

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

A Variety of Training Options

This Guide provides a range of training options to meet the diverse needs of both trainers and participants.

A training needs survey conducted by the Violence Prevention Initiative showed that many trainers would prefer short sessions. A series of lunch-and-learn events would therefore be ideal for these trainers.

There are fifteen one-and-a-half-hour sessions, corresponding to the learning modules in the Participant Manual. (There are sixteen modules, but modules 13 and 14 have been combined so there are actually only 15 sessions.)

Participants will vary in their knowledge, skills, abilities and readiness to take action. For most groups, we suggest starting with the first two foundational sessions: *Types of violence against older persons* (Module 1) and *Indicators of violence against older persons* (Module 2). Beginning with these two sessions is a good way to ensure that everyone has a common understanding and is able to recognize violence against older persons.

Our research shows that many front-line service providers and other helping professionals in this province have never received the information, education or training needed to effectively recognize violence against older persons. Modules 1 and 2 are a good starting point for training.

After foundational training, you may select topics from this Guide, and the corresponding modules in the Participant Manual, and complete the training in whatever order best suits your trainees' needs.

For trainers who are able to provide half-day training options, a separate Trainer's Guide has been developed for three, three-hour sessions, one for each section of the Training Manual (Recognition, Prevention and Intervention).

In each training session you will find a list of materials required for that session. We also provide the key points that you need to cover with participants, agendas with timing suggestions, and a detailed trainer guide for all activities.

The times given for all session activities are approximate. Use the timing suggestions to help you in planning. Be flexible, and be prepared to make changes if needed. There is no point in moving ahead if the group has not learned or understood key concepts.

TIPS FOR TRAINERS

An experiential and participatory approach to training

Experiential learning means that people are given opportunities to share knowledge and stories with others. They work together to learn and find solutions. With this approach, your role as trainer will be to *facilitate the process of learning*, rather than to lecture or teach.

A participatory approach to training is based on the belief that people learn best when their own abilities and knowledge are recognized and valued. The more learners participate and contribute, the more they learn. The more they take part, the more they will feel they own the learning and commit to making it useful.

Learning is effective when training content and activities relate to what participants already know. Whenever possible, draw out examples from group members to enrich the session. This builds bridges from the familiar to the new. Use the *Stories from the Front Lines* from the Manual in your training. Explain that these stories are taken from real situations and events in the lives of people of this province.

The session agendas in this Trainer's Guide offer a variety of activities and training techniques to involve people in learning and reflection. These give participants opportunities to contribute their ideas, suggestions, solutions, information, experiences and stories. The PowerPoint files and the

Participant Manual provide information to guide learners in planning for or taking action based on what they have learned.

Creating a safe and comfortable learning environment

Learning is most effective when participants feel safe to share and explore their experiences. Participants often bring to training their own personal concerns, priorities and expectations or fears about learning. Some learners may feel excited about the training. Others may think that training is a burden or an annoyance. A safe learning environment is supportive and respectful, and enables participants to take risks and make mistakes without feeling threatened or put down.

The following suggestions will help establish a safe, respectful and welcoming environment that is focused on the learner:

Before the session:

- Arrive early. Give yourself plenty of time to set up your equipment and the training space. This will help you be relaxed and fully present as participants enter.
- Write the name of the session on a flipchart sheet. Post it on a door or wall so that participants know they are in the right place.
- Greet participants as they arrive.
- Offer refreshments (coffee, tea, juice, water) before the session begins.
- If possible, know how to adjust the room temperature for the comfort of participants.
- Ensure that all participants can see and hear you. Confirm that everyone can comfortably see the projection screen or wall.

At the start of the session:

- Take care of “housekeeping” early on in the session: tell participants if there will be refreshments. Point out where to find the washrooms, and state what time the session will end.

