Dear Readers,

Thank you for reading Malvern Family Resource Centre’s second edition of Seniors Connections. This newsletter is a community-led project, involving a diverse group of older adults with an interest in writing and seniors’ issues.

Seniors Connections highlights seniors’ safety information, particularly issues related to elder abuse. In addition, there are other topics older adults may find interesting and informative.

In this second issue, our contributors highlight the issue of neglect and have included important information that will help you better understand this form of elder abuse.

We hope that you enjoy this issue and we look forward to you reading our third issue that will be published in the coming year.

Please note, while this newsletter aims to represent the voices of seniors in the Malvern and Scarborough communities, the views expressed in the articles are of the individual authors and may not represent Malvern Family Resource Centre and its employees.

For any questions or comments about Seniors Connections or if you would like to contribute a piece for our next issue, please contact:

MFRC’s Seniors Department
416-284-4184 ext. 246
Dementia: Information to Keep Seniors Safe

By: Lystra Pierre

I decided to submit this article because in the past year or so I have become very aware of myself having memory lapses. In looking back over the lives of my mother and grandmother, I began to realize that they both exhibited beginning stages of dementia. I began doing some research and realized that there are signs of the onset to dementia and that there are things both medically and non-medically we can do to manage the onset of the disease.

I’m sharing this information in the hope that it will help individuals to recognize some of the signs and to help caregivers deal with dementia patients in their care.

Note: The following is a summary of an article by Kimberly Love entitled “10 Warning Signs of Dementia”. This article can be found on the website www.emboldly.com.

What is Dementia?

Dementia is a term that is used to describe an assortment of diseases that adversely affect brain function. Generally, dementia is applied to the more severe aspects of mental impairment, rather than the occasional lapse of memory that occurs in most people as they age. Loss of memory is quite common in seniors and the elderly, and is not considered to be a definitive symptom of dementia. In most cases, dementia is a progressive illness, where symptoms emerge slowly, and then significantly increase over time.

Warning Signs of Dementia

1. Short Term Memory Loss
   Although remembering the past - even decades ago - is fairly easy, a person with early-stage dementia has difficulty remembering yesterday or last week - and this short-term memory loss only worsens over time. See a doctor as soon as this warning sign appears.

2. Confusion
   Confusion can lead to difficulty communicating or performing regular activities, like driving. He or she may also not recognize people they have known for a lifetime. This can lead to frustration, emotional distress, and loss of independence.

3. Communication Difficulties
   Those with early-stage dementia may experience difficulty expressing themselves or following a conversation or story line because of an inability to remember vocabulary.

4. In ability to Recognize Sarcasm
   Some research has shown that the ability to understand if a person is lying or being sarcastic lies within the frontal lobe of the brain. Therefore, if it is not functioning properly, this could be a sign of dementia.

5. Mood Changes
   The person may undergo a complete personality change, becoming depressive or moody, and their judgment skills may completely reverse. Individuals should not be left alone for extended periods as they may be unable to recognize dangerous circumstances and can potentially harm others or him or herself.

6. Loss of Function
   Thinking and memory skills slowly decline, affecting the ability to perform day-to-day activities, such as selecting an outfit for the day or deciding what to eat. As time goes on, the individual may require assistance with very simple, routine matters.

7. Loss of Interest
   It is difficult and frustrating for some, who have been active all their lives to suddenly lose their ability to keep track of their regular daily activities and as such, they may lose interest in the activities they once loved and were passionate about.

8. Repetitive Behaviour
   Since dementia triggers memory loss and confusion, those who are in the early stages of dementia may repeat themselves, either in conversation or activities.

9. Difficulties Coping with Change
   The individual with early-stage dementia may not understand that his or her life has changed. Since they may be unable to remember people and places, they see each encounter as new people and new experiences. This often enhances a dementia patient’s feeling of alienation, isolation, and frustration.

10. Frequent Falls
    Frequently falling can be a sign of early-stage dementia, specifically Alzheimer’s disease. Since short-term memory is affected by early-stage dementia, the individual may not remember that he or she has fallen or the circumstances surrounding bruises or even broken bones.

If you think you are exhibiting signs of dementia, speak with your doctor. There are mental tests that can be given to determine if you are in early stage dementia.

Elder Abuse: Exploring Neglect

By: Joan Charles

Issue 1 of Seniors Connections introduced the reader to a range of issues related to elder abuse. We highlighted financial abuse in that issue and explained what it looks like and how it affects our community. Issue 2 of Seniors Connections highlights neglect as a form of elder abuse and this article aims to define neglect and show how it can occur within our community.

