



CANADIAN NETWORK *for*
the PREVENTION of ELDER ABUSE

RÉSEAU CANADIEN *pour la* PRÉVENTION
du MAUVAIS TRAITEMENT des AÎNÉS

National Seniors Day Webinar

Engaging Older Women in your Community

with Krista James (Canadian Centre for Elder Law)
Shahnaz Rahman (West Coast LEAF)
Clemencia Gomez (South Granville Seniors Centre)



A few housekeeping tips

- Remember to mute yourselves. If you are listening to this presentation via phone, use **your mute/unmute button or press *6 on your keypad.**
- If you are experiencing issues, please let us know via the CHAT BOX or SEND AN EMAIL to benedictes.cnpea@gmail.com
- There will be a 10-15 minute Q&A at the end of the presentation. You can send your questions via chat box or email at any time during the presentation.
- The presenters' contact information is available on their bio slide if you have further questions.
- At the end of the webinar, you will be invited to take a short survey about this webinar. Please take a moment to participate. Your feedback will help us improve our next webinars.

ANY TROUBLE?

- Ensure that your sound is turned on/up, or that your headphones are plugged in
 - Leave the session and start over

AUDIO VIA PHONE

Long distance number Canada: +1 (647) 497-9355

Toll free: 1 888 350 1025

Long distance number US: +1 (510) 365-3231

Toll free: 1 877 309 2075

Access Code:771-764-378

Audio PIN: Shown after joining the training

Tech issue? Can't stay?

The presentation will be available online later this week on www.cnpea.ca.

You can always send your questions to benedictes.cnpea@gmail.com

YOUR PRESENTERS



Krista James

is the National Director of the Canadian Centre for Elder Law and a staff lawyer with the British Columbia Law Institute. Her work is focused on the legal and policy issues that impact us as we age. She has written on topics such as abuse and neglect of older adults, mental capacity and caregiving policy.

Increasingly her work centres on intersections between aging, gender and the law and strives to shift narratives on aging from characterizing older people primarily as recipients of care to recognizing older adults in our communities as caregivers and rights-bearing subjects. Over the years she has worked with various women's centres and advocacy agencies serving low-income people in BC.

kjames@bcli.org



YOUR PRESENTERS



Shahnaz Rahman has a combined 22 years of experience as an educator, author, counselor, facilitator, provincial coordinator, and community liaison.

In her current position at West Coast LEAF, Shahnaz manages community-based programming with a focus on using family law to advance women's equality rights.



She has extensive experience building community partnerships with diverse groups including members from ethno-cultural and Aboriginal communities across BC. Shahnaz's wonderful mother continues to be her inspiration and hope for a discrimination-free world.

familylaw@westcoastleaf.org

YOUR PRESENTERS



Clemencia Gomez has been the Executive Director of the South Granville Seniors Centre which provides a diverse range of programs and services for seniors, including a weekly program for Spanish-speaking seniors who are often battling language barriers and poverty issues.

She worked with the Neighbourhood Helpers (a non-profit group that serves low-income seniors living in single-room-occupancy hotels in downtown Vancouver) for ten years, and presently she is part of the City of Vancouver Seniors Advisory Committee.

In 2010, Clemencia was given the “Bright Light” award by the Pacific Immigrant Resources Society, in recognition for her contributions as an immigrant woman who has become a leader and a role model in the community.

cgomez@southgranvilleseniors.ca





Engaging Older Women in your Community: A Promising Practices Guide

Canadian Centre for Elder Law

Dedicated to the law and policy issues that impact us as we age

- Legal research
- Law reform
- Public legal education
- Community outreach



My part of this presentation...

- Introduce the OWDP
- Outline the guide
- Provide examples from our work



***“It’s like all of the sudden
you’re invisible at 60.”***

The OWDP explores:

- What are the pressing law and social policy issues impacting older women?
- What can we do to address these barriers to quality of life for older women?

“There are many hidden problems here.”

Even excellent research/policy ignores older women:

- ***Shelter Voices*** (2016): Canadian Network of Women’s Shelters and Transition Houses—no data on older women
- ***Designing a National Seniors Strategy for Canada*** (2015): Institute for Research in Public Policy—no gender analysis

“We want to do more than tell our story. We want action.”

Two components of the project work:

1. **Consultation with older women**—what are the legal and policy barriers to your well-being?
2. **Tool development**—working with older women to develop tools that take action on law and policy issues

The Older Women's Dialogue Project



- Collaboration with West Coast LEAF
- 2011-2017
- Over 550 older women participated


Why do we do this work?

