

Gathering people together to address the abuse and neglect of older adults in your community

What has been done

Various communities across Ontario and other Provinces in Canada have found it most useful to get a group, or groups, of people together to address the abuse and neglect of older adults in their community.

Approximately 72 communities in British Columbia have developed "Community Response Networks" (Described on the next page).

Communities in Ontario such as: the Counties of Haldimand and Norfolk, Waterloo, Hamilton-Wentworth, the Niagara Region, Peterborough County and City, Hastings/Prince Edward County, the Halton Region, Wellington and Dufferin Counties, Simcoe County, Thunder Bay, Brantford, and Kingston have committees to address the abuse of older adults in various ways. (Please Note: A description of some of the Projects that these groups are working on, and how to contact these groups, can be found both in the Resource Section (Section Six) of this Manual and in the links to them on the Abuse Education, Prevention and Response Project's Web Site. This site can be found at: <http://fp.kwic.com/~jpreston>.)

In some communities, groups of older adults - most commonly those involved with Peer Support Counselling Programs, Friendly Visiting Programs, and/or Councils on Aging - have identified the abuse of older adults as an issue. In other communities, it has been representatives of service provider agencies/organizations to older adults that have begun the work of addressing these issues.

All these groups have something in common. They are groups of individuals and/or representatives from service provider agencies or organizations who have come together because they have identified a problem, and they want the assistance and support of others to address it.. The individuals in the groups that exist have found that they can learn a lot from the other members of the group and that their collective voice is better heard by other members of the community than their singular voice. They have also learned that working collectively saves time and energy that might otherwise be expended in repeated single efforts by individuals, or individual agencies or organizations.

Community Response Networks

Many people and community committees are now utilizing the terms “Community Response”, or “Community Response Network”. When the people working on the Haldimand-Norfolk Project on the Abuse of Older Adults and the Abuse Education, Prevention and Response Project use the term “Community Response Network” they mean something **very** specific.

In these projects, “Community Response Networks” are networks created through the facilitation of Connecting Modules Workshops, a community development model that was first piloted in British Columbia, Canada, in 1996.

“...the term **Community Response Network** (CRN) is used to refer to any group of organizations and/or individuals working together, in an area defined by geography, to provide effective service to adults who have been (or are at risk of being) abused by others.”¹

"A Community Response Network exists to respond to a victim's needs and wishes when abuse or neglect is reported. It develops a framework for addressing the abuse of older adults that is...shared and supported by individuals and organizations throughout the community. ... A framework provides the context that a community uses in designing, reviewing, and improving...a community's service delivery, advocacy, and peer counselling system...when actual incidents of abuse occur." ²

“**Effective service** is defined as respectful service that achieves clearly communicated goals that flow from stated needs of the people who use the service. When dealing with abuse, some services will focus on prevention, some on stopping abuse that is currently happening, and some on healing effects of past abuse. Some, of course, will deal with all three.

Some service providers may limit their services to a particular client population, and others may serve a variety of client groups.

"Whatever the specific focus of a service organization, ‘*effective service*’ should mean that agency and program goals are clear and specific, that services reflect those goals, and that evidence is available that individual and organizational action results in the achievement of those goals and the meeting of clients’ needs in a timely and efficient manner.”³

¹ *Developing Community Response Networks: A Guide for Communities*, Holland, Sylvia; Northshore Community Services, British Columbia; April, 1994

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

During the *Community Response Networks: Community in Action Conference* (British Columbia; November, 2001) workshop participants looked at what elements "make up" a Community Response Network and what would be the expected outcomes of a Co-ordinated Community Response.

Community Response Network	Co-ordinated Community Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community development to create a strong <i>community</i> team that will address abuse [and] neglect of older adults - as an issue that effects communities as well as individuals • Outreach to include the people most effected [by abuse], and the work of the CRN • Team building to facilitate inclusion, participation and power sharing on the CRN team • Education of team members, and the community at large • Prevention • Advocacy • Peer Support • Protocols to guide co-ordination of community supports • → increased community capacity to respond to abuse and neglect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased community and professional awareness about adult abuse and neglect • Increased commitment to address abuse and neglect as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an issue that effects individuals and families - an issue the effects communities • Increased understanding of the dynamics of abuse and neglect & how to prevent/reduce/respond • ...tools for intervening, and offering support and assistance • More awareness of the people and organizations that can provide supports • Stronger relationships between the people and organizations that can provide support • Better co-ordination of supports and services → fewer people falling through the cracks

(This chart is adapted from: *Protocols to Guide a Co-ordinated Community Response - Everyone has a Role to Play*: Handout distributed at the Community Response Networks: Community in Action Conference; November 21 - 24th, 2001; Richmond, British Columbia)

However, it is easiest to define a Community Response Network by describing what it is not.

A Community Response Network is not:

- simply the development of a protocol or protocols to follow when assisting an abused older adult
- the establishment of multi-disciplinary groups/committees whose purpose is to discuss specific cases of abuse that are occurring
- a network of people who are responding to abuse situations that might occur within a specific group of people (e.g., within certain cultural, faith, or age related communities/groups, within long-term care facilities, etc.)
- a network of people who are all from the same background or who all do similar work (e.g., “gatekeepers” in the community; legal professionals, social service providers, nurses, etc.)
- the development of a group or Speaker’s Bureau whose members offer public and/or professional educational seminars on the issue of the abuse of older adults
- the development of a group or committee whose members meet to discuss and share information about the issue of the abuse of older adults
- a group of people who come together to write and distribute information on the issue of the abuse of older adults

A Community Response Network (CRN) can encompass all or some of these elements but no one of these elements is a CRN. No community's CRN is exactly the same as that within another as the development of the CRN is based on the community in which it exists and the individuals and services within that community.

A Community Response Network includes **everyone** who is living within a defined geographical area.

These people may develop networks of individuals and organizations who could provide assistance to abused older adults --they may provide public education and develop other prevention of abuse strategies/programs - they may work with many different cultural and/or faith groups within their community, etc., etc. You will want to be as **inclusive** as you can be, both while you develop the

membership of your Community Response Network, and within the Network itself.

