

Committee members heard that guardianship legislation can protect vulnerable older Canadians if properly applied.

**The Committee recommends:**

- 29. That the Minister of State for Seniors and the Minister of Justice consult with the provinces and territories on guardianship legislation and ways to strengthen the rights of seniors.**

**VIII EVALUATING WHAT WORKS**

Witnesses emphasized the need to evaluate the effectiveness of the various social, legal and health interventions aimed at preventing elder abuse to assess among other things whether they reached the desired audience and whether they achieved the desired outcome. The Committee heard that before more money is spent, “we have to know what’s working, and if it’s not working we should move on and try something else.”<sup>102</sup>

The witnesses indicated that evaluation can mean many different things to different people in different areas. Some examples were suggested by witnesses. For educational materials aimed at young children, evaluation can mean testing the attitudes of children before exposure to the materials and then testing to see if their attitudes changed in any way afterwards. On educational material aimed at adults, it can mean a quiz about the facts contained in a particular pamphlet taken both before and then again after reading it. For educational material generally, it can mean something as simple as finding out how many people took a pamphlet or how many people called an inquiry line.

Witnesses also spoke about some of the difficulties in carrying out evaluations. One of the key elements of any evaluation is the need to do an adequate evaluation of the situation prior to the exposure to a certain program to establish a baseline for future comparison. This can be complicated by the fact that a program may be targeted at individuals or it may be targeted at a broad population. In turn, a program may be delivered by an individual practitioner such as a social worker, physician,

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<sup>102</sup> Podnieks, 3:15.