- Some trainers like to use “guidelines for being together” to promote respectful conversation. This helps participants feel safe in speaking up. For example:
 - Confidentiality: Participants may share personal or work-related stories or experiences. Insist that “what gets *said* in the room stays in the room”;
 - Balanced participation: Ask participants to be aware of how much they are talking. Remind them to leave room for others to speak;
 - Respect: Respect each view, opinion and experience offered by any participant;
 - Interruptions: Remind participants to turn off any mobile devices such as cell phones, or set them to vibrate; and,
 - Abbreviations and acronyms (such as VPI): Do not assume that everyone will understand what these mean. Avoid using them. If a participant uses an acronym, ask for an explanation.
- Tell participants how the training will solve a problem or challenge (in this case: *recognizing, preventing* and/or *intervening* in violence against older persons).
- Clarify learning objectives. Review the agenda. Explain training activities to help participants relax and understand what to expect.
- Encourage participants to ask questions at any time. Tell them that if you do not have the answer, you will get it for them. Be sure to follow-up.
- Tell participants that the session is participatory, and that you will not be lecturing or reading PowerPoint slides for the whole time. Tell participants that the more they add to the session, the richer the learning will be for all.
- Remember: as a trainer, you bring energy and enthusiasm to the session. Your enthusiasm is your message to participants that this material is meaningful and important to them and their work. This should encourage participants to learn, listen, share, take part and use what they have learned in their work.

During the session:

- People learn best when they are in a group where everyone takes part. Be aware of who is speaking and who is not. Here are some ways to balance participation:
 - Build confidence and trust within the group by having them work in small groups for part of the time;
 - If one or two participants dominate the conversation, use a talking stick or other object. Only the person holding the talking stick is allowed to speak. No interruptions are allowed;
 - You may set a limit for the amount of time one person can speak; and,
 - You can request that no one speaks twice before everyone has had the opportunity to speak once.

Gender dynamics in training

Most perpetrators of violence against older women are men. Furthermore, in violence prevention training, the issues around gender dynamics can sometimes be controversial. This may leave some participants feeling uncomfortable. As a trainer, you must be aware of gender-related issues that may be present or arise, even more so if you will be training mixed-gender groups. Refer to Module 4 in the Manual for an overview of gender dynamics of violence.

- Through gender stereotyping, traits are often assigned to men and women based on sex differences, for example, males are considered to be strong and “natural” leaders; females are afraid of conflict. Try to be aware of your own biases and stereotypes about gender.
- In mixed-gender groups, encourage equal participation. Small-group work gives *all* participants an opportunity to share leadership and to be heard. Suggest to participants that when they are in their small groups, they can support one another by asking questions, being genuinely curious, and showing interest in each other’s thoughts and opinions.
- In the large group, you may find that one gender is dominating the conversation. Make the point that it is important to hear from a diverse range of voices.

- As learners, men may be more used to debate, confrontational speeches and challenges. Women tend to prefer dialogue and a mutually supporting learning climate. Each group may be unaware of the impact of their preferences on others.
- Talking about violence can be threatening for both women and men. It is not unusual for male participants to react with fear, resistance, hostility or even silence.
- Resistance and denial often come in the form of a challenge. Some of the ways that resistance can show up include challenging statistics, claiming statistics do not show the true picture, and refusing to believe that things are as bad as statistics indicate. If this occurs, point out that there may indeed be some inaccuracies in any statistics. However, the overall picture across the country is the same: more men than women use power and control tactics to intimidate, harm and victimize women.
- Do not allow sexist language or demeaning jokes. These affirm stereotypes and promote sexism and sexist behaviour. Set a positive example by recognizing and challenging these hurtful and inappropriate remarks. Explain your discomfort with what has been said. Request that no more insensitive comments be made. Identify sexist language and jokes for what they are: a form of verbal abuse.

An important note for trainers about gender and violence:

Talking about violence may be hard for some people. According to national research, half of the women over age 15 in this country have been or will be victims of sexual or physical violence at some point in their lives.¹ It is likely that one or more participants in your group are victims of violence. Be prepared to provide or find support for any participant who seems distressed during the training.

¹ Statistics Canada. (1993). *Violence Against Women Survey*. Ottawa, ON: Minister of Industry.

Training a mix of generations

You may be using this training program with learners of varying ages. Keeping learners of all ages interested and tuned in is important in all training situations. In sessions with a mix of generations, a variety of training techniques and approaches may be needed to fully engage participants.

People of different ages may have different learning styles and preferences. Older learners tend to:

- Train at a more leisurely pace;
- Enjoy story-telling;
- Prefer the use of text; and/or,
- Prefer exploring a few topics in depth rather than just touching the surface on a large number of topics.

The challenge for the trainer is that these are not the training methods preferred by younger learners. Younger learners tend to dislike:

- Going too slow;
- Lecture-dominated sessions;
- Trainer talking too much;
- Text-oriented materials;
- Overly-structured sessions;
- Step-by-step instructions; and/or,
- Sessions that are not much fun.

