



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

ADDRESSING ELDER ABUSE IN JAMAICA: ARE THERE LESSONS TO BE LEARNED FROM BERMUDA'S RESPONSE?



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July 30, 2021**



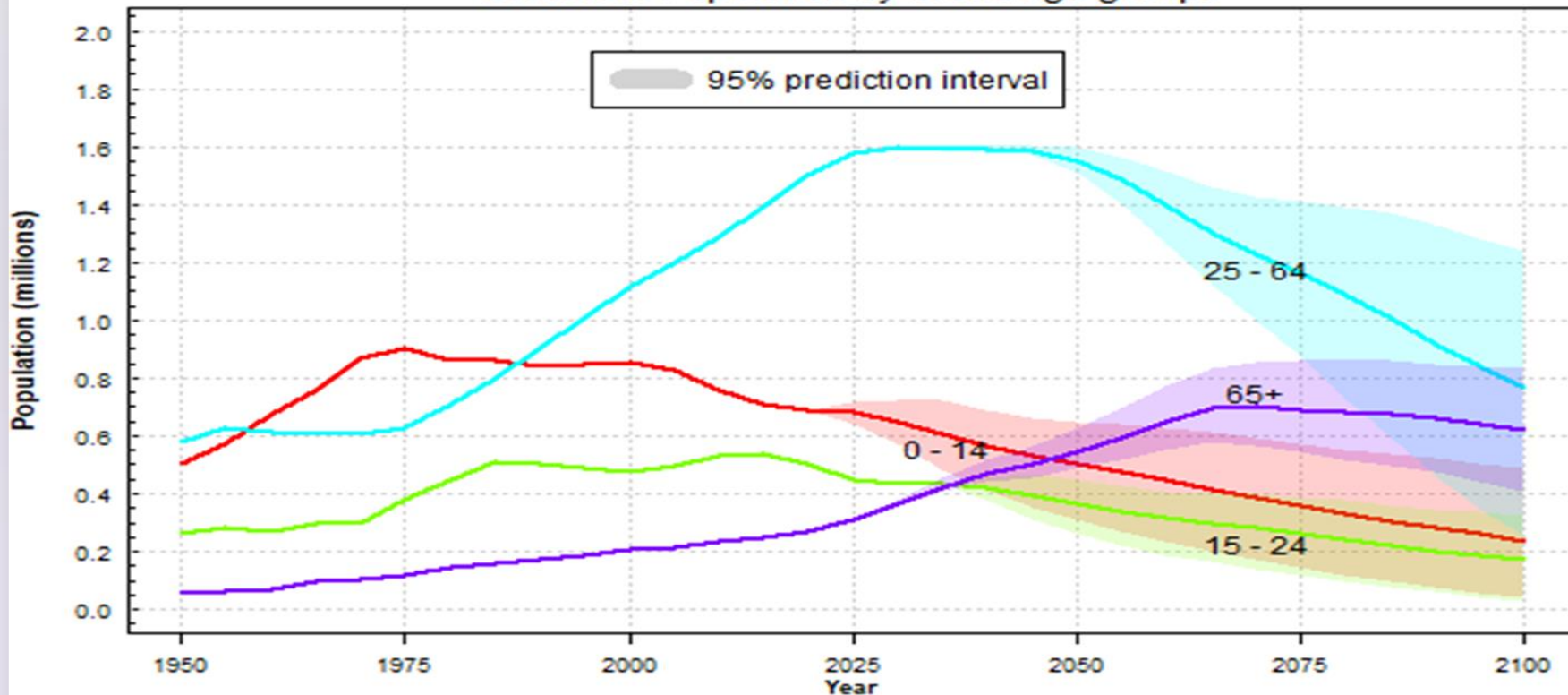
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OVERVIEW OF POPULATION AGEING IN JAMAICA

Jamaica: Population by broad age groups



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United Nations, DESA, Population Division. *World Population Prospects 2019*. <http://population.un.org/wpp/>





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EVIDENCE OF ELDER ABUSE & PREVENTION

- ❑ Between 2015 - January 2018 774 males and 383 females between the ages of 60 – 68 years old were victims of serious and violent crimes (Jamaica Constabulary Force Statistics and Information Management Unit, 2018).
- ❑ In 2015, 383 persons 65 years and older were victims of serious crimes. 256 were men (67%) and 127 (33%) were women (National Policy for Senior Citizens, 2018; ESSJ, 2015).





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EVIDENCE OF ELDER ABUSE & PREVENTION CONT'D

- ❑ Newspaper reports highlight elder abuse in care facilities (Jamaica Gleaner; Reid, 2011); neglect and financial exploitation by family members and strangers (Jamaica, Gleaner; Malcolm, 2017).
- ❑ Limitations – no formal reporting system in place
 - ❑ Elder abuse cases are underreported
 - ❑ Limited resources and the absence of solid evidence deter the development of comprehensive prevention programmes (Pillemer et al. 2016).