Everyone is eligible to be included in the Network and the Network reaches out to everyone. Initially a “core committee” is usually created to develop the framework for the Network. Then more and more people come together to decide what strategies they would like to use to address the abuse of older adults in their community, both initially, and in the future. These strategies will be re-defined and/or altered as the group develops and/or circumstances in the community change.

It is important that a **team** is built while you are developing your Community Response Network. Communities involved in the building of CRNs will be involved in building partnerships within their community. Team building or partnership-building processes should be built into all aspects of CRN building (including their incorporation into every meeting that the members of the CRN have). New members should feel welcomed and should be given an orientation to your CRN, its goals, and its members work. The people and organizations who belong to the CRN should feel ownership for it. They need to feel included, that the work is meaningful to them, and that their ideas and suggestions are heard and acted upon.

Team building is important not only for the sake of maintaining and sustaining your CRN – it is important in terms of being able to maintain the CRN while holding its members accountable for their actions and while addressing barriers within your community.

(More information on team building, and developing agreements which further define the way that the members of your network can work together, is available beginning on Page 11 of this Section of the Manual.)

When members of a community have decided that they would like to address the issue of the abuse of older adults how do they begin to organize?

A good place to start is by taking an inventory of what resources currently exist in your community. (Community Worksheets # 1, 2 and 3 - found in Section # 3 of this Manual - may be useful tools for the members of your community to work through when you are starting to develop your network. These Worksheets will assist you in defining who could belong to your network, what resources are available in your community, and what barriers to the creation and maintenance of your network exist in your community)

The people developing Community Response Networks in British Columbia found that “initial ‘movers’ behind local Community Response Network development ...fit one or more of the following descriptions:

- “they have had close personal contact with victims of abuse or neglect
- as service providers they have had contact with clients who are living in abusive situations and they recognize that they have neither the authority, resources and/or personal skill or knowledge to independently ‘fix’ the situation
- they have had specific ideas and insights - or else want these things from others - about how to stop, prevent and heal abuse”⁴

The following questions, responses, and lists (the next five pages of this Manual) are adapted from *Developing Community Response Networks: A Guide for Communities*, Holland, Sylvia; Northshore Community Services, North Vancouver, British Columbia; April, 1994

How do you decide who *needs* to be involved?

This question must be considered from two perspectives: the kind of *organizations* that need to be involved, and the older adult *individuals* who need to be involved. It does not matter which you start with, but your lists shouldn't be considered complete until you have approached the question from both angles.

What *agencies/organizations* need to be involved?

To identify the organizations that need to be represented in a community response to the abuse of older adults:

- list all of the types of information, support and assistance that an adult victim of abuse and neglect might need to stop, heal, and prevent, abuse
- develop an inventory of all the service organizations and support groups in the community who are providing help in one of more of those areas. Don't just think of services and supports that "advertise" themselves as abuse response services. Think "out of the box"!
- double-check your local inventory against the list of service providers listed

⁴ *Developing Community Response Networks: A Guide for Communities*, Holland, Sylvia, North Shore Community Services, British Columbia; April, 1994

below to see if you have inadvertently omitted any key players

- review your lists with people who have been abused and/or neglected, i.e., past and/or potential users of services, to determine whether the list needs to be expanded
- review your lists on an on-going basis to see if there is an organization that should be added to the list, if there is an organization that should be removed from the list (i.e., it does not exist anymore), and/or if the description of the organization on the list should be altered (i.e. the organization's mandate has changed)

Potential Response Network Participants

- Individual Older Adults
- Representatives of Senior's Organizations
- Consumer and support group representatives (may be related to violence in relationships, coping with disabilities, Alzheimer Societies, anti-poverty groups, or other issues)
- the staff of Long-Term Care Facilities (Nursing Homes, Municipal Homes for the Aged, and Charitable Homes)
- the staff of Care Homes (rental homes/Retirement Homes that offers at least one of the following care services: nursing care; supervision of medications prescribed by a doctor; an emergency response system (e.g., a call bell); help getting from place to place; incontinence care; and/or assistance with daily living activities such as eating, bathing, dressing, and personal hygiene)
- Home Support Workers
- Occupational therapists, physiotherapists, massage therapists, chiropractors, etc
- Friendly Visitors
- Deliverers of "Meals on Wheels" and other similar programs
- Community Care Access Centre staff (Management, Case Managers, and Placement Co-ordination staff)
- Social workers (including Discharge Planners)
- Geriatric Psychiatry Program/mental health workers
- Lawyers, paralegals, community legal workers
- Police
- Crown Prosecutors
- Victim Assistance Workers/victim advocates
- Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee staff
- Women's Shelter/Services staff
- Sexual Assault Centre staff
- Counsellors in private practice
- Managers of housing complexes (including Municipal Housing)

- Representatives of Associations for Community Living and similar programs
- Adult "Day Away/Day Care" staff
- Banking/financial services staff
- Federal Income Security Program and other financial assistance workers

- Department of Veteran's Affairs staff and counsellors
- Co-ordinators of local information and referral services
- Nurses (hospital staff, public health nurses, nurses who provide care in private homes, etc.)
- Physicians (in private practice, on the staff of a long-term care facility, etc.)
- Other health care workers
- "Gatekeepers" in the community, e.g., Pharmacists, business operators, postal workers, meter readers - people who are regularly in touch with people who live in the community
- people working in culturally-specific agencies, e.g., immigrant-serving agencies, Native Friendship Centres, Aboriginal services
- Alcohol/drug addiction counselling or treatment staff
- Crisis centre counsellors
- Outreach workers
- Peer counsellors
- Pastoral care workers and clergy
- Social planners
- Members of community co-ordinating committees

Obviously you are not going to get all these people together at the same time. Some will join your group later than others, some may never be formal members of the group, etc. However, you can keep these groups and individuals informed via newsletters, educational bulletins, in-service or public education seminars, the media, etc. It is important to think about how you can reach the most people - both in terms of educating them on the issue of the abuse of older adults, and in terms of getting their input on your work and utilizing that expertise as you are developing your project.