The learning styles and habits of younger people have been strongly affected by technology. Younger learners are more comfortable with computers, video games, electronics and the internet. They respond better to faster-paced, interactive training that provides choices and options. Younger learners will likely prefer visual examples, less text and less lecturing.

In designing this training program, we have provided a mix of techniques and methods to promote interaction among participants. This will help address the learning preferences of all ages.

Try to be flexible and adapt your training as needed. Techniques that work for younger people can work for everyone. You may need to adjust the number of these techniques and the extent to which you use them. The Session Plans in this training program are guidelines only; feel free to adapt them to suit the group you are training.

Cultural communication considerations in training

Every person has a culture. A culture is made up of all the unique material and non-material components of a society or group that are passed from one generation to the next, including symbols, language, traditions, customs, values and beliefs. Culture creates a lens through which we see others. Most of us are experts in the cultural experiences that are part of our own lives. While it is impossible to become an expert in every culture, we can strive to become more culturally aware. We can understand our own cultural influences, *and* at the same time, value and appreciate differences of other people and groups. When we communicate with people from other cultures, we need to do so in an effective, respectful and appropriate manner.

Newfoundland and Labrador is becoming more culturally diverse. You will likely have participants from a mix of cultures in your training sessions. Different communication styles among cultures can lead to misunderstandings. Learning more about *broad patterns* (rather than stereotypes) of cultural behaviour can be a starting point from which to engage with your participants. Through building your awareness, sensitivity and understanding of other cultures, you will enhance your connectedness and build trust and better relationships.

Here are some hints to facilitate your interactions with participants from other cultures:

- Gender is an important factor in many cultures. For example, in some cases men will feel uncomfortable talking with or learning from women, and vice versa;
- In some cultures, cross-gender handshakes, or any cross-gender touching, may not be appropriate;

- Many Western cultures consider eye contact as a sign of honesty and interest in the conversation; however, in other cultures direct eye contact may be seen as a sign of disrespect, aggression, rudeness or challenge to authority;
- In some cultures women and men avoid eye contact with each other because it can be taken as a sign of sexual interest;
- Be aware of your own body language.
 - In some cultures, standing while others are sitting may demonstrate authority or aggressiveness.
 - Avoid pointing with one finger. It is considered very rude in some cultures, where pointing is done only as a deliberate insult;
- Recognize that some slang terms and cliché phrases may be culturally specific and confusing to some. For example, participants from some cultures may find the local term “b’y” (boy) demeaning;
- Storytelling and personal sharing are important communication techniques that transcend most cultures. Ask participants to share relevant stories as a way of starting a conversation or building rapport. Remember to insist on confidentiality as one of your “guidelines for being together”;
- Honour flexibility in people’s self-identification. You may make assumptions about people’s cultural identities, but they may perceive themselves differently. For example, based on appearances, you may determine there are no Aboriginal persons at your training session, only to find out later that two of the participants identify as Mi’kmaq; and,
- Do not be afraid to ask if you are not sure about what might be appropriate. Most people respond very positively to sincere inquiries about their culture. For example, you might ask:
 - “What is important for me to know about you and your culture?”
 - “If I was a member of your community, how would I most likely react to this situation?”

Training with Aboriginal Persons

Culture, sharing, healing, spirituality and wholeness are key elements in Aboriginal persons’ lives. In delivering the *Respect Aging* training to

Aboriginal groups, bear in mind that learning methods need to be rooted in the cultures of the participants, and that these cultures vary from group to group.

The following suggestions were contributed by members of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee for this project. They will help create a safe, comfortable and effective learning environment in groups with Aboriginal participants. You may also want to use or adapt some of these suggestions for other groups.

- Arrange the chairs in a large *circle* (or in several concentric circles depending on the size of the gathering and the room). The circle affirms that all living things are connected and equal. In a circle there is no beginning or end. The circle allows participants to share and speak freely.
- A *sharing circle* can be convened during the training session, particularly if you are asking participants to share personal stories or experiences. Sharing circles can take place in small groups or with the whole gathering. Remind participants to honour confidentiality: what is said in the circle stays in the circle, and is never repeated unless the speaker gives permission.
- Invite an Elder or other knowledgeable participant to begin the session with a *smudge*. Smudging involves burning certain herbs such as sage or sweetgrass to create a cleansing smoke bath. Smudging is used to purify people, spaces and ceremonial tools and objects.
- Invite an Elder or other knowledgeable participant to lead a *prayer* or offer a *song or chant*, with or without *drumming*, to open and/or close the session.
- Use a *talking piece* such as a stick, feather or stone. This is meant to encourage respectful listening. Only the person holding the talking piece speaks. All others remain silent. Participants support the speaker by listening attentively. When the speaker finishes, she or he holds out the talking piece. Whoever wishes to speak next will take it. The talking piece may also be used in a sharing circle to give all participants the opportunity to speak.
- Encourage all to take part, but *respect those who just prefer to listen and observe*. (People learn in different ways; some need time to reflect on what they have learned and may not be ready to talk about it.)

