



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago  
Ministry of Social Development and Family Services

## DIVISION OF AGEING

Under the Auspices of Senator The Honourable Donna Cox

WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY (WEAAD) ONLINE Webinar Series: 15, 22, 23 & 30 July 2021

# Family Support Services and Strategies to Mitigate Against Elder Abuse in Trinidad

Presented by Kathleen Sarkar, Assistant Director NFSD  
and

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The National Family Services Division was established via Cabinet Minute No.576SDFS (91) 25, of March 21<sup>st</sup> 1991.

This Division of the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services is mandated to promote healthy family functioning through the provision of the following measures:-

1. Preventative
2. Developmental
3. Remedial programmes and services



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The mandate of the Division is :

To promote healthy family functioning through the provision of preventive, developmental and remedial programmes and services.

We assist individuals, groups, couples and families through counselling, advice, advocacy, referrals and placements.

By disseminating information on healthy family life through community workshops and meetings, focus groups, radio and television programmes, outreaches and lectures upon requests by various Organizations (Governmental and Non- Governmental) and social media.

Some of the main issues addressed are: domestic violence, parenting and co-parenting, marital and relationship problems, elderly abuse, behavioural problems, substance abuse, depression, grief and loss, social displacement and life crises.





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Elderly abuse is a global social issue which affects the general health and human rights.

NFSD uses as its point of reference the United Nations definition of the elderly which states that an elder is an individual aged 60 and over.

According to United Nations:

**Elder abuse** is defined as a “single or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to an older person”.





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## Where do referrals come from:

1. Neighbours/Community
2. Care givers
3. Family Members
4. NGO's CBO's FBO's
5. Case workers from other divisions both internal and external
6. Media
7. Counselling





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## Types of Abuse identified :

- Financial Exploitation
- Emotional or Psychological Abuse
- Physical Abuse
- Health related matter
- Neglect or Abandonment by Caregivers
- Sexual Abuse





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## At National Family services we utilize a Case Management Approach:

- Screening
- Assessment
- Stratifying risk
- Planning
- Implementing
- Follow up
- Transition
- Communicate post transition
- Evaluation





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## Steps to Mitigate Elder Abuse in Trinidad:

- Adopting a collaborative approach;
- Advocating through policy for the importance and relevance of elder abuse in society;
- Ensuring that there is appropriate legislation and that the consequences for elder abuse are upheld and enforced ;
- Developing and delivering sensitization session and training on Care for the Elderly for family members and care givers on a continuous basis;
- Developing a standardize manual /guide/informational video;







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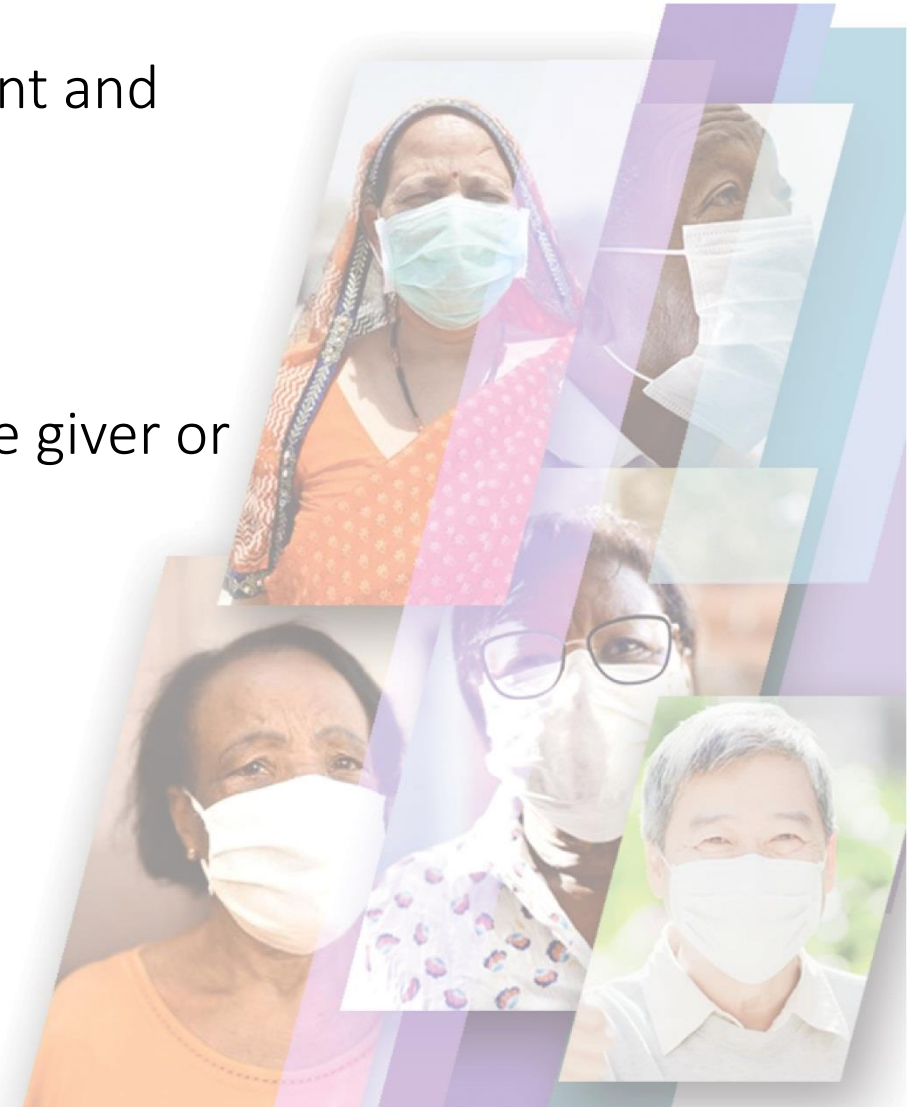
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- Caregiver support interventions (including stress management and respite care);

Engaging the elderly in their communities;

- Ensure that due diligence is carried out when selecting a care giver or a senior citizens care facility;
- Call and or visit regularly;
- Look out for potential signs of abuse; and
- Listen to them, talk with them, learn from them.





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I shall pass this way but once;  
any good that I can do or any kindness I can show to any human being;  
let me do it now.  
Let me not defer nor neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.

Etienne de Grellet

Thank you!

