

ELDER ABUSE- ASSESSMENT

JUNE 2013

DR. M.S. GUDI

PRESIDENT

NEOLIFE FOUNDATION

Introduction

- Elder Abuse is a social crime, seen as day to day event all over the universe.
- It has been widely accepted as blow to humanity and violation of human rights.
- Loneliness, literacy, Widowhood, Dependency, Depressed and frailty are the most common risk factors, which render elderly vulnerable to abuse.
- Mostly relatives & trusted people commit this inhuman treatment to elderly. It makes elderly more depressive, away from social contacts, humiliated and desperation and thereby making their quality of life more worse.
- So, there is need to prevent such inhuman acts & exploitation of elderly, and strengthen all our efforts to restore the pride, respect and dignity of elderly people, so that they should spend their evening life with pride, peace and pleasure.

Objectives-

- To assess the prevalence of elder abuse
- To know types of abuse committed and relation of abusers to elderly.

Methods

- **Present study was conducted in the month of May 2013 in four different localities of Haripur and Haridwar of Uttarakhand.**
- **Health workers & volunteers were assigned the work of assessment.**
- **Four workers and two volunteers visited their respective area and randomly contacted the elderly people & noted their details (personal), after obtaining verbal consent.**
- **They have been assured satisfactorily that all information will be kept confidential and their names & other details will nor be divulged to any body.**
- **Then, using a questionnaire (designed as per the guidelines of WHO on Elder Abuse Assessment), the required information was collected and recorded, Then the data was analyzed and summarized.**

Results and Discussion

<u>1. No. of elderly verified</u>	M	216	(57%)
	F	162	(43%)
	Total	378	

2. Economic status

Dependant	146	(38.6%)
Independent	232	(61.4%)

<u>3. Living alone</u>	107	(28%)
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4. Abused

108 (28.5%)

Physical	4
Psychological	46
Financial	25
Neglect	69
Sexual	-

5. Abused By

Son/ Daughter in Law	40%
Caregivers	30%
Relatives	20%
Others	10%

- Totally 378 elderly were verified, out of which 162 were females and 216 were males.
- 146 (38.6%) were found to be Dependant economically on others, whereas 232 (61.4%) were economically Independent.
- After assessment, it was found that 108 (28.5%) were abused routinely. In those, 4 were physically, 46 were psychologically, 25 were financially and 69 were of neglect.
- No single case of sexual abuse is reported in this study, As there were multiple type of abuse present in elderly, the percentage won't make it complete.

Main abusers are Son & Daughter in law (40%), followed by care givers (30%) relatives (20%) and others (10%)

Conclusion

- Elder Abuse is commonly found throughout the world as well as in India. In all sects/religions, poor & rich people, literate and illiterate people elder abuse is equally seen.
- But it is always under reported due to various reasons (family affair, prestige and honour are at stake, fear of retaliation from abusers, fear of branding them as mentally deranged etc).
- In this area neglect is the most common type of abuse, psychological and financial abuse are also frequently seen.
- Son & Daughter in law are the main abusers, caregivers, relatives and others also account significantly in abusing elderly.

Taking into consideration of all the above facts, there is need to prepare the plan of action to curb the incidence of abuse & to make the community free of elder abuse.

- Identifying the Vulnerable elderly for abuse.
- Counseling of elderly and relatives including caregivers.
- Making a “Coordination Team” involving Police and Administrative personnel, Social activists, Teachers, Renowned citizens, celebrities, spiritual heads are all to be involved.
- Wide campaign of Health Awareness Generation Programme for a) All senior citizens to make know the human rights and details of abuse and abusers, b) All health workers, volunteers & Coordination team members.
- All govt./non govt./voluntary organizations should join hands and work unitedly to make the society free of elder abuse.