When creating an initial, core, committee of individuals who will begin the work of creating your community response start by asking yourselves what skills, knowledge and personal attributes you think would be important qualities for committee members to possess.

You do not want to spend time researching information and/or re-creating resources when there is someone, or some people, in your community who can bring skills, knowledge, and/or existing resources to your group.

Seek older adults and agency/organization representatives who are already engaged in addressing abuse issues, understand the aging process, work with older adults, and/or understand a community development approach to planning.

Mentally noting who has what knowledge, and who does what well, can also serve as a reminder to validate and support these people.

Personal Skills

When considering whom to invite to sit on your committee you should think about people who possess the following personal skills, knowledge and qualities (these lists are in no particular order of priority):

- listening
- probing
- inspiring
- can identify individual's strengths
- can identify community strengths
- organizing
- delegating
- planning
- focusing
- goal setting
- action planning
- reflecting
- prioritizing
- summarizing
- time management
- stress management
- co-ordinating
- training
- confronting
- advocating
- recording
- reporting
- visioning - using metaphors, imagining, picturing
- public speaking
- networking/coalition building
- writing
- policy analysis/development
- evaluating

Knowledge (of)

- power and control issues, abuse, and indicators of abuse
- abused person's experiences
- legal rights and legal recourses
- continuums of abuse/tactics of power and control
- assessment skills
- interviewing skills
- prevention approaches and tools
- characteristics, culture(s), and resources of the local community
- consensus-building procedures

Personal Qualities

- curious
- compassionate
- energetic
- expressive
- respectful - of self and others, and of process and timing
- forthright
- inspirational
- empathetic
- creative
- persuasive
- empowering
- patient
- playful
- clear-minded
- determined
- fun loving
- honourable
- flexible
- persistent
- humble
- irreverent
- diplomatic
- supportive
- problem solver
- risk taker
- attentive
- adaptable
- experienced
- assertive
- know their own boundaries well, and respect others

These lists are not exhaustive, and, obviously, you are not going to find a person who possesses all of these qualities. They are presented to guide your thinking when you are forming your group.

“Beware of the bug!

Discussions about who *should* be involved often become discussions about why certain people or agencies are *not* involved, and what problems will be (or have already been) encountered in securing their commitment to community response network development.

Then, because those present for the discussion are typically anxious to ‘get on with the work’, the decision to proceed simply with who is present (and/or whoever can easily be convinced to join the group) is often made. The result can be a cohesive, energetic, task-focused group - who do not have strong connections with other parts of the system and it [should] not [be] one person, or one small group, but the *whole system* that ultimately determines whether or not [abused person’s] needs are met.

Clarify first whose voices are important to the development of your response network and whose actions, authority, influence, and ability to allocate resources may be critical to the practical success of the community response network.

To do this, you need to [envision what] the purpose of your CRN [will be], and the criteria that will be used to measure ‘success’ “. ⁵

Again, answering the questions posed in Community Worksheet # 1, Section Three, Page 1, of this Manual may assist you with this work.)

Remember...

"Communities are made up of individuals with a variety of cultural backgrounds, beliefs, interests and concerns. One of the greatest challenges you will face is to find the common ground in the diversity. Success requires that a good cross-section of community members participate.

⁵ *Developing Community Response Networks: A Guide for Communities*, Holland, Sylvia; Northshore Community Services, British Columbia; April, 1994

Inclusive processes are those that:

- are open and participatory in nature;
- respect differences and value all contributions;
- ask questions rather than impose answers;
- look for solutions and areas of agreement;
- break down barriers to communication such as the use of jargon and stereotypes; and
- provide a variety of opportunities for participation

Examples of the way communities include a variety of people in community development processes are:

- town-hall meetings,
- focus groups,
- coffee gatherings and potluck suppers,
- discussion papers that provide an opportunity for response,
- questionnaires about community matters,
- surveys that identify the skills and abilities of community members,
- local media reports,
- e-mail and chat rooms,
- planning workshops, and
- interviewing individuals in leadership roles.

Failure to involve a cross-section of community members and interests will weaken your community development effort. To be effective, all sectors must be involved.

Invite community leaders to participate, and design strategies to bring together individuals who do not normally participate in community processes. Make sure that it is the right time and that there is enough interest to proceed."⁶

Building Teams

From November 21 - 24th, 2001, members of Community Response Networks from across the Province of British Columbia came together at the *Community Response Networks: Community in Action Conference* in Richmond, British Columbia.

⁶ *Community Development Workbook: A Tool to Build Community Capacity*: Frank, Flo and Anne Smith, Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada; 1999; Section 2, pp. 26 & 27

During the Conference the importance of team building, in terms of developing and sustaining Community Response Networks, was discussed. It was suggested that the principles that would be adhered to by a team that was building a Community Response Network would be those of:

- inclusion
- participation, and
- power sharing.

 goal of team building would be to create an environment in which team members feel free to fully participate in the team.

Team members would feel:

- welcomed
- they would be provided with information, (including a description of the principles by which the team is to operate)
- they would be a part of any decision-making process(es), and
- they would be held accountable for their actions.

An environment of safety and trust would be developed in which members of the group feel free to express their thoughts/ideas.

Once the team members are defined, and they have come to a shared understanding of what the goal and purpose(s) of the team are, they can define how they are going to work together/relate to each other in order to achieve the group's goals.

* **Outcomes of the Team Building Process**

Outcomes of the team building process may include:

- Agreed-upon principles to guide the team's actions
- Shared awareness about how experiences and beliefs effect the ways we work together
- Shared commitment to choosing *how* to learn together and to work together
- Shared commitment to build capacity to work together most effectively, i.e., becoming more aware of what team members know, what can learned, what can changed (knowledge, skills, attitudes, relationships, processes, systems)
- A team that values and draws on diverse experiences and perspectives

- A team that maximizes the participation (contribution) of all its members
- A team in which all participants have equal opportunity to influence how the work gets done, and the what the outcomes of the work will be
- Individual and team actions that are accountable to principles

And, of course,

- More people in the community know about the Community Response Network (CRN)
- More people in the community are concerned about [older] adult abuse and neglect
- More people will see the CRN as a community resource for addressing [older] adult abuse and neglect
- More people will know who to contact when they hear about a situation of abuse or neglect

(Please Note: Community Worksheets # 1, 2 and 3 - contained in Section Three (pp. 1 - 6) of this Manual - may assist you with building your CRN and with your team building work.)

