

awareness doesn't cost anything, but you have to be able to respond when someone calls you. You have to have that ability to respond, but right now that's limited. That's what we somehow have to create."<sup>71</sup>

### **A. General Elder Abuse Services**

The need for an "overall coordinated vision and strategy" was seen as important for successful planning and delivery of services in elder abuse.<sup>72</sup> Many witnesses felt that existing services such as police, health, social services, transportation, and housing could be adjusted to meet the needs of these older people: "We need to look at how these different services are responding and orient them to make sure that they can respond to the seniors' needs. That's not creating something new. It's looking at the old and saying, all right, how can we adjust this to make sure it accommodates these people? It's fitting the service to fit the people who have the needs".<sup>73</sup>

The Committee heard repeatedly that appropriate, available and accessible services were the key to success in addressing abuse of older people. Several witnesses spoke about networks of elder abuse services, some about multidisciplinary team approaches. Most efforts to provide elder abuse services involved both paid and volunteer workers. Some suggested that the key to dealing successfully with abuse of the elderly was more focused action by those providing existing services.

Others indicated the need for a focal point in every community, a highly visible place where older people and their families could obtain information about services or where services might be provided. It was suggested that many elder abuse services could be coordinated through the seniors centres already located in nearly every community across Canada. This would facilitate having seniors involved in any program development.

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<sup>71</sup> McKenzie, 8:20.

<sup>72</sup> Kartes, 4:15.

<sup>73</sup> Leon, 5:23.