Protecting Older Adults
Interweaving Formal & Informal Responsesto Elder Abuse

Bridget Penhale
University of Sheffield, UK
Responding to Elder Abuse & Neglect (EAN)

- Background
- General points
- Issues in responding
- Protection & prevention
- Intervention types
- European perspectives & responses
- Future possibilities
Background

- Global phenomenon, historical perspectives
- Recent recognition, increasing concern
- Community care & professionals
- Demography
- Medical advances & technology
- Advocacy and rights
- Changing social structures
General points

- Definitional issues
- Lack of awareness of abuse
- Detection & identification problems
- Differing histories & trajectories
- NGO development
- Education & training
Issues in responding to EAN

- An Aging issue?
- A complication of caregiving?
- Family Violence perspective
  - Prevention, protection, punishment
- Apparent tensions:
  - Service & welfare orientation
  - Justice & criminalisation orientation
Protection & prevention (1)

- Concept of protection
  - Preventive
  - Reactive

- Protective actions
  - Rules & laws
  - Policies & procedures
  - Action to protect
  - Risk reduction
Protection & prevention (2)

- Issues of vulnerability
  - Self
  - Others

- Levels of Prevention
  - primary prevention
  - secondary prevention
  - tertiary prevention
Types of Intervention

- Practical
- Legal
- Therapeutic
- Focus on protection & safety
- Focus on autonomy & empowerment
- Victim orientation
- Abuser orientation
Principles of Assessment

- Assessment of need
  - Holistic but abuse-focussed
  - Assessment or investigation?
- Care plan
  - Protection or safety planning
- Risk assessment & management
- Protective responsibility
European perspectives

- Cultural & economically diverse region
- Differing meanings & understandings
- 30 year time span
- Legislation & policies
- Intervention strategies
- Research & publications
European Responses

In EEA

- France & Italy: Helplines
- Germany: model projects & helplines
- Belgium: intervention centres
- Holland: Awareness raising campaign
- Ireland: National plan, caseworkers
- Norway: National Centre, special units
- Spain: professional guidance
- England & Wales: policies & procedures
- Czech Republic: Helpline
Future possibilities

- Intervention studies
  - Model projects & evaluation studies
- Research on effectiveness & impact
  - Of mistreatment
  - Of interventions
- Specialist teams & practitioners?
- Individualised approaches?
- European-wide approach?
- Research & development
Contact details

- Bridget Penhale  
  University of Sheffield, UK

Tel: +44 (0)114 226 9606

Email: B.Penhale@sheffield.ac.uk
Finally…..

- Thanks for listening!