** Adapted from: Protocols to Guide a Co-ordinated Community Response - Everyone has a Role to Play: Handout distributed at the Community Response Networks: Community in Action Conference; November 21 - 24th, 2001; Richmond, British Columbia*

Developing Agency, Inter-Agency, and Community Understandings of your CRN

During the Community Response Networks: Community in Action Conference a number of handouts were distributed that discussed “agency, inter-agency, and community protocols”. In this Manual the terms that will be utilized in place of the word "protocols" are: “**understandings**” or “**agreements**”. This is due to the fact that the word “protocol” often conjures images of a fixed, or static, chain of events that are to occur when an action triggers them. When assisting abused older adults such a static model has not been found to be useful as older adults are individuals, and their individual circumstances will change with each instance of abuse that occurs. Therefore the response that worked for one, individual, instance of abuse probably will not work for another.

Any "understandings" or "agreements" should be flexible to accommodate this need for differences in response. The agreements (or to use the other language "protocols") should only be a framework to help CRN members think through how to assist people. The understanding or protocol should adapt to fit the needs of the person being assisted rather than trying to fit that person's problem into a rigid protocol.

The process to develop understandings and/or agreements within the CRN, and between CRN members and the community, is grounded in the same principles as other CRN activities:

- Inclusion
- Participation
- Power Sharing
- Assuming capability, and
- Building capacity *

In order to promote understandings (particularly among the older adult members of your community) of your CRN and its work - among agencies, between agencies, and within your entire community -all the members of your CRN will need to be able to describe:

- how each CRN member can offer support to an [older] adult experiencing abuse or neglect, **and**
- how the CRN team is working toward the prevention of such abuse.

* Adapted from: *Protocols to Guide a Co-ordinated Community Response - Everyone has a Role to Play*: Handout distributed at the Community Response Networks: Community in Action Conference; November 21 - 24th, 2001; Richmond, British Columbia

One way in which you could educate both CRN and community members about: the CRN; who in your community could assist an abused older adult; and what that assistance would look like, is to use scenarios to think about situations of abuse and neglect.

Develop scenarios of abusive situations that are realistic but are not actual instances of abuse of older adults that have occurred in your community.

Ask yourselves as you are working through the scenario(s) you have developed:

- In this situation, how would each organization or individual member of the CRN be able to offer support to the older adult experiencing abuse and/or neglect?
- Do understandings/agreements exist between you, as CRN members, regarding how each organization or individual will respond to/support the abused older adult?
- Do understandings/agreements exist regarding how you will co-ordinate these responses?
- Where no such understandings or agreements exist how might you develop them?
- Who else in the community (non-CRN members) might work with you to support this older adult?
- How might you develop understandings/agreements between these organizations or individuals and the CRN regarding how they will support you in assisting the abused person?
- How will you, as CRN members, make **sure** that the abused older adult receives appropriate support and assistance?
- How will you come to agreements regarding what is appropriate assistance? *

* Adapted from: *Protocols to Guide a Co-ordinated Community Response - Everyone has a Role to Play*: Handout distributed at the Community Response Networks: Community in Action Conference; November 21 - 24th, 2001; Richmond, British Columbia

Remember...

"An effective co-ordinated community response to [older] adult abuse and neglect will occur ... when CRN relationships ... support:

- Shared learning, reflection and growth
- Shared leadership
- Shared decision-making
- Shared accountability
- Safety and trust, and
- Shared action"⁷

⁷ *Protocols to Guide a Co-ordinated Community Response - Everyone has a Role to Play*: Handout distributed at the Community Response Networks: Community in Action Conference;

All members of the CRN should be able to describe what the people in these relationships have agreed to do, and how they will be accountable to each other.

The measure of an effective community response is found in the strength of the relationships among CRN members.

Values to Guide Practice and Participation in the Community

1. The people involved in developing a co-ordinated community response include:
 - (a) those individuals who may need or want assistance to prevent, avoid, or address abuse
 - (b) those individuals who may provide assistance to prevent, avoid and address abuse
2. The needs, interests, and participation of those individuals who potentially may need or want assistance *leads* the planning and implementation process.
3. Participation is meaningful for all participants, as defined by the participants themselves.
4. The skills and knowledge of all participants are recognized, valued, and supported.
5. Activities for participation are varied and flexible, to meet the specific needs and wishes of a wide variety of participants.
6. All participants endeavour teamwork together as equal partners in the planning and implementation process. Efforts are made to decrease power imbalances where they exist, and to build on the capacity of all participants to participate on an equal basis with others.
7. Professionals transform their practice from “doing for” to “doing with” to enable full participation.
8. All participants are kept informed, communicate and share information with each other.

November 21 - 24th, 2001; Richmond, British Columbia

9. All communication is in simple and clear language or in some other form that is understood by participants. Special efforts are made to communicate with all individuals, regardless of how they communicate.
10. Policies, procedures and protocols are developed with maximum participation of all individuals who may need or want assistance or who may provide assistance to prevent, avoid, or address abuse.
11. Any guidelines to develop a co-ordinated community response respect the diversity of the communities across Ontario and support local control.
12. Accountability is built into all plans for the implementation of any response to abuse at both the government and community level; evaluation will address both process and outcome.⁸

Developing Community Response Networks The Haldimand-Norfolk Process

The members of the Community Response Network have gone through the above described team building processes many times and will go through them many times again.