- To support older women to influence law and policy
- To enhance capacity to understand issues through a lens that considers both aging and gender
- To recommend law, policy and practice reforms that will improve quality of life for older women

Two consultation reports

2017

2013



We Are Not All the Same:
**KEY LAW, POLICY AND PRACTICE
STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING
THE LIVES OF OLDER WOMEN IN
THE LOWER MAINLAND**



*Your Words
are Worth Something*

**Identifying Barriers to the Well Being
of Older Women**

Downtown Eastside Women's Centre

Topic:
Safety &
discrimination
in housing

Tools:
Educational
workshop &
videos



South Granville Seniors Centre

Topic:
Access to
medication

Tools:
Postcard
campaign
& video



Richmond Women's Resource Centre

Topic:
Access to
dental
care

Tools:
Brochure,
petition &
meeting
with govt



Aboriginal Mother Centre

Topic:
Culturally
appropriate &
affordable
housing

Tool:
Letter-
writing
campaign



Promising practices guide

- 5 promising practices
- Key questions to explore
- Tips for enhancing capacity
- Examples from our experience

Who is the guide for?

- Seniors and women's social services
- Agencies that work with older women as staff or volunteers
- Folks in government, policy, and law reform
- Researchers and academics
- Students

Five promising practices

1. Supporting older women's leadership
2. Addressing accessibility, safety, and inclusion across difference
3. Working across generations
4. Collaborating and working in partnership
5. Meeting basic needs and showing respect: honorariums, food, and transportation

Suggested uses:

- Training resource for new staff or volunteers
- Conversation-starter for potential collaborators
- Citation for funding application
- Resource for inclusive consultation strategies
- Curricula and professional development module
- Resource for research and ethics board applications



CANADIAN CENTRE FOR
ELDER LAW

WEST COAST LEAF

Promotes
women's equality
through law



Litigation



Law
Reform



Public
Legal
Education



WHY OUTREACH TO OLDER WOMEN?

- Hard to Reach?
- Invisibility
- Isolation / Shame
- Systemic discrimination



Recognize the barriers...

- Poverty
- Disability
- Family Violence
- Caregiving



Lessons learned in working with older women

- Respecting the voices of older women
- Focus on process as much as outcome
- Accessibility and Inclusion-
- Strategic collaborations
- Inclusion with safety

Some considerations in engagement with Older Women

- Ensure language interpretation needs are met
- Recognize inequality and privilege
- Identify accessibility barriers
- Be on the same page – Roles and Expectations
- Respect Needs: Honorarium/Food/Transportation



Three key successful outcomes of outreach to Older Women

- Consultations with over 500 women- 4 host agencies
- Service and referral connections
- Informing and feeding into other projects
- Sustained relationships

Engaging Older Women Volunteers

Clemencia Gomez, Executive Director
South Granville Seniors Centre

Volunteers in Canada

Virtually all Canadian non-profit organizations rely on volunteers to some degree.

- 28% of volunteers are 55+
- Women are more likely to volunteer than men
- While younger people are more likely to volunteer, older volunteers, particularly those aged 65-74, contribute the most volunteer hours (*39% of all volunteer hours*)

(Statistics Canada, 2015)

Older Women Volunteers at South Granville Seniors Centre

- Supported by **458 volunteers** (*113 permanent & 345 special event volunteers*)
- **14,649** volunteer hours
- Monetary contribution of **\$153,082.05** (*14,649 hours x \$10.45/hour*)



Older Women Volunteers at South Granville Seniors Centre

- 90% are women aged 55+
- 77% live alone
 - 26% are widows/widowers
 - 51% are single
- 83% are low income
- 20 % are from diverse cultural backgrounds

Older Women Volunteers at South Granville Seniors Centre

- The contributions of our volunteers are immeasurable.
- Older women volunteers work as board members, run 18 of our 40 programs, provide Information & Referral, fulfill reception duties, help with special events, and assist with fundraising projects



Older Women Volunteers at South Granville Seniors Centre

- Volunteers report positive outcomes including:
 - Positive effects on physical and mental health
 - Increased sense of belonging, purpose, and self-respect
 - For vulnerable women, volunteering presents an important opportunity to connect, and feel safe and included in the community, as well as learn new skills.

Engaging Older Women at South Granville Seniors Centre



Mobilizing older women's unique skills as volunteers, board members, and facilitators

Recognizing older women's knowledge and experience

Empowering immigrant women to participate and lead in their communities

Successful Strategies for Engaging Older Women

Intergenerational Connections

Older women are part of the decision making

Education and support to engage older women in advocacy and leadership

We acknowledge older women's knowledge and contributions

Building Trust

Taking time to understand older women, getting to know them, and hearing their stories.

