

Elder Abuse, Domestic Violence and Older Women

Bridget Penhale
University of East Anglia
Norwich, UK

Overview

- Background
- Older women, domestic violence and elder abuse
- Key points/critical factors
- Research findings
- UK framework
- Policy and practice
- Future directions

INPEA – Missing Voices

- Early study – 8 countries (2 from Europe)
- Perceptions of older people about Elder Abuse
- Neglect – isolation, abandonment, social exclusion
- Violation – human, legal and medical rights
- Deprivation – of choices, decisions, status, finances and respect
- Ageism – identified discrimination on basis of age
- Key factors: Gender and socio-economic status

Older Women, Domestic Violence and Elder Abuse

- Ageism
- Sexism
- Families and care
- Hidden Problem
- Patterns of Abuse
- Gender Issues
- Triple Jeopardy
- Survivors

Similarities

- Adults
- Shared living arrangements
- Causative factors
- Power and control
- Citizenship and empowerment
- Legal remedies
- Interventions
- Issues of safety and protection

Differences

- Different causes
- Demographic factors
- Historical factors
- Timescales
- Societal views
- Nature of abuse
- Public responses
- Different origins (as a social problem)

What is to be Done?

- Prevention
- Protection
- Justice
- Provision
- Partnership working
- Empowerment

Triple Jeopardy

- Marginalisation, exclusion, violence and older women
- To be old is to be marginalised (single)
- To be old and female is to be marginalised (double)
- To be old and female and abused is to be marginalised (triple)
- Other forms of disadvantage and disempowerment (could be 5 – or more forms)
- Bruises on the Soul

Key points

- Social construction of abuse and violence
- Gender and power relations crucial
- Not just family and interpersonal relationships: institutional settings an important context
- Not just about frailty, vulnerability, dependence
- Personal, cultural and structural levels at which abuse and violence occur
- Ageism as a master category, abuse a consequence
- Citizenship and rights-based perspectives important

The Importance of Naming

- Silence about the topic
- Comparative lack of recognition
- Under-developed, under-researched concept
- Naming is essential: What is being named?
- Primacy of the individual and personal
- Importance of professional identification (as with child abuse, but not VAW); this has shaped development of policy and responses

Critical factors

- Abuse and older women
- Poverty and older women
- Discrimination – ageism, sexism, employment status
- Social and cultural contexts are important
- Gender discrimination across the lifespan
- Violence, abuse and neglect across the lifespan
- Attention paid to older women by (ageing) feminists

Further considerations

- Cohort changes may result in additional issues
 - Some gains in rights for women
 - Some increase in labour-market participation
 - Some gender equality legislation
 - Some development of policy and legislation on violence against women
 - Some attitudinal and perceptual change – zero tolerance
- Will we see changes in levels of violence against older women?

Older Women and Abuse

- Rarely considered as a separate group
- VAW work often does not include older women or women with disabilities
- Elder abuse/safeguarding often does not reflect experiences or needs of older women
- Needs of older women not fully considered, or explored, especially relating to domestic or intimate partner violence
- DAPHNE Programme initiatives (esp. DAPHNE 111)

UK Government Principles: VAW

- Prevention – taking action before harm occurs
- Provision of Services
- Partnership – local solutions through services working with their communities
- Justice outcomes - including protection
- Recent developments:
 - Violence Against Women and Children Action Plans
 - Development of definition of Domestic Violence
 - Legislation on Coercive Control

UK Government Principles: Adult Safeguarding

- Empowerment – supporting people to make decisions and have a say in their care
- Protection – support and representation
- Prevention – taking action before harm occurs
- Proportionality – safeguarding must be proportionate and consider people's human rights
- Partnership – local solutions through services working with their communities
- Accountability – safeguarding arrangements should be accountable and transparent

Key Points

- Safety is everybody's business
- Focus on preventing abuse and exploitation
- Include whole population approaches
- Connect people within communities to encourage safety
- Raise awareness in the whole community; make it easy to get good information and report concerns

Key points

- Involve citizens in shaping strategies that bring personalisation and safeguarding together
- Develop an inclusive approach that considers and involves individuals, carers and families
- Develop multi-agency approaches and work with regulators
- Reviews should focus on outcomes
 - Have supportive systems in place that can respond if things go wrong
- (DH document on safeguarding & personalisation)

Framework for Protection

- Legislation to Protect
 - Scotland
 - Wales
 - England
- Importance of risk and risk enablement
- Education and training
- Regulation
 - institutional care
 - domiciliary care
 - workforce

Framework for Protection 2

- National guidance, local approaches
- Social Services mandate
- Multi-disciplinary and inter-agency perspectives
- Differing models and teams - MASH
- Collaborative orientation-working together
- Extending partnerships with service users
- Individuals at risk of harm-situational vulnerability

Care Act 2014

- Changes to Adult Social Care Law
- Implementation from April 2015
- Changes to Adult Safeguarding
 - Statutory basis for Safeguarding Adults Boards
 - Duty to make enquiries (adult social care)
 - Self Neglect is included
 - Safeguarding Adults Reviews after deaths etc
 - No Power of Entry included

Care Act – Types of Abuse

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Discriminatory abuse
- Organisational abuse

Care Act – Types of Abuse

- Domestic Violence
 - Psychological, emotional, physical, sexual
 - Honour-based violence
- Modern Slavery
 - Human trafficking
 - Forced Labour
 - Domestic servitude
- Self Neglect

Future Directions

- Improve uniformity of responses
- Further develop policies and procedures
- Develop standards and systems
- Develop strategies to empower
- Promote working together and partnerships
- Promote participation and involvement
- Voice, choice and credibility (Croft & Beresford 1999)

The Way Forward?

- Improve recognition, awareness, understanding of domestic violence, elder abuse and human rights
- Develop policies to prevent, protect and promote rights and inter-sectoral approaches
- Promote education (including general awareness raising) and training
- Centrality of older women in processes and development of policy and practice
- Improve and extend partnerships to join up safeguarding, domestic violence and rights-based approaches

References

- Croft, S. and Beresford, P. (1999) Service User and Carer Involvement, in Eastman, M. and Slater, P. (eds) *Elder Abuse: Critical Issues in Policy and Practice*, London: Age Concern Books
- Department of Health (2000) *No Secrets: guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse*, London: Department of Health
- Department of Health (2010) *Practical approaches to safeguarding and personalisation*, London: Department of Health
- Department of Health (2014) *Care Act Guidance*, London: Department of Health (Chapter 14)
- HM Government (2007) *Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act*, London: TSO (see also <http://www.scotland.gov.uk>)
- WHO/INPEA (2002) *Missing Voices: views of older persons on elder abuse*. WHO: Geneva

Useful Websites

- Scottish legislation: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk>
- Department of Health: www.dh.gov.uk (search for adult safeguarding)
- Care Act 2014 factsheets (see no 7 on safeguarding):
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-care-bill-factsheets>
- Care Act 2014 Statutory Guidance (chapter 14 on safeguarding):
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-2014-statutory-guidance-for-implementation>
- Social Care Institute for Excellence: www.scie.org.uk (search for adult safeguarding, Care Act guidance and implementation)

Contact Details

- Bridget Penhale
- Reader in Mental Health of Older People
- School of Health Sciences
- University of East Anglia
- Norwich, UK
- Tel: +44 1603 597016
- Email: B.Penhale@uea.ac.uk

Finally....

- Thanks for listening
- And thanks for being here today
- Thanks for your interest
- Thanks for your commitment to this issue
- Together we can make a difference....