The Steering Committee of the Haldimand-Norfolk (H-N) Elder Abuse Project was originally formed to write a funding proposal to Health Canada: The Partners in Aging Program. The proposal that they wrote requested funding which would allow them to: teach themselves about the issue of the abuse of older adults; teach others about these issues; and develop a community protocol that would describe how older adults suspected of being abused could be assisted. Therefore, the initial Committee was very small and task (proposal writing) oriented. It was comprised of a group of representatives from agencies and organizations that had identified themselves as being interested in doing this work during a one day workshop on the issues involved in working with older adults.

When the requested funding was secured the Committee hired a Project Co-ordinator and its membership was expanded.

⁸ *Connecting Module Workshops Manual: Module One Handouts*, British Columbia Coalition to Eliminate the Abuse of Seniors; 1994; pp 14 & 15

New Committee members consisted of those who were invited to join. The expanded Committee was comprised of representatives of: service provider agencies and organizations that work with older adults in the community, law enforcement (Police), Long Term Care facilities (Nursing Homes, Charitable Homes and Municipal Homes for the Aged), and one older adult (who resided at a Long Term Care facility).

The older adult member of the Committee was identified and recruited as he sat on the Board of Directors of a local agency. His voice was considered to be important to the success of achieving the goals of understanding the needs of older adults, education, and team building.

The other Committee members were identified and recruited as they represented agencies, organizations and facilities whose employees worked with older adults. Their voices were considered to be important to the success of achieving the goals of education and team building/information sharing between agencies.

A public awareness campaign was initiated early in the Project. This campaign's purpose was to increase awareness among all community members about the abuse of older adults, the existence of the Project, and the fact that new Committee members, particularly older adults, were being sought.

The public awareness campaign was successful in educating the community about the issue of the abuse of older adults and the existence of the problem, but was not found to be a useful strategy for recruitment of older adult volunteers.

The Steering Committee then broke off into smaller working Committees - the Management Committee, the Training Committee, and the Protocol Development Committee.

The full Steering Committee continued to meet quarterly to update each other on the work of the Committees and to evaluate whether or not the group as a whole was achieving its goals as originally planned.

At the end of the work of the first H-N Elder Abuse Project, the members of the Steering Committee had:

- increased community and agency/organizational awareness of the issue of the abuse of older adults
- increased the level of knowledge of these issues in the community
- written and distributed an Education Manual on the issue of the abuse and neglect of older adults and how to assist an abused older adult

- written and distributed a Resource Guide that provided information on the abuse of older adults, how to assist an abused older adult, and what community resources (agencies and organizations) were available to assist abused individuals and in what ways they could assist

They were unsuccessful in developing a community "protocol", in terms of creating a "map" of who in the community would do what to assist an individual abused older adult. The members of the Steering Committee encountered all of the difficulties with protocol development that have been discussed earlier in this Section of this manual. The main difficulty they encountered was that individual's circumstances change with each instance of abuse that occurs, therefore one "map" could not be created.

For example, the members of the Protocol Committee discovered that they could "map out" a response for one, individual, instance of abuse, but this "map" would not work for another instance of even a similar form of abuse. Therefore, the members of the Protocol Committee, and ultimately the Steering Committee, decided to apply for further funding which would allow them to create a community team the members of which would work toward the development of shared understandings regarding older adult abuse and how to respond to abused individuals. In short, they decided to attempt to obtain funding which would allow them to import the Community Response Network community development model from British Columbia.

Again a small, task-focused committee was created to write the proposal for funding that would allow them to develop this local community response network. When they were successful in securing this funding they expanded and altered the Steering Committee's membership once again.

More concerted efforts were made to recruit older adult volunteers. Some of these recruitment efforts were successful, (e.g., when trained older adult volunteers spoke to groups of their peers) and some were not, (e.g., the mass distribution of a flyer that described the Project and our volunteer needs).

When the Connecting Module Workshops (four days of Workshops, facilitated over time, that lead community members to the development of a framework for their community's CRN) were to be facilitated in H-N the members of the Steering Committee invited specific people/organizations to attend the Workshops.

These people were:

- older adults from various cultural backgrounds (reflective of some of the cultural backgrounds of residents of the Region)
- a clergy member
- representatives from service provider agencies and organizations that provide

service to older adult community members (including: the Police, the Public Guardian and Trustee's Office, the Department of Veterans Affairs, Women's Services, the Community Care Access Centre, the Public Health office, geriatric psychiatry/mental health services, the local Alzheimer Society, victim's services, aboriginal family violence services, the Victorian Order of Nurses, emergency room staff from each of the hospitals in the Region, social work staff from each of the hospitals in the Region, and Senior Support Services).

Some of the community service agencies and organizations represented at the Workshops had been Steering Committee participants prior to facilitation of the Workshops and some had not.

In most instances the Steering Committee invited agency and organization representatives that held managerial level positions within their agency or organization to attend the Workshops. One exception was to invite the Abuse Issues Co-ordinator of the H-N Ontario Provincial Police rather than the Staff Sergeant. The reason that managerial level representation was requested was due to the fact that the Workshop participants would be speaking for their agency or organization at the Workshops and potentially making some commitments in terms of organizational policies and how they could assist the response network.

The Connecting Module Workshops did lead Workshop participants to develop a framework for H-N's Community Response Network.

When this framework was established the Steering Committee membership expanded and altered once again.

New members joined the Committee. These were mostly people who had been in attendance at the Workshops and representatives from new service provider agencies in the community. Some representatives left the Committee as their service was no longer being offered in H-N.

A new sub-Committee, the Policy and Procedure Committee, was formed to perform a specific task - that of writing the Mission Statement and Guiding Principles of the H-N CRN.

The Education Committee (formerly the Training Committee) expanded.

The Protocol Development Committee was disbanded.

As the funding for the H-N Project was scheduled to end in December 2000, the work of the members of the Steering Committee, was re-focused to concentrate on developing strategies to sustain the Community Response Network.

Their efforts were successful and the Haldimand and Norfolk Community Response Network is still in existence.