Reducing power differences

Making older women feel included and needed by recognizing their skills and providing training and learning opportunities.

Collaborative decision making

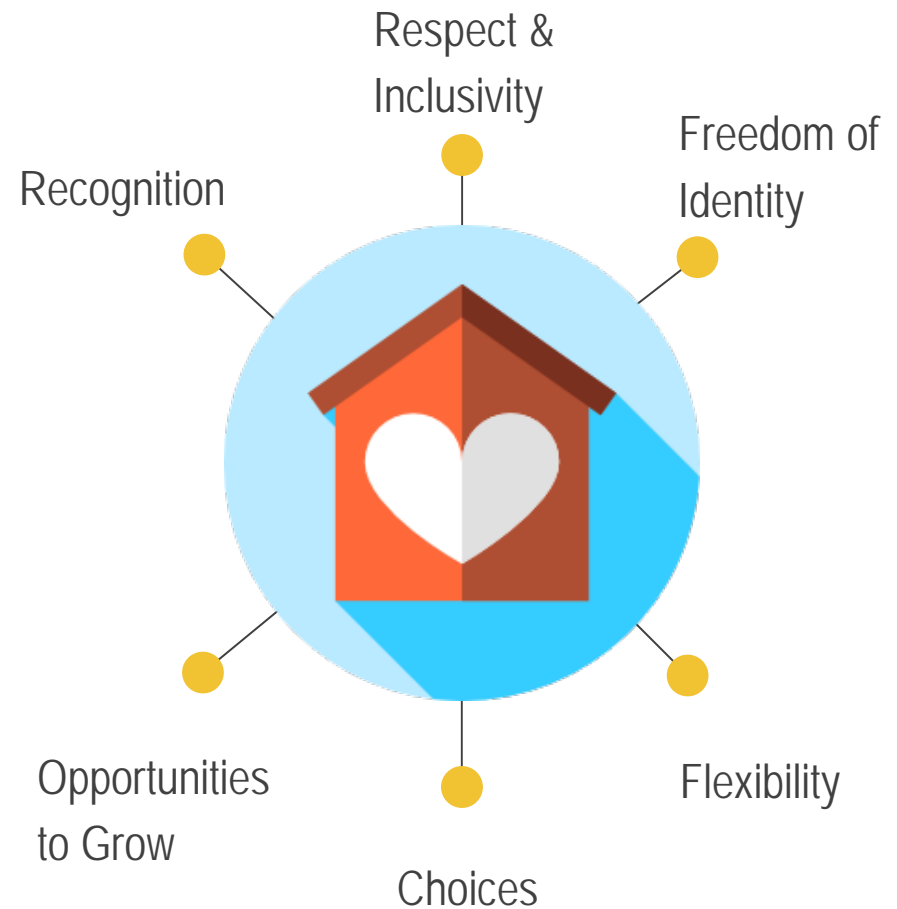
Seeking older women's input and advice and making them feel valued, welcome, important, and visible.

Evaluation

Acknowledging and respecting the opinions of older women. Fostering an environment where older women can feel safe and free of judgment.

Our Principles

We act as a safe, accessible, and inclusive space for older women



Challenges and Recommendations

Challenges to Engaging Older Women Volunteers

Financial Barriers

Older women aged 55-65 volunteer as a means of gaining employability skills

No government programs that support the financial well-being of older women in this age bracket.

Caregiving

Older women are often primary caregivers for children, grandchildren, and partners.

Physical Challenges

Physical disabilities and illnesses associated with growing older.

Transportation challenges.

Recommendations

- Financial support for older women volunteers (55- 64) living on fixed incomes
- Grant allowances for honoraria, travel vouchers, and food costs
- Support for caregivers
- Removing barriers to continued professional involvement for older women
- Corporate incentives for retired employees to volunteer (ex. Telus)

QUESTIONS?

Feel free to ask your questions now out loud or to type them in the chat box.

A recording of this presentation will be available online later this week on cnpea.ca

You can send your questions to benedictes.cnpea@gmail.com or directly to today's presenters.

Your opinion matters. Please take a minute to answer a few quick questions about your experience of this webinar. Click on this link or copy/paste it in your browser:

<https://goo.gl/forms/wuwjHSGTFPkQh8wo2>

Deadline: Monday, October 16, 2017

Stay in touch with us

Twitter: @cnpea

Facebook: www.facebook.com/cnpea

Questions/Comments: benedictes.cnpea@gmail.com