning Workshops)
 - feedback from the Focus Groups/interviews of older abused women to bring their perspective to the development work

The aims and activities of WHOSEFVA

- Aim: to support health care organisations to create standards and procedures from the point of view of victims' safety and legal protection
- Activity: implementing of tools in health care settings for identification of abuse of older persons
- Activity: development of good practice protocols for medical examination and treating older abused persons in emergency and primary care settings
 - examining and assessing physical injuries taking into account aging process, diseases and medications
 - assessing psychological signs of abuse in older persons

The aims and activities of WHOSEFVA

- Aim: to increase the capacity of DV organizations to cooperate with healthcare providers and provide more accessible and sustainable training for them
- Activity: training of DV organisations' trainers
- Activity: development of Online Open Course based upon the developed training programme

The aims and activities of WHOSEFVA

- Aim: to increase the capacity of DV organizations to advocate for needed healthcare policy changes through training and evaluation
- Activity: train DV workers on political advocacy and policy analysis
- Activity: assess the European regulations' and recommendations' implementation related to prevention of violence against older persons/women and development of services for older abused people
- Activity: creation of national and EU-wide recommendations advancing the health care policy on prevention of domestic violence of the older victims (practice and education).

Strengthening Older People's Rights: Towards a UN Convention

- Not any specific instrument dedicated to older persons
- Older persons are mainstreamed into their implementation but general protection is not enough
- Attention is focusing on the implementation of international and EU level human rights instruments to tackle elder abuse and protect and promote the rights of older people

<https://social.un.org/ageing-working-group/documents/Coalition%20to%20Strengthen%20the%20Rights%20of%20Older%20People.pdf>

Strengthening Older People's Rights: Towards a UN Convention

”A single, dedicated international instrument would provide standards related to the human rights of older persons, as well as guidance for the development of national legislation, policies and programmes to prevent and combat violence neglect and abuse against older persons and specific and adequate mechanisms for protection and accountability at the national and international levels”.

Open-ended Working Group on Ageing. Eighth working session New York, 5-7 July 2017.

<http://undocs.org/A/AC.278/2017/2>