The Network is currently (2002) comprised of two Committees:

- the Advisory Committee (which oversees the "day-to-day" running of the Network), and
- the Education Committee (which supplies educational presentations to both the public and to professionals)

There is also one Sub-Committee of the CRN - the "Choices Committee". This Sub-Committee is comprised of a group of older adults who are investigating both the needs of older adults in the community and how to meet those needs, and piloting an "A Time for Me" Project.

A Steering Committee, comprised of all the members of the Community Response Network, meets quarterly so that CRN members can update each other on the work of the Committees and Sub-Committee, and to plan future Network activities.

The history of the events that took place in H-N is not offered to you as a "map" for how your community should recruit and organize volunteers and representatives in your Community Response Network.

It is meant only as an **example** of how one community developed a CRN and to illustrate that your committee membership will change as time goes on, both in terms of membership and in terms of the focus of your work.

An integral part of the H-N Project on the Abuse of Older Adults was the issuance of reports that discussed what had, and had not been, accomplished during the course of the Project, and recommendations for future CRN development work - both in H-N and other communities. These reports and recommendations were made to the Project's funders, the Ontario Trillium Foundation, as a part of the Project's evaluation process.

The exercise of writing these reports and recommendations was quite useful in terms of helping the Steering Committee reflect about such things as, for example, which older adult volunteer recruitment strategies did, and did not, work. These reflections led the H-N group to alter strategies along the way. As a result of this learning process, it is anticipated that the community's future work will be more successful.

The following is a list of some of the recommendations that the Steering Committee of the H-N Project made in reports to its funders. You may find these recommendations useful in your community work in that you may find that some strategies that did not work in H-N work for you, and vice-versa.

Recommendations from the Haldimand-Norfolk Project: What Worked and What did not Work

1. The H-N Steering Committee had initially proposed to establish eight “Older Adult Resource Groups” - one Group in each of the eight towns within the Region. These groups were envisioned to be comprised of older adults, and it was the hope of the Steering Committee that the Groups' members would both: inform the members of the H-N CRN of the needs in their community, and, that one member from each Group would agree to be trained to facilitate Connecting Module Workshops.

It was difficult to find older adults who possessed the time and energy to commit to being both the person who was assisting H-N CRN members in community development activities in their town and the person who would take the “Train-the-Trainer”, Facilitation of the Connecting Modules, Training.

It was eventually decided that these tasks would be divided amongst different people.

This was a successful strategy in terms of identifying more older adults who were willing to volunteer to assist in the work of the H-N Project and **the Steering Committee highly recommended this strategy to any other community attempting to recruit volunteers.**

In fact, when trying to build a Community Response Network in your community the Steering Committee members would recommended that you:

- identify potential volunteers, and utilize a variety of recruitment strategies, from the onset of your project
- maintain an information flow to its own communities via the media, however it is not recommended to rely on media releases as a recruitment strategy
- contact Seniors Groups, Legions, and other organizations where older adults congregate early in your project’s tenure. Arrange speaking engagements to these groups of older adults as soon as possible.
- have pre-planned activities for older adult volunteers who are recruited early

in the life of your project to undertake so that they remain interested and involved in the project while committee building and strategy development is ongoing.

- allow a lot of time in the timeframe of your project for the recruitment of older adult volunteers and develop as broad an older adult recruitment strategy as possible.
- recruit past caregivers to older adults who are interested in assisting in such a project, and/or interested in assisting current caregivers.

It should be recognized that older adult representatives and caregiver representatives on committees may, at times, be one and the same person.

2. The Steering Committee created and distributed a flyer describing the need for CRN volunteers (particularly older adults). This flyer was displayed across the Region. The distribution of this flyer resulted in the recruitment of one young adult volunteer who was willing to assist with clerical work and two requests for a speaker on the topic of the abuse of older adults. **The Steering Committee would recommend the distribution of such a flyer by others working on similar projects as a community education tool, however, the H-N experience is that such flyers are not useful in recruiting older adult volunteers.**

3. The Project Co-ordinator and Steering Committee members organized booths at community Seniors/Health Fairs. This was not found to be a good venue for the recruitment of volunteers, however, such venues did provide an opportunity for more community education on the issue of the abuse of older adults as well as providing community exposure to the work of the project.

In Haldimand-Norfolk it has been interesting to note that the talks to “Women’s Groups” (Women’s Auxiliaries, Church Groups, etc.) - particularly those groups within faith communities - have successfully resulted in the recruitment of older adult Project volunteers.

4. The Steering Committee highly recommends the training of older adult volunteers to be speakers to community groups on the topic of the abuse of older adults - both as a volunteer recruitment tool, and in terms of generating more interest among the older adult population in the work of older adult abuse projects. This strategy resulted in older adults showing increased interest in the work of the H-N Project.

5. The Steering Committee would recommend to other communities that they allow for a great deal of time within the timeframe of their project for the recruitment of older adult volunteers; that they have as broad an older

adult volunteer recruitment strategy as possible; and that they acknowledge from the outset of their work that older adult volunteer recruitment will be ongoing throughout the life of any such project.⁹

Most of these recommendations refer to the recruitment of older adult volunteers. This is due to the fact that both H-N Projects on the Abuse of Older Adults were developed by agency and organizational representatives who then needed to find ways to recruit older adults to assist and inform them.

When you are recruiting individuals to join your CRN be creative, and think as broadly as you can when you are thinking about both who should be represented on your committee and how you will recruit those people/invite them to participate!

Strategies for CRN Development

If you have now:

- created a core group/committee that has decided how they want to address the issue of the abuse and neglect of older adults in your community
- focused on the specific activities you would like to engage in, and the tasks that you would like to accomplish, in terms of addressing this issue in your community
- identified who you would like to assist you in this work (in terms of giving input to, and providing feedback regarding, the work that you are suggesting should be done)

What strategies could you use to accomplish the work that you are suggesting be done?

You could:

Apply for funding that would enable you to do such things as purchase resources, hire a person to co-ordinate your activities, advertise the fact that your committee exists and the work that it is attempting to accomplish, create and distribute your own educational materials on the topic, etc.

