

31. That the federal government provide guidance on appropriate evaluation methods for different interventions.

32. That annual progress reports on the results of all evaluations, positive and negative, carried out on any federally funded projects be made public.

One Voice called elder abuse "an abhorrent social, health, and legal problem in Canadian society."¹⁰³ The Committee recognized that the problem cuts across these diverse sectors and acknowledged that any solutions must be both flexible enough to apply to all areas and focussed enough to be effective in addressing the abuse of every older Canadian.

The Committee heard that education for increased public awareness is a major priority. Educating seniors, young people, service providers, community members, and informal caregivers is essential. Members agreed with witnesses that strengthening and focusing existing community based services is another priority area. Winnie Giesbrecht of the Native Women's Association told the Committee that any federal funding related to family violence must go to the people who work in the community. In the case of native people as with many others, "women are the ones who work in the service-providing areas."¹⁰⁴ Using existing seniors centres to provide a focal point for seniors and their families seeking help and organizing existing housing, transportation, financial, legal, social and health services to be aware of and to respond to elder abuse are among the efforts already underway.

The Committee agreed that the key to success in preventing, intervening and treating abuse of the elderly is to involve everyone in breaking the silence. In the words of Michel Couture:

If we can't get in by the left side, we can get in by the right. If that doesn't work, we'll get in by the back. There are many keys that haven't been courted or used.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ Darran, 2:6.

¹⁰⁴ Giesbrecht, 9:21.

¹⁰⁵ Couture, 4:28.