The definition of neglect can be found in Webster’s Dictionary as, “To pay insufficient attention to; disregard; to fail to perform or omit through indifference or carelessness.”

Keeping this definition in mind, it is important to know that one of the principles of the National Framework on Aging in Canada is Dignity. Additionally the United Nations support the fundamental importance of human rights as it pertains to seniors (Safe Seniors Calendar 2016).

The Residents Bill of Rights for people who live in Ontario Long Term Care Facilities (nursing homes) lists nineteen rights. Number two states, “Every Resident has the right to be properly sheltered, fed, clothed, groomed and cared for in a manner consistent with his or her needs.” Therefore, it is important that families and caregivers pay attention to the seniors in their lives, ensuring they are receiving adequate care, as failing to address this can have a direct impact on their dignity as a person and can infringe on their basic human rights.

Neglect Example 1

Jan was an 82 year old female resident who resided in a Long Term Care Facility. She did not speak English but understood spoken words and gestures. Jan was dependent on others for all activities of daily living (hygiene and grooming, washing, dressing, toileting, eating, getting in and out of bed, etc.).

When approached by her primary caregiver, Mona, Jan would yell, scream, and throw fits. Mona (Mona), whom on she is dependent would ignore her, which included leaving her wet and soiled in fees and urine (sometimes for the whole shift). Other staff was assigned to Jan did not experience that same problem.

In conclusion, neglect is a serious form of elder abuse which must be taken seriously. Being neglected at home by paid caregivers or family members is more difficult to detect since these individuals are isolated. However, it also happens in long term care and other seniors residences. Education, supervision, and vigilance are of utmost importance to prevent this from happening and in some instances continuing.

The above names have been changed to protect the individuals.
Beware the knock at the door
Door-to-door salespeople, scams and “experts”

By: Joe Robinson

There is an increasing number of people knocking on doors lately. Some claim to be from the government and need to inspect your furnace, water heater or water filter system. Others claim to be from Enbridge Gas wanting to inspect the gas line inside your home (this is not to be confused with the gas meter readers who do need to check your outside meter).

There are also those who come asking for money for a particular charity; these even come complete with “identification badges”, mainly from charities you’ve probably never heard.

There are also those who come asking to inspect the gas line inside your home (this is not to be confused with the government or Enbridge Gas or Young people with these clipboards may actually believe they are working for the government or Enbridge Gas or an inspection agency, but in reality they have been given brainwashing training from the company for whom they are working. Don’t let strangers into your home just because they have a badge! No senior has to let anyone into their home, unless they are fire or police. Some of these people just want to obtain entrance in order to overpower you and take your money/valuables, or check your place for a possible future burglary.

Even if they are from a legitimate organization, you do not have to let them in your home. If you do talk with a company at your door, and even sign a contract, there are protection laws you should know. These rights are set out by the Consumer Protection Act and cover most common consumer transactions (see sidebar).

On May 2, 2016 MPP for Etobicoke Centre Ivan Baker introduced a private members bill called the “Door-to-Door Sales Prohibition Act”. This bill would ban door-to-door sales, especially when it involves the sales or rental of furnaces, water heaters, water treatment devices and air conditioners. Though this might not stop companies from still knocking on doors, it would essentially void any contract made during that door-to-door visit.

Remember that there are individuals and groups who love to prey on seniors, thinking they are not well-informed and are an easy target. Show them that you are intelligent, well-informed, and know your rights!

Know your rights
The Ontario Consumer Protection Agency explains your rights as a consumer.

• Ask anyone who comes to your door for ID. Have them state their name and the name of the company they work for.
• Never show your gas, hydro or Internet bill, or state your current payment on these bills.
• Call the police if a person does not leave when asked, or continues to knock/ring your doorbell.
• There is a Cooling-Off Period if you sign a contract.
• A business or individual cannot give you false representation about themselves or their products.
• If you order a product from a person/company, the delivery of goods must be within 30 days of the promised delivery date or you can ask for a refund.
• Remember to read and understand the terms and conditions of any contract before you sign. Don’t be afraid to ask for clarification, or for a copy of the terms before you sign a later date. If you’re not sure, don’t sign!

Contact the Ontario Consumer Protection Agency if you feel you have been wronged by a business, unfairly treated, or taken advantage of because you are a senior.