- Oral tradition is strong among many Aboriginal groups. Use more visual aids and stories. Use less text and less lecturing.
- At the beginning of the session, engage participants by *asking them what is most important for them to learn*.
- Provide a *Suggestion Box* into which participants can place their questions or concerns. During or near the end of the session, open the box and try to answer or address questions or concerns without participants having to speak or identify themselves.

Making your training accessible to all

- Be open to the diversity among participants and any accessibility needs. Some participants may have one or more disabilities (for example: mental, psychiatric, mobility, sensory or learning disability; a disease or chronic condition).
- If you have participants with accessibility needs, adjust your training to meet those needs. For example, you can describe visual content, speak clearly and provide large print handouts. Some participants may need documents in Braille, or others may need captioning provided. Others may need transportation assistance.
- Ensure accessibility at the same entrance that other participants are using. Always ensure that the front building entrance, meeting space, and washrooms are accessible. Many buildings state accessibility; however, the access may be at the back entrance only. This entrance may be poorly lit with locked doors. It is a good idea to check for accessibility before you book your training space.
- Know the building's emergency evacuation procedures. Have a plan to assist people who may need help to leave in an emergency.
- Arrange tables to allow room for wheelchairs in seating areas throughout the training space.
- Consider the size of the group and the possibility of equipping yourself with a lapel microphone, a hand-held microphone that can be passed around and speaker system. Older learners are more likely to have hearing impairments than younger learners, but even with a group of participants of mixed ages, sometimes the size of the group and/or environmental challenges like a noisy ventilation system will make it

hard to hear the speaker and may create a need for a microphone and speakers.

- If you are presenting to a group with several older persons, consider also borrowing or renting a “group listening system” that helps amplify and clarify sound for some people with hearing impairment.
- Use multiple communication methods for different learning styles. Some people better understand verbal information, pictures and diagrams or text.
- Be visible. Position yourself in good lighting so participants can see your face when you talk. This helps people hear and understand better. If you do not have a microphone, do not face away from the group when you read projected material.
- Respect participants’ needs. People might have accessibility needs that you have not considered. For example, someone might require a break at a set time for an insulin injection or other medical need. Someone with Tourette Syndrome might shout out during a session. Someone who cannot take notes due to a physical disability might ask to record the session; if this is the case, be sure to ask that the recorder be turned off during any personal sharing.
- Making your training accessible is good for everyone. Training sessions and training materials that are accessible to persons with disabilities may also benefit people who are not fluent in the language, or people with diverse learning styles. Check with your participants to ensure their accessibility needs are being met.
- Hold scent-free sessions, and make note of this on your event notices or invitations to the sessions.

Suggestions for increasing participant interaction

- There may be participants who know the answer to a question raised by someone in the group. Rather than answering it yourself, redirect the question to the group as a whole. This technique involves participants more with the question. It also shows how group members can be a resource for learning.
- Ask a question and invite participants to:
 - Turn to a neighbour and brainstorm possible answers; and,

- Move around and find a partner they have not yet talked with. This works well when participants have been sitting awhile in the same spot.
- Have participants number off to form small groups. Ask all people with the same number to find each other. Assign a place for each group to meet. For maximum participation and interaction, keep groups small: from three to six people is ideal.
- The instructions in this Guide for the training sessions are only suggestions. You may think of other collaborative, creative ways for small groups to report back to the larger group. For example, small groups can create posters, or give five-minute “newscasts” about their learning.
- Limit your lecturing or reading. Any time you find yourself talking (or reading PowerPoint slides word-for-word) for more than 10 minutes, use one of the suggestions above to involve the participants.
- Account for time of day when planning training. Avoid scheduling training right after lunch, when participants’ energy is low. A morning session is best. A mid-afternoon session that includes a nutritious snack is also a good choice.

