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REPORT

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DATE: January 24, 2014

SUBJECT: **ELDER AND VULNERABLE ADULT ABUSE - ANNUAL REPORT**

FROM: Dan McDonald, Deputy Chief, Operations Support Services

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Elder and Vulnerable Adult Abuse – Annual Report be received by the Peel Regional Police Services Board as an information item as part of the annual reporting requirements.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- In 2013 fifty-four (54) incidents of Elder Abuse were reported to Peel Regional Police.
- The Regional Elder Abuse Coordinator provided twenty-nine (29) speaking engagements. The audiences were front line sworn members, police communicators and community groups.
- Approximately eight hundred and twenty-two (822) residents and two hundred and forty-four (244) Peel Regional Police officers were educated on the issues involving elder/vulnerable adult abuse.

DISCUSSION

1. Introduction

This report provides information on the mandate of the Elder and Vulnerable Adult Abuse Coordinator and the number of investigations entered into relating to elder abuse and vulnerable adult abuse in adherence with Ontario Policing Standards LE-021.

Peel Regional Police Directive I-B-701(F) provides instructions for the action to be taken by all members when incidents of abuse and neglect of elderly and/or vulnerable adults are encountered.

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For the purpose of this report, the following definitions apply:

- (a) "elderly person" - means an older adult who is sixty (60) years of age or older;
- (b) "vulnerable adult" - means a person who depends upon others to meet their everyday needs due to mental illness and/or developmental disabilities, or requires long term or indefinite care due to their age or medical condition;
- (c) "elder abuse/vulnerable adult abuse" – means any act or behaviour that harms or threatens to harm the health or well-being of an elderly or vulnerable adult. The abuse is caused by someone in a position of trust or authority that the elderly/vulnerable adult relies upon for their basic needs. Forms of abuse include, but are not limited to physical, sexual, financial and psychological abuse and neglect, whether active or passive.

PERSONS OVER 60 YEARS OF AGE

The latest census statistics for the City of Brampton and City of Mississauga are as follows:

Census 2006

Total population *1,198,854
Persons 60 + * 165,325 (14%)

Census 2011

Total population *1,237,354
Persons 60 + * 291,430 (24%)

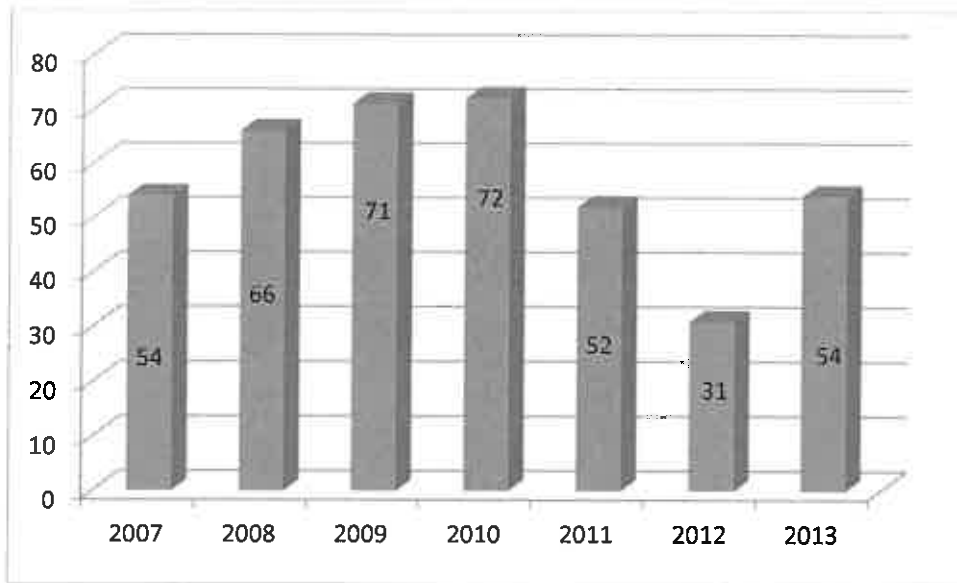
*** This figure is an estimation of total population and was provided by the Region of Peel Planning Department.**

Responsibilities - Regional Elder Abuse Coordinator

- Act as a resource to members of this service and the community.
- Provide assistance and guidance to officers, victims, complainants, and families of victims, as appropriate.
- Establish and maintain a liaison with other police agencies, family and criminal justice agencies, community and social agencies, the Coroner's office, and organizations dealing with issues relating to elderly and vulnerable adults.
- Liaise directly with Victim Services of Peel and provide such assistance as may be required.
- Coordinate training programs, conduct lectures, and disseminate information to the members of this service in relation to elder abuse. Such training shall include, but is not limited to, the role of this service in meeting the needs of victims/witnesses of incidents of elder/vulnerable adult abuse.
- Liaise directly with the "Seniors Fraud Officer", Fraud Bureau regarding frauds and scams perpetrated upon elderly and/or vulnerable adults within the community; and,
- Liaise with members of the various specialized bureau/units regarding any type of serial crime against elderly/vulnerable adults in the community and ensure appropriate dissemination of information to the public.

2. Background

Between January 1st, 2007 and December 31st, 2010 there was an increase in the number of reported elder abuse incidents. In 2007, there were fifty-four (54) reported incidents of elder abuse identified. This number increased to seventy-two (72) reports of elder abuse at the end of 2010.



