WHAT IS BEING DONE AND WHAT MORE CAN BE DONE?

IV FEDERAL INITIATIVES

Although the federal government has since the late 1980s funded various activities to address elder abuse, the 1991 Family Violence Initiative was the first to specifically target elder abuse. Of the $136 million allocated to help reduce all aspects of family violence, about 10 percent was to be directed to the prevention of elder abuse.[47] The Initiative's funds were to be allocated as follows: $55 million to Health and Welfare; $23 million for the Solicitor General; $7 million to Justice; $22 million to Indian and Northern Affairs; $21 million to Canada Mortgage and Housing; $8 million to be divided between Secretary of State and Multiculturalism and Citizenship.

Work within Health and Welfare Canada and across the other departments who received funds from the Initiative is coordinated by Health and Welfare. Its Assistant Deputy Minister meets regularly in an Interdepartmental Steering Committee on Family Violence composed of the other departmental assistant deputy ministers. The Family Violence Prevention Division in particular works closely with other divisions of Health and Welfare Canada and with the other departments to coordinate federal efforts on mistreatment of older Canadians. In addition, Treasury Board receives an annual report from the Minister of Health and Welfare on activities undertaken by all departments receiving funding from the Initiative.

The Committee agrees that elder abuse is a high priority and that the 10% allocation of funds provides a necessary stimulus for initial examination of the issue. Members heard from witnesses about projects related to elder abuse that had received funding and about efforts to consult on this issue along with other aspects of family violence. They did however feel somewhat concerned that, partly because of the number of departments involved in the Initiative, there was difficulty in establishing if the money so allocated has been spent on that particular issue.

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[47] Scott, 1:21, see correction.