



DOMESTIC ABUSE SCREENING & PREVENTION

A PROGRAM BY **GetWell**

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Dear Founders:

This is an initial approach letter for a grant to disseminate information on intimate partner violence and abuse of disabled 45+ age women. Studies have shown a direct link between abuse and health in older women. (6) (7), Disabled women have also shown a 4-10 times greater risk of abuse than other women. A big problem for this group is that abuse is more likely to go unnoticed and unmentioned. Psychological abuse is the most probable cause as it is more likely to create chronic conditions and disabilities with no apparent physical findings such as marks or obvious injuries. This age group has been overlooked and needs more education and intervention.

Our goal is to help decrease disability and health care costs associated with domestic abuse by educating the most affected group. The overall cost of this abuse has been estimated to be as high as \$45-50 billion per year.

With better training and education for health care providers, as well as disabled women, devastating problems, such as injuries, chronic illnesses, and undiagnosed mental illnesses could be prevented. Though more educational material has become available in the last few years, a significant amount of work remains to be done in the area of dissemination of this material to that age and specific population.

Our main objectives are to:

1. Disseminate more information about domestic abuse and health related consequences.
2. Train health care providers in recognizing and addressing domestic abuse in chronically ill or disabled patients.
3. Educate women to correlate their health problems with their abusive situation.

In this presentation we are proposing for your foundation to help us to provide more educational material to address this issue. Please find enclosed an Executive Summary. We look forward to your reply and would be pleased to send you a full proposal.

Warm regards,

The Board of Directors

In collaboration with:



DOMESTIC ABUSE EDUCATION AND PREVENTION

Disability and domestic abuse

Executive Summary

Problems

More than 3 women are murdered per day and health care cost due to abuse is rising:

Domestic abuse is a seriously under diagnosed social and psychological problem which causes disabling illnesses as well as disabling or fatal accidents in the United States.

Abusive behavior cascades through family generations, impacting the health of the abused, both children and adults, and is a major social and health care issue. It is impacting the role models given to the younger generation as well, as we have seen a rising wave of violence. (2)

The facts: On average, more than three women are murdered by their husbands or boyfriends in this country every day. In 2000, 1,247 women were killed by an intimate partner. The same year, 440 men were killed by an intimate partner. Estimates range from 960,000 incidents of violence against a current or former spouse, boyfriend, or girlfriend per year to three million women who are physically abused by their husband or boyfriend per year.

The problem of domestic abuse costs the U.S. health care system \$20-45 billion/year. This represent % of total health care cost. It has been determined that only 2% of domestic abuse injuries are diagnosed by physicians and that physicians are still too poorly trained on this topic to recognize signs of emotional, physical and financial

domestic abuse. Despite medical school training, only 10% of physicians report routinely screening for this problem.

Women who are disabled, 45 years and older, and are abused face unique challenges.

Their decreased economical potential puts them in a very unique situation. Studies have shown that this age range has been neglected and yet is a significant proportion of the population subject to domestic abuse or IPV. Studies shows that 15-25% of women seen at ambulatory medical clinics and 20% of women seen in emergency room have been physically abused.(5) These women grew up and married during a time when domestic abuse was often ignored. Now at an older age, they have endured many years of abuse and have problems with poor self-image and shame. Older women who have been abused also are less likely to tell anyone about it; have health problems that keep them dependent on their abusive partner; feel committed to caring for their abusive aging partners; and are fearful of being alone..

Solution

This problem could be addressed and changed significantly by increasing awareness and educating the medical profession and the general public to recognize the signs and symptoms

of the impact of abusive behaviors. In a research study sponsored by the National Institute of Justice, it was found that **education** was an effective way to increasing self-reporting by victim of abuse.(3)

For every 1% of increase in detection by physicians in the United States, \$250-450 million/year in health care costs would be saved. In this particular case, the end goal

would help abused disabled women regain better health, become productive members of society, and decrease health care costs related to preventable illnesses

GetWell.org has chosen to disseminate and promote education on domestic abuse in the aging disabled population (45+). Our general goal is to increase awareness and understanding of domestic abuse in the underprivileged 45+ disabled population through seminars and public service announcements. Our specific goal is to address health care costs for present and future generations. Targeting this particular group and age range would decrease society's health care costs stemming from abuse. These programs would also affect long term costs by improving role models for younger generations.

Project Description

Goals

The overall plan is to:

Provide education for health care providers and older disabled adults in recognizing signs of domestic abuse:

- a. Seminars in senior centers, libraries and hospitals on the topic of: signs of emotional, physical and financial domestic abuse
- b. Public service announcements on radio and television
- c. Press information, and articles.
- d. Confirm the effectiveness of education by looking at the rate of health improvement among participants as well as the decrease in suicide, homicide or other accidental death.

Funding Requirement

Each educational program is estimated to cost between \$1000-5000.

Funding will be based on the number of programs planned.

Biography

(1) Elder Mistreatment in Women, Fulmer et al. *J Obstet Gynecol Neonatal Nurs.* 2004; 33: 657-663.

(2) A child's exposure to the father abusing the mother is the strongest risk factor for transmitting violent behavior from one generation to the next. – *Report of the American Psychological Association Presidential Task Force on Violence and the Family*, APA, 1996

(3) Results from an Elder Abuse Experiment in New York, NIJ, National Institute of Justice

(4) Cohort, Period, and Aging Effects, Therese Zink, Sandra Regan, C. Jeffrey Jacobson, Jr., Stephanie Pabst, University of Cincinnati. *Violence against Women*, Vol 9, No 12, December 2003, 1429-1441 (5) Prevalence of domestic abuse in community practice and rate of physician inquiry. Hamburger LK, Saunders, DG, Hover M. , *Fam Med* 1992;24:283.

(6) a. The Associations between Health and Domestic Violence in Older Women: Results of a Pilot Study, Charles P. Mouton, M.D., M.S., Susan Rovi, Ph.D., Kathy Furniss, R.N., & Norman L. Lasser, M.D., Ph.D. , *Journal of Women's Health & Gender-Based Medicine* 9:9:1999

b. Prevalence and 3-Year Incidence of Abuse Among Postmenopausal Women Mouton et al. *Am J Public Health.* 2004; 94: 605-612.

(7) Unmet needs of older women in a clinic population: The discovery of possible long-term sequelae of domestic violence, B. H. Wolkenstein, L. Sterman , *Professional Psychology*, 1998.

(8) Physical Health Consequences of Physical and Psychological Intimate Partner Violence

[Ann L. Coker, PhD; Paige H. Smith, PhD, MSPH; Lesa Bethea, MD; Melissa R. King, MSPH; Robert E. McKeown, PhD Arch Fam Med. 2000;9:451-457.](#)

(9) [Intimate Partner Violence and Physical Health Consequences, Jacquelyn Campbell; Alison Snow Jones; Jacqueline Dienemann; Joan Kub; Janet Schollenberger; Patricia O'Campo; Andrea Carlson Gielen; Clifford Wynne, Archives of Internal Medicine, May 2002; 162: 1157 - 1163.](#)

(10) Violence and People with Disabilities: [A Review of the Literature.](#)

(11) [National Committee for the Prevention of Elder Abuse](#)