In January 2011 Ontario Regulation 299/10 under The Services and Support to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act was enacted. This required mandatory reporting for service agencies to report incidents of abuse of a person with a developmental disability. It was anticipated that this legislation would have an impact on reported cases of elder abuse; however the number of reported incidents in 2011 was reduced to fifty-two (52), a 28% decrease from 2010.

In 2012, thirty-one (31) incidents were reported to Police. Approximately four-hundred and sixty-eight (468) residents of Peel were addressed on the topics such as Elder Abuse and Frauds/Scams.

In 2013, fifty-four (54) incidents were reported to police, this is a 75% increase from 2012. Of these incidents twenty (20) were financial, six (6) constituted neglect, twenty-one (21) were physical abuse, two (2) were psychological abuse, four (4) were sexual assault and one (1) was found to be public mischief. These follow-up investigations resulted in seventeen (17) being classified as unfounded, ten (10) incidents were found to be non-criminal, four (4) were found to be sexual assaults, three (3) incidents were found to be civil in nature, two (2) incidents resulted in cautions, and three (3) incidents are still under investigation. Fifteen (15) investigations relating to these reports of elder abuse resulted in twenty-five (25) criminal charges being laid.

3. Presentations

In 2013, The Elder Abuse and Mental Health Coordinator provided twenty-nine (29) speaking engagements internally to front line and communications staff and externally to the community. Presentations were given to community members comprised of community agency workers,

long term care service providers and residents, private care givers, elders living in their own homes, post-secondary students, volunteers and neighbourhood associations. Approximately eight hundred and twenty-two (822) residents and approximately two hundred and forty-four (244) officers from Peel Regional Police were educated in relation to issues surrounding vulnerable adult abuse.

On December 3rd, 2012, Peel Regional Police, in partnership with the Peel Elder Abuse Prevention Network (PEAPN), launched the "Scams Wow" DVD that reflects the common scams and frauds targeting seniors in our community. The DVD was created to educate seniors and community members alike. The Scams Wow II DVD Series, an updated fraud education video, was launched in October 2013.

4. Elder Abuse Committee Involvement

The Elder Abuse Coordinator sits on eleven (11) committees in the community that impact elder and vulnerable person's issues:

- Law Enforcement Agencies Protecting Seniors (L.E.A.P.S.) – Member
- Peel Human Services and Justice Coordinating Committee – Member
- Joint Management Committee – Member
- Mental Health and Justice Management Committee – Member
- Peel Vulnerable Adults working group - Member

To ensure effective and efficient coordination of resources, the Elder Abuse Coordinator sits on the following committees that also have member representation from the Region of Peel:

- Peel Elder Abuse Prevention Network (P.E.A.P.N.) – Co-Chair
- Peel Elder Abuse Prevention Network (P.E.A.P.N) – Senior Crisis Team (sub-committee)
- Project Lifesaver – Committee member and police liaison (location tracking device that assists in the location of vulnerable persons suffering from Dementia and Alzheimer's, Autism, brain injury and being developmentally delayed)
- Project Lifesaver Regional Steering Committee – Member
- Adult Injury Prevention Network (A.I.P.N.) – Member (comprised of representatives from local community agencies with an interest in protecting seniors and vulnerable persons. Agencies include: Region of Peel Health, Distress Centre Peel, Spectrum Care Services, Brampton, Caledon and Mississauga Fire Departments)
- Brampton Senior Council – Member

5. Educational/Marketing events

The Coordinator attends, in a supporting role, a number of educational/marketing events hosted by the various community agencies. Examples of this would include:

- Guest on the "A Seniors Moment" radio show on Haze FM, January 2013
- AIPN events – June & July & November 2013
- World Elder Abuse Conference and Awareness Day – June 2013

- The Honorable Linda Jeffrey MPP Senior Strawberry Tea & Information Session – June 2013
- Counselor Pat Saito Seniors Info Fair – June 2013
- TV Series on Rogers – “Bullying, Battered & Bruised”, November 2013
- Seniors Advisory Committee – Seniors Mental Health Conference – November 2013

6. Project Lifesaver

In May 2010, Project Lifesaver commenced in the City of Brampton, and expanded into Mississauga in September 2010. Project Lifesaver utilizes radio technology to locate children and adults with a history of wandering due to a cognitive disability or impairment. Currently we have fifty-seven (57) members of the public registered to Project Lifesaver within the Peel Regional Policing area in addition to three (3) participants in the Caledon Area. Since training commenced in October 2009, we have trained one hundred and sixty-three (163) Peel Regional Police front line officers, and twenty-nine (29) OPP officers to be Electronic Search Specialists. There are now nineteen (19) Peel Regional Police officers trained as Electronic Search Instructors. Peel Police have had sixty-one (61) searches for registrants since the program commenced. In 2013, we conducted twenty-five (25) searches using the Project Lifesaver equipment.

CONCLUSION

As the population of the Region of Peel continues to age, the Elder Abuse Coordinator will, in coordination with other service providers in the Region, endeavor to educate the public and the members of the Police Service on the complex issue of Elder and Vulnerable Persons Abuse.

Approved for Submission:



Dan McDonald, Deputy Chief, Operations Support Services

For further information regarding this report, please contact Superintendent Robert Devolin at extension 3300 or via e-mail at robert.devolin@peelpolice.ca

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