Preparing yourself for training

You do not need to be a professional trainer to lead these sessions, nor do you need to be an expert on the issue of violence against older persons; however, you should be familiar with the training materials. These provide knowledge, research and concepts pertaining to the field of violence against older persons and violence prevention in general. You should also be able to explain to participants why the training is important.

We recommend that you take the time to read through the Participant Manual and the Trainer’s Guide before you begin delivering your training. Almost everything you will need to respond to participants’ questions can be found in these materials.

Here are some other ways to prepare to deliver the training:

- Core skills for an effective trainer include:

- Listening: the ability to hear and pay attention to what a speaker has said and *how* it was said;
- Presenting: the ability to present information – instructions, data, concepts, theories, models – in ways that others may receive and understand;
- Supporting: the ability to provide verbal support and feedback, and nonverbal encouragement, validation, acknowledgment and caring; and,
- Observing: the ability to see what is happening with an individual or in the group, to understand nonverbal cues, and to perceive and articulate shifts in mood or tone in the group;
- Read through the outline of the training session. Be familiar with the training materials and handouts. Make sure that they are in order and ready to use;
- On the day of training, arrive early to set up the room and the equipment. Once everything is in order, you will be free to greet the participants as they arrive;
- There are many good print and internet resources on participative training and/or facilitating groups. Contact the person or department in your organization responsible for staff training, staff development, or organization development for more training resources; and,
- Celebrate your successes. Learn from your mistakes.

Coping with your own experience of violence²

If you have experienced violence in a relationship as a victim, witness or perpetrator, it may be a challenge for you to facilitate a workshop on violent relationships. Talking about violence can be very stressful.

It may help to turn to someone you trust to discuss your feelings before you start the training. As a trainer, it is your responsibility to create a safe learning environment that encourages everyone to participate. This can be difficult if you are not able to stay emotionally neutral.

² Adapted in part from:

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2010). *Training Curriculum on Effective Police Responses to Violence against Women*. Retrieved from: <http://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/newtrainingcurr.pdf>.

Tips to help you prepare for talking about violence against older persons

- Reflect on your feelings about violent relationships and violence against older persons. Reflect also on your own feelings and possible biases about aging. Read the key learning points in Module 5 and do the exercises in Module 10, *Self-understanding for violence prevention*. These exercises may help you increase your self-awareness about your thoughts and feelings on violence, as well as aging.
- Read Module 12, *Self-care for violence prevention helpers*, and follow some of the suggestions.
- If you choose to share your experiences and opinions, tell the group that these are your personal ideas. Other people may not share them. You need to accept this.
- Think about how you may feel and what you might do if someone in the group shares a personal story that reminds you of your own life or the experience of someone you know. Talking about violence can bring up strong feelings for you as well as for the participants in the training session.
- You may want to debrief with someone you trust after the session to talk about your feelings. This could be a friend, family member, counsellor or spiritual leader.

Planning considerations: Preparing the space for learning

Participants learn better if the training space is conducive to learning. When you do not have to worry about the details of the room, you will be better able to meet participant's learning needs. Here are some things to consider before each session:

- Have you booked your training space well in advance of the training?
- Is the room large enough to comfortably hold the maximum number of people who may attend?
- Is there enough space for participants to form small groups during the session? If not, are breakout rooms available?
- Is the location accessible (inside and out) by persons with disabilities?
- Is there adequate space for people who use wheelchairs to move around? Are there any physical barriers?

- Do you require a sound system (lapel microphone, hand-held microphone and speaker system)? Consider the size of the group, the anticipated age composition of the group (older persons tend to have more hearing impairments than younger persons), and any environmental noise like a loud ventilation system which may lead you to decide that a sound system is necessary.
- If you are presenting to a group with several older persons, consider also borrowing or renting a “group listening system” that helps amplify and clarify sound for some people with hearing impairment.
- Are you planning a nutrition break during your session? If so, have you made arrangements for healthy refreshments well in advance?
- Have you asked participants in advance if any have food allergies, environmental sensitivities (such as certain scents) or disability-related accommodation needs?
- Is there space in the room for a refreshment table?
- Have you arranged the training space to promote interaction? If possible, arrange the chairs and tables in a circle or U-shape, or have participants sit around a conference table. Participants are more likely to interact when they can see each other. Avoid lecture-hall seating (participants in rows facing the front of the room), since interaction is typically low in this arrangement.