Web: www.ontario.ca/page/your-rights-under-consumer-protection-act
Phone: 416-326-8800

You can obtain an online copy of Bill 193, the “Door-to-Door Sales Prohibition Act” on the web at: www.ontla.on.ca

The twenty six letters in the English alphabet are so intelligently arranged. They show you the way of life.

A: Always
B: Be
C: Cool
D: Don’t have
E: Ego with
F: Family and friends
G: Give up
H: Hurting
I: Individuals
J: Just
K: Keep
L: Loving
M: Mankind
N: Never
O: Omit
P: Prayers
Q: Quietly
R: Remember God
S: Speak
T: Truth
U: Use
V: Valid
W: Words
X: Xpress
Y: Your
Z: Zeal

Elder abuse from a nurse’s perspective

Q: What do you suggest we do with this person?
A: The first thing to do is to educate the potential abusers by initiating programs from pre-schools to college – “Respect the elderly”.

Q: Why as young as preschool?
A: This is the next generation - Elderly Abuse was hardly ever heard of, but as “Baby Boomers” age over the years, abuse seems to be escalating. We have to educate through awareness seminars, school workshops, games, “youth conferences” even availability of mentors to correct this.

Q: How can we help the abuser?
A: The abusers have to “recognize themselves as an abuser”. They need to know “who to go to for help if they see themselves as an abuser.” Remember “Youths of Today – Elderly of Tomorrow”. Leaving an elderly parent in a home with a baby or young child on a daily basis, they see themselves as an abuser.” They need to be gently arranged. They show you the way of life.

For the following is a short interview I conducted with registered nurse Janetha Gill - RN (England), RTTA (England), CAPPA Trainer (Canada), IBLCE (USA) - about elder abuse.

What I found interesting about this interview is the nurse’s perspective about how to prevent elder abuse.

Elder abuse is a complex issue and one may observe that it is often harder to stop after is has started than preventing it in the first place. This interview will shed some light on the importance of educating our youth on this issue for prevention and what need to know as a community to keep seniors safe.

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A: Well now that this issue of “Elder Abuse” is being handled, we now have to look at the potential abuser.

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By: AlisonMcLetchie

Q&A

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A,B,C’s of a happy life

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P: Prayers
Q: Quietly
R: Remember God
S: Speak
T: Truth
U: Use
V: Valid
W: Words
X: Xpress
Y: Your
Z: Zeal

Original source unknown. Submitted by Seethadhevi Subramaniam.
A conversation about elder abuse

By: Anonymous

Walking out of the mall the other day I was stopped by an elderly women sitting on a bench. She appeared to be alone. She asked if I could plug her charger into her cell phone. Her eyesight was poor and the holes were too small. After setting up her charger I decided to sit and talk with her.

I could tell from her accent she was originally from Jamaica. She told me that many people had passed by her and that something told her to ask me for help. She went on to tell me that she was having some difficulties at home with her daughter and began to cry.

The following is a brief account of our conversation. All names have been changed to protect her privacy.

Evelyn: Can I tell you something? I’m having a really bad day.

Me: What’s going on? What happened?

Evelyn: Well…I’ve been having trouble with my daughter. I can’t stay with her anymore. She lives in my house with her children and she isn’t nice to me. I came here today because I just can’t be there anymore. I want her to come home and wonder where I am and worry.

Me: What types of things does she do?

Evelyn: Well…she doesn’t beat me or anything but she pays me hundreds of dollars every month. She cooks me food to check that she is eating. She told me to call her every day to make sure she got home safely. She was very happy to hear from me. She said that things with her daughter had completely changed.

I don’t want her taking things from me without asking. I live in the basement. It’s nice though. I fixed it up with my grand-son. He’s so good. He put rails all over the bathroom for me.

Me: I really wish there was more that I could do for you. I used to work in long-term care so I have seen all kinds of horrible things happen to seniors by their families. It usually has to do with money. It sounds a bit like your daughter is taking advantage of you. She’s getting the money but not helping you with your needs and wants.

Evelyn: Please take my phone number and call me if you can think of anything to help me. Please remember to call me. You can call me anytime. This is my own phone.

Me: I will definitely try my best to check up on you every few days. Do you need me to call anyone for you right now? Are you alright by yourself? You know how to get home?

Evelyn: Yes, yes, honey. My house is right over there. I know where I’m going. I come here all the time.

