

The Committee recommends:

- 11. That the federal government, through the relevant federal departments, take the lead in developing and disseminating multimedia educational materials aimed at preventing elder abuse. These materials should be developed in consultation with various target groups and should be based on knowledge of what is most effective for each group.**

A. Educating Seniors

Older Canadians themselves were seen as the number one priority to target for education. To be successful, any prevention strategy needs to ensure their full involvement in design, planning and execution. One Voice, the Canadian Seniors Network, has begun work on the issue of elder abuse and in a series of national forums is seeking input from seniors to be turned into recommendations for dissemination back to seniors across Canada.

Various avenues for reaching older Canadians were suggested. Governments at all levels were urged to educate about existing services and to disseminate any information through pension cheques, in special mailouts by Health and Welfare or Revenue Canada, and through inserts with provincial utilities bills. The television and radio media were to be encouraged to allot space to airing educational videos about abuse of seniors as public service announcements while community newspapers were to publish information inserts. Banks, trust companies and other financial institutions were urged to initiate education and awareness endeavours or to utilize existing material in their contacts with seniors in order to reduce the need for older Canadians to rely on a third party to look after their banking needs. Another suggestion involved using retirement counsellors to educate when giving sessions on retirement planning. Religious leaders and physicians were also viewed as key people in conveying information to the elderly.

The Committee had the opportunity to view several excellent videos related to elder abuse. They were particularly impressed with two videos funded by Health and Welfare that presented very positive images of older people. One called "Even in Our Neighborhood" focussed on different forms of abuse and various ways that