

Elder Abuse Community Outreach Report

Issue 2

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Forming an Elder Abuse Coordinated Community Response

What is a coordinated community response, or CCR? A CCR is a group of partners that considers the process of victims getting the help they need. When discussing elder abuse, a CCR would look at the process from when the abuse was first reported, through the justice system, and to the social service network to ensure that older victims have what they need to move on with their lives.

Forming an elder abuse CCR was a requirement of Knoxville's elder abuse grant. Working with the Family Justice Center's CCR, the grant brought together professionals representing the justice system, including law enforcement, prosecution, the courts, and Adult Protective Services. Organizations representing healthcare, banks, the aging network, domestic violence/sexual assault organizations, faith-based groups, and other partners help the group think about the issue of elder abuse from many angles. Groups representing racial minorities, immigrants, refugees, people with disabilities, and the LGBT community help consider barriers that victims may face in getting necessary help.



The Knoxville-Knox County Elder Abuse CCR began its work by completing an impact analysis of feedback from the grant's August 2016 kickoff. Some ideas currently under consideration include:

- Creating a shareable, one-hour training on identifying elder abuse, reporting it, and connecting the victim with resources.
- Building resources and support for Adult Protective Services.
- Developing a database for elder abuse resource information.
- Supporting the creation of emergency and long term housing for older adults with medical needs.
- Encouraging the entire community to take referrals of elder abuse seriously by always reporting suspected abuse to Adult Protective Services.

Souls Behind Statistics

145,935 people, or about 1/3 of Knox County population, is 50 and above. Who are they?

- 131,655 are White, including 1,875 Latinos
- 10,899 are Black or African American
- 3,881 are other or multiple races
- 5,163 are blind or deaf or have some form of disability
- 3,794 are lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender*

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate

*Williams Institute Estimate



Bottom Left:

The Elder Abuse CCR Team places kickoff feedback on wall as part of an impact analysis.

Top Center:

The O'Connor Senior Center is the site of monthly coordinated community response meetings.

Prosecuting Elder Abuse

Training is a major component of Knoxville's elder abuse grant; training is offered to law enforcement, victim service providers, the community through CCR efforts, judges, and prosecutors.

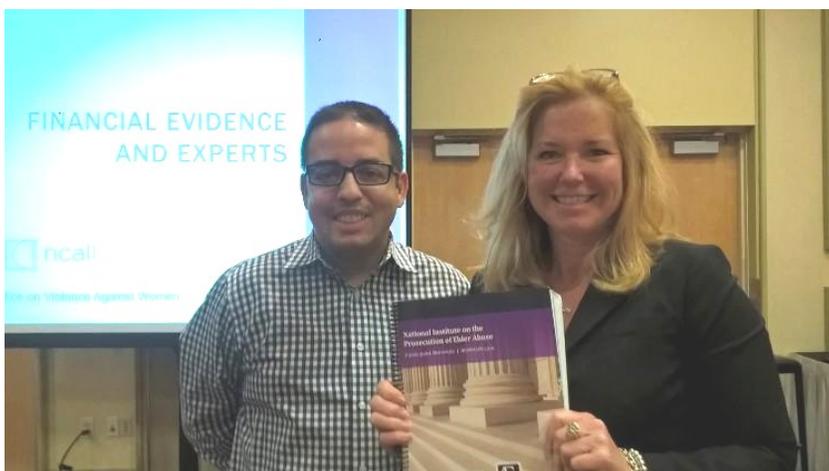
In November, prosecutors from across the country gathered in Phoenix for the biannual National Institute on the Prosecution of Elder Abuse. The institute—which is a collaboration of the Federal Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women (OVW), AEquitas, and the National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life (NCALL)—“challenges prosecutors to reevaluate their approach to prosecuting elder abuse cases.”

Why is this training offered? Studies indicate that as little as 5% of elder abuse cases are reported. Additionally, many cases that are reported do not go through the justice system because of lacking investigative and prosecutorial strategies. For more information on the National Institute on the Prosecution of Elder Abuse, please visit www.aequitas.org.

Knox County has been ahead of the curve in dealing with these issues. Knox County District Attorney General Charme Allen made the plight of abused elders a major component of her 2014 campaign. Following her election, the Knox County Attorney General's Office Elder Abuse Unit was formed. The unit is led by Assistant District Attorney Generals Andrea Kline and Willie Santana.

Knox County's Elder Abuse Unit has accomplished much in its short history. They helped establish the Vulnerable Adult Protection/Investigative Team or VAPIT. This team brings together prosecution, law enforcement, and APS to discuss all APS non-self neglect elder Abuse cases. VAPIT has been such a success that it has been written into state law and each jurisdiction will be required to have one.

For more information on the Elder Abuse Unit, please visit knoxcounty.org/dag.



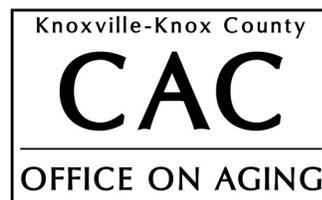
Picture:

Knox County Elder Abuse Unit Prosecutors Willie Santana (left) and Andrea Kline (right) attended the National Institute on the Prosecution of Elder Abuse in Phoenix, Arizona, between November 15-18, 2016.

Since its inception in October 2014, the Knox County District Attorney General's Elder Abuse Unit has reviewed over 1,600 cases with nearly 900 referrals made in 2016 alone. It is the first unit of its kind in the State of Tennessee.

Learn More: Recorded Webinars

- [Health Care Providers' Role in Identifying and Responding to Older Victims of Abuse – December 8, 2016](#)
- [Collaboration & Confidentiality Norms – September 29, 2016](#)
- [Guiding Principles for Working with Older Victims of Abuse – June 10, 2016](#)
- [Promoting Respect and Dignity Across the Lifespan: Working with Older Victims of Domestic & Sexual Violence – June 9, 2016](#)
- [Stalking in Later Life - January 27, 2016](#)



Are you interested in learning more about Knoxville's elder abuse grant or want to know how you can be involved?

Contact Joseph Winberry, Elder Abuse Community Outreach Program Manager, at (865) 524-2786 or by email at joseph.winberry@knoxseniors.org.

To report abuse, contact Adult Protective Services at: 1-888-APS-TENN (1-888-277-8366) or [online](#).

Remember, reporting abuse is mandatory under state law!

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