I gave Evelyn a hug and pointed her in the direction of a Walmart. When I looked back to check that she was going the right way I saw that she had walked into a large store window mistaking it for a door, she was feeling around for a door knob. I went back and guided her into the Walmart. I then contacted mall security and asked them to keep an eye on her and make sure she doesn’t get lost.

I called to check in with her the next day to make sure she got home safely. She was very happy to hear from me. She said that things with her daughter had completely changed.

She had told her daughter how unhappy she was and that she didn’t want to live this way anymore. Her daughter acknowledged the tension and said she was going through some personal issues. She took Evelyn to get her groceries and do her taxes. She even invited her to watch TV.

Evelyn told me that at the moment everything seemed to be OK but was nervous about how long the good times would last. I told her I would check in with her at least once a week and I would try and find some community services.

Elder abuse comes in different forms—financial, emotional and physical. Emotional abuse can be just as painful as physical abuse. At Evelyn’s age she does not need many forms of help. She just wants the love, kindness and companionship of her children and grand-children.
Memorable summer moments

Malvern seniors took over Ward Island on August 25, 2016, as part of our Seniors Summer Trip Series.


The seniors drumming group showcased their skills at two events in June - when the former Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs came to MFRC to help us kick off Seniors Month, and at our Open House.

Seniors Connections
Committee Members
Aliceson McLetchie
Joan Charles
Lystra Pierre
Joe Robinson

Issue 2 of 4
Malvern Family Resource Centre
90 Littles Road,
Scarborough, ON M1B 5E2
Tel: 416.284.4184

www.mfrc.org

Find the following words in the puzzle. Words are hidden ➤, ←, and ↘:

ABILITY
ACCOMPLISHING
ACHIEVE
ADEQUATE
ADOPT
ARGUED
ASSIGNMENT
CASE
CATEGORY
 COMPARED
CONCERNED
DARSON
EMPHASIS
ENHANCE

EXPECTED
FACTOR
FOCUS
FRAMEWORK
GOAL
GROUP
HAND
IMPACT
IMPAIR
INADEQUATE
INCREASE
INTERESTED
LEAD
LEARNING
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<td>PROGRAM NOTES:</td>
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<td>Programs marked with an asterisk * require registration.</td>
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<td>Please call to register or for more information about seniors programs:</td>
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<td>416-284-4184 ext. 246</td>
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<td>All fitness programs require proper attire and completed</td>
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WHERE TO REPORT ELDER ABUSE
Local and Toronto-area services where you can report elder abuse and receive assistance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advocacy Centre for the Elderly (ACE)</th>
<th>Ontario Provincial Police OPP Seniors Issues Unit</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legal assistance geared to low income seniors.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Tel:</strong> 416-235-4981 (This is Highway Safety Division-Toronto on Keele Street; they may redirect you to local police depending upon the issue at hand)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tel:</strong> 416-598-2656</td>
<td><strong>Fax:</strong> 416-235-1697</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Web:</strong> <a href="http://www.advocacycentreelderly.org/services.php">www.advocacycentreelderly.org/services.php</a></td>
<td><strong>Elder Abuse Ontario</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Elder Abuse Ontario</strong></td>
<td><strong>Tel:</strong> Seniors Safety Hotline at 1-866-299-1011</td>
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<td><strong>Web:</strong> <a href="http://www.elderabuseontario.com">www.elderabuseontario.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family Service Toronto</strong></td>
<td><strong>Family Service Toronto</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tel:</strong> 416-595-9618</td>
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<td><strong>Email:</strong> <a href="mailto:sau@familyservicetoronto.org">sau@familyservicetoronto.org</a></td>
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Save on your energy bills with the Home Assistance Program!
The Home Assistance Program can help you save on your hydro bill by reducing the amount of energy you consume! Receive a **FREE home energy assessment** to see if you qualify for new, more efficient equipment that uses less energy.

FREE equipment upgrades include:
- New energy efficient light bulbs
- ENERGY STAR appliances (such as a refrigerator, freezer, dehumidifier or window air conditioner)
- Insulation

Two ways to qualify:
1. **Annual Household Income** (before-tax income of all household members, age 18 or older)
2. **Being a recipient of an approved social benefit program.**

This program is funded by the IESO and is being administered by GreenSaver in the Scarborough area.

For more information on the Home Assistance Program, please visit our website:
http://www.greensaver.org/homeassistance or call 1.855.591.0877

To speak to someone at Malvern Family Resource Centre about the Home Assistance Program call:
Seniors Department: (416) 284-4184 ext. 246