



Patrick Doherty

ABUSE IN LATER LIFE EDUCATION SERIES FOR ADVOCATES:
SEXUAL ABUSE IN LATER LIFE

Module 4

National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life

2017

Office on Violence Against Women Abuse in Later Life Program

2

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As a Result of This Training, Participants Will Be Better Able to:

3

- Define sexual abuse in later life
- Recognize unique issues for older victims

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Sexual Abuse in Later Life

4

- Any type of sexual contact or behavior that occurs without the explicit consent of an older adult
- Victim is 50 years of age or older

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Sexual Abuse in Later Life

5



Sue Hall Dreher
Consultant
Formerly Director, Sexual Assault Support Services of Midcoast Maine

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Statistics around sexual violence later in life are thought to be serious underestimates, and reliable data is not yet available.

Teaster & Roberto, (2004).

6

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In the community, older victims of sexual abuse were violated most often by spouses/partners.

Acierno, et al., (2010).

In facilities, employees responsible for care (43%) or other residents (41%) were most likely offenders.

Ramsey-Klawnsnik, et al., (2008).

7

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Elder sexual abuse is often embedded in a pattern of multifaceted elder abuse, whether it occurs in domestic or institutional settings.

Ramsey-Klawnsnik, (2009).

8

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Sexual Abuse in a Family

9

- Sexual abuse by a spouse or partner
- Incest such as abuse by an adult child or grandchild



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Miss Mary

10



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Unique Issues

11

- Incestuous sexual abuse may add to shame & self-blame for victims
- May feel need to protect perpetrator if it is an adult child or grandchild
- System may be less responsive to older victim making a report

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12



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Unique Issues

13

- Male victims may not be believed or may have additional shame
- Victims who have dementia may not be believed or seen as credible witnesses
- Challenges of making a report in a facility setting
- Power imbalances may make it difficult for victims to report or seek help
- Fear of retaliation

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Additional Issues to Consider

14

- Less likely to have strong support system
- Ageism creates environment where older victims are less likely to be believed or taken seriously
- Increased risk of injury and/or infections
- Hearing impairment and/or physical limitations may make forensic exam difficult

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Summary

15

- Sexual abuse in later life is seriously underreported
- Older victims of sexual abuse are less likely to be believed
- Unique issues exist for older survivors of sexual assault

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Video Presenters

16

- Sue Hall Dreher
Consultant and former director at Sexual Assault Support Services of
Midcoast Maine
- Karla Vierthaler
Lifespan Project Manager at the National Sexual Violence Resource Center

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Special Appreciation

17

To Miss Mary, Al, and his family for the courage to tell their story so others may benefit.

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Thank You

18

- Special thanks to Terra Nova Films for the ongoing working partnership with NCALL and the beautiful video production
- www.terranova.org

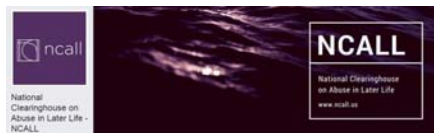


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Staying Connected to NCALL and Other Advocates

19

- Sign up for our enewsletter: <http://oi.vresp.com/?fid=03fcc93262>
- Join our listserv for advocates serving older survivors: ncall@ncall.us
- Join us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/ncall.us
- Join us on Twitter: www.twitter.com/ncall_us



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National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life (NCALL)

20

National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life,
a project of End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin:
(Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence)

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