

Media release: UCD Communications

Thursday 18th June, 2015

Afternoon seminar marks World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, which is marked on 15th June each year, aims to increase awareness of mistreatment of older people and highlights the need for appropriate action, including preventive measures. To coincide with World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, the National Centre for the Protection of Older People (NCPOP) at UCD, the Health Service Executive (HSE) and the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA) are conjointly hosting an afternoon seminar on elder abuse on Thursday, 18th June 2015. The seminar takes place at the Ashling Hotel, Parkgate Street, Dublin.

The seminar will see the launch of two reports from the National Centre for the Protection of Older People. The first, entitled *Non-compliance with Residential Care Standards: Towards a Risk-management Framework for Preventing Elder Mistreatment*, provides a summary of key findings from an analysis of a sample of published inspection reports into residential care homes. Dr Attracta Lafferty, lead author of the report, will show that the accumulated findings from these reports offer lessons for the residential care sector in relation to good risk management practices in preventing elder mistreatment and neglect.

Entitled *Interventions and Services which Address Elder Abuse: An Integrated Review*, the second report summarises the evidence from the growing body of reports and studies into elder mistreatment. The report lead author, Dr Deirdre O'Donnell, will discuss the effectiveness of responses and interventions aimed at addressing elder abuse. The report points to the need for interventions that include the older person who is the key stakeholder in both the problem and its solution.

In addition, Ms Marguerite Clancy, HSE Senior Research and Information Officer, will report on the work of the HSE's dedicated elder abuse service. She will outline the total number of referrals which the HSE's elder abuse service received over the past five years and will demonstrate how the dedicated service responds to these referrals.

The Lord Mayor of Dublin will give the welcome remarks. Speaking in advance of the seminar, the Lord Mayor stated: *'Elder abuse is unacceptable, regardless of where it occurs, and no older person should experience abuse. World Elder Abuse Awareness Day serves to increase the public's awareness of this difficult and challenging social issue.'* Also speaking in advance of the conference, Mr Paschal Moynihan, Chair of the HSE National Elder Abuse Steering Committee said: *'World Elder Abuse Awareness Day provides an important opportunity for those with responsibility for the care of older people and for the wider public in Ireland to renew their efforts to prevent elder mistreatment or neglect. The reports being launched at today's seminar provide further information for both policy makers and practitioners in planning appropriate responses and interventions in relation to elder abuse.'* Speaking as the national INPEA representative, Dr. Amanda Phelan, UCD, said: *'Elder abuse remains a serious issue in Irish society and it is therefore important that we use the best available evidence from research when developing system-wide responses to elder mistreatment, including legal, health and social care responses.'*

As part of the conference proceedings, the Lord Mayor of Dublin, and the UCD Dean of Nursing will sign the INPEA Declaration against Elder Abuse.

-ENDS-

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Elder Abuse is defined as: *“A single or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to an older person or violates their human and civil rights”*. In 2013, the HSE received over 2,400 referrals of elder abuse to its service. Since 2008, there has been a 29% increase in the number of referrals to the service. Most of the alleged victims referred to the elder abuse service were female and the referral rate was three times higher in the over 80s age group compared to those 65-79 years.

If you or someone you know is experiencing abuse, don't be silent. Tell someone. Get support and stop the abuse. Anyone experiencing elder abuse can call the HSE Information Line on **1850 24 1850**, Monday to Saturday, 8am–8pm, or contact a health professional such as GP, public health nurse or social worker. For more information visit www.hse.ie