⁹ *First and Second Interim Reports to the Ontario Trillium Foundation*: Preston, Joanne; Port Dover, Ontario; 1998 and 1999

BUT, you may not receive the funding that you initially applied for, and/or a source funding may not become available for some time.....so what can you do when funding is not present?

Again, think very broadly and creatively.

Scan your community:

- see who might already have some of the resources (including knowledge) that you are seeking to assist you with your work and ask them to join your committee and share their resources and/or knowledge with the broader group
- ask older adults who are considered “informal leaders” in your community to join your group
- ask people (particularly older adults) who have particular skill sets to join your group (i.e., people may possess: public speaking skills, researching skills, teaching skills, organizing skills, clerical skills, computer skills, etc.)
- ask community agencies and organizations if they would be willing to join your group, and/or assist you in other ways, i.e., will they: donate staff time to assist the group in overseeing and co-ordinating your activities; donate staff time to attend and/or facilitate in-service educational sessions on the issue of the abuse of older adults; make “in kind” donations to your group (e.g., would they be willing to do some photocopying for you, offer you free meeting space, etc.), etc.
- ask your local media if they would be willing to donate advertising time and or space in their publication for you to communicate the fact that your group exists and what you are attempting to accomplish.....etc., etc.

* (Community Worksheets # 1 and # 2, contained in Section Three of this Manual, may be of assistance to you in this work.)

Be creative

Both in thinking about what you could ask for, and how you will ask for it. You will be surprised how many individuals, agencies and organizations will be willing to assist you. The H-N experience has been that people do see the need to become involved in such activities and are happy to do so. Quite often they have been seeking assistance in addressing the issue of the abuse and neglect of older adults and have not known how to organize/begin addressing the issues. When

opportunities for increased learning on these issues and assistance in addressing the issues are presented to them they will respond positively.

In terms of co-ordinating your work it was the experience in H-N that individuals, organizations and agencies will be willing to assist you with that task. They will see the merits in collectively sharing the work as, although it may take time to undertake such activities as attending committee meetings, providing education on the issue(s), etc., in the long run participating in the work of the project will save them time. It will save them time as: individuals and staff will not have to seek out resources for themselves; individuals and staff will know who to contact to discuss a particular issue; etc.

Once you have begun the processes of gathering people and resources together, defining the needs of your community, and defining your goals.....

How can you evaluate whether or not you are accomplishing what you intended to accomplish, whether or not your activities are meeting the identified needs, and whether or not there are other needs that should be addressed?

Developing Plans and Evaluating your work

You have begun the process of gathering people and resources together, defining the needs of your community, and defining your goals. How can you evaluate whether or not your activities are meeting the identified needs, and whether or not there are other needs that should be addressed?

Planning

Plans are made by people so that they can clarify what they want to do, how they want to do it, and when they estimate it will be done. Everyone plans. They plan their day, plan for a vacation, plan what they are going to make for supper, etc.

Whether you are aware of it or not, you also evaluate whether or not your plans were "good plans".

For example, if you are planning a dinner party you:

- decide who to invite
- set a date and time for your party
- send out invitations
- decide on your menu
- check on your available funds to see if you can pay for the ingredients

- necessary for the menu you have planned
- revise your menu if necessary
- purchase the ingredients that you will need to prepare your meal
- clean your house
- prepare your meal
- set your table
- serve the meal to your guests

Your purpose for having the dinner party may be to:

- create an atmosphere in which people enjoy themselves
- provide your guests with tasty, nutritious food
- create a situation in which you get to visit with your friends
- reciprocate (i.e., if you are inviting friends over who had you to their house for dinner a couple of months ago)
- all of the above

You will decide whether or not your plan was good based on:

- did everyone come to your party?
- did they enjoy themselves?
- did you enjoy yourself?
- was the food enjoyed by all?
- all of the above

The author of this manual once held a dinner party for friends. Everyone who was invited came to the party and everyone had a good time. The author had decided to serve Lasagna (with a meat sauce). A couple of weeks before the party she discovered that one of her invited guests is a vegetarian. She decided to make a Lasagna with meat sauce and a vegetarian Lasagna. A few days before the party she discovered that one of her guests is lactose intolerant. The wife of the lactose intolerant person offered to make a cheese free Lasagna and bring it to the party. The person for whom she had made the vegetarian Lasagna was ill the day of the party and could not come.

What can we learn from the above scenario?

- that the timing of the party was well planned (everyone who was invited was initially able to attend)
- people are available on a Saturday evening to attend a dinner party
- that people came and had a good time despite some difficulties
- that the person planning a dinner party should ask their guests about food allergies and preferences before they set their menu

- that you have a dear friend who is willing to assist you
- that vegetarians get sick

Making a plan, or plans, for how you are going to address the abuse of older adults in your community is a very similar process to the one described in the above scenario, as is evaluating the effectiveness of your plans.

First of all you need to gather together a group of people.

Then the group has to decide what they want to do, when they want to do it, what materials they will need to carry out their plans, how much their plans will cost, how you are going to evaluate whether or not your plans was a good one, and who will report to whom about the effectiveness of the whole endeavour.

Planning, and evaluating the effectiveness of your endeavours, should be on-going, cyclical processes.

You will find that your plans will change depending on: what assistance you get while carrying out your plan(s); what barriers appear while you are carrying out your plan(s); what feedback you have received regarding whether or not your plan(s) are working out as anticipated; as well as other factors.

Ask yourselves:

- What do we want to do? (what is our purpose/to what end are we doing this) - in the short term? - in the long term?
- Why do we want to do it? (i.e., is it for some benefit?) - What benefit? - Whose benefit?
- When do we want to do it?
- Who is going to do it?
- What will the costs of doing this be? (financially, and in terms of volunteer hours, etc.)
- How will we know that what we did was good? (Well planned - well timed - met the needs of the people that we wished to assist/educate, etc.)

Decide upon, and write out your purpose. This should be a brief, broad, statement of what you want to do. For example: the purpose of the Abuse Education, Prevention and Response Project is: "To work together, and with groups in other communities in Ontario, to raise awareness about the abuse of older adults; help communities identify ways of actively preventing, and responding to, the abuse of older adults at a local level; prepare educational materials to assist communities to understand the dynamics of abuse, abuse prevention and response; prepare materials that will act as a community development guide for groups interested in raising awareness about abuse and in developing a local response to abuse; and, work with communities who

request Connecting Module Workshops to develop Community Response Networks to improve the quality of life of seniors."

You will also need to decide what outcome you are working toward (what would you like to see happen as a result of your endeavours). The outcome of the Abuse Education, Prevention and Response Project is anticipated to be:

"Healthier communities whose members are trained to:

- assist older adults suspected of being abused and/or neglected, and
- co-ordinate their responses to such abuse when it occurs."

As with the plan for the dinner party, from your statement of purpose you will have to decide on plans of action that will lead you to accomplish what you set out to do. So, using the Abuse Education, Prevention and Response Project as a model, from the above statement of purpose you would have to decide the "who, what, when, how and why" for each of the activities listed in the statement of purpose.

For example, you would decide:

- when and where will workshops be held
- who will facilitate the workshops
- what materials will the workshops include
- who will gather together and/or create the materials that are necessary for the workshop
- how will we evaluate the effectiveness of the workshops
- how will we evaluate whether or not the workshops have helped us achieve our anticipated outcomes

You will find that what you are doing as you are breaking up your overall plan/purpose into individual plans of action is setting objectives for yourself.

You will have some short term objectives, (e.g., write a training manual to accompany the workshops that are facilitated/put the Lasagna in the oven by 5:30 PM), and a long term plan, (e.g., facilitate "x" number of workshops within the next three years/hold a dinner party for your friends).

Each of these objectives, in turn, will have to be broken down in terms of creating individual action plans for each activity you will need to carry out in order to achieve that objective, (e.g., gather together materials that you will need to assist you in the writing of the manual/turn the oven on).

If you have started with a documented, clear, and mutually agreed upon purpose; decided upon and documented what you need to do to accomplish what you set

out to do; and decided upon and documented how you are going to evaluate whether or not your activities were successful; you will find a clear guide, or map, to follow while you are carrying out your activities. Without a map you will get lost, so taking the time to prepare one is vital to your group's well-being, in fact its survival. You will waste a lot of time if you are going in circles, so time spent creating your map will save you time in the long run.

As previously stated in this Section of this Manual, evaluation should address both process and outcome.

What is meant by process and outcome?

Graham and Sheree Meredith (the evaluators of both the Haldimand-Norfolk Project and the Abuse Education, Prevention and Response Project) have described "process" as the "manufacturing process". What, exactly, did you do when you were making your Lasagna. (You bought the ingredients, cooked the noodles, chopped vegetables, combined the ingredients, etc.)

"Outcome" (as described by the Meredith's) is discerned when you answer the question "to what end" (did we do all of this)? For example, if the training manual that you are reading is viewed by people to be a positive contribution to the literature on the abuse of older adults it would be a good outcome of all the work that went into writing it, editing it, printing it, and distributing it. An example of an outcome is "the operation was a success but the patient died". You would evaluate whether or not this was a good outcome based on whether or not your purpose was to save the patient, or operate successfully.

Therefore your group would not only want to evaluate the ways in which you went about attempting to achieve your purpose (process), you would also want to evaluate the outcome of your activities (to what end did all of our endeavours come).

Evaluating the process means evaluating the strategies that you have attempted to achieve your anticipated outcome.

To go back to our dinner party:

The author would evaluate the **process** she went through when hosting that dinner party as flawed. The timing of the party was good, but the lack of questioning the food preferences of her guests led to many problems that could have been avoided. The **outcome** of her dinner party was good as it was viewed by all her guests to be an enjoyable evening, accented by enjoyable food, (even though the process was flawed). Sometimes you get lucky, (as the author did), but sometimes not paying attention to the process leads to undesirable outcomes.

Evaluation is a learning process. Your group should get feedback on your planned activities before you carry them out (you want to make sure that people will come to your party); monitor and get feedback on your activities as they are being carried out (ask about food preferences before you actually prepare the food); make note of any suggestions that are made regarding changing your plans, take action to incorporate these suggestions, (make a vegetarian Lasagna); and learn about and document what worked, and what did not work.

Alter your future activities to account for what you have learned. (An example of not taking learning(s) into account, and paying the consequences for your lack of attention to your learning(s), is that the next time the author served a meal to her lactose intolerant friend she served a cheese omelette).

So, how do you evaluate/get feedback on your activities and the outcome of your Project?

If possible, hire evaluators to assist you with this process. These people should come from outside of your group so that they are objective.

If this is not possible, when you are doing your scan of your community regarding knowledge and skills that you should look for when deciding who should belong to your group, (described earlier in this Section - Page 30) seek out individuals with:

- planning skills
- evaluation skills
- survey writing skills
- computer skills (setting up databases, etc.)
- researching skills (finding materials that will assist you in learning how to evaluate your work), and/or
- the ability to look at things objectively.

There are many evaluation tools available to you...

You could:

- establish focus groups (to review your materials, give you feedback on your plans, etc.)
- write, distribute, collect and analyze a survey (Your survey could be written in such a manner that it provides you with information regarding what the needs

of abused and/or neglected older adults in your community are, and then see if your activities are going to meet some of these needs. Such a survey would also identify needs that you are not currently addressing, but may want to in the future.)

- distribute evaluation forms (ask attendees at any seminars or workshops you facilitate to: rate the workshop, your effectiveness as a facilitator, let you know what they considered useful in the presentation and what they did not, etc.)
- schedule regular meetings of your group the sole purpose of which is to go over your map and see if you are still on course. If you are off course use this opportunity to ask those present how they think you should alter your course/activities so that you can get back on track

Insure that the people you are attempting to assist (older adults) have a voice in your evaluation process(es). (If you make it easier for service providers to do their work, but the needs of the abused older adults are still not being met in your community, you will not have had a favourable outcome to your activities!)

Congratulate yourselves well things go well, and look for positive solutions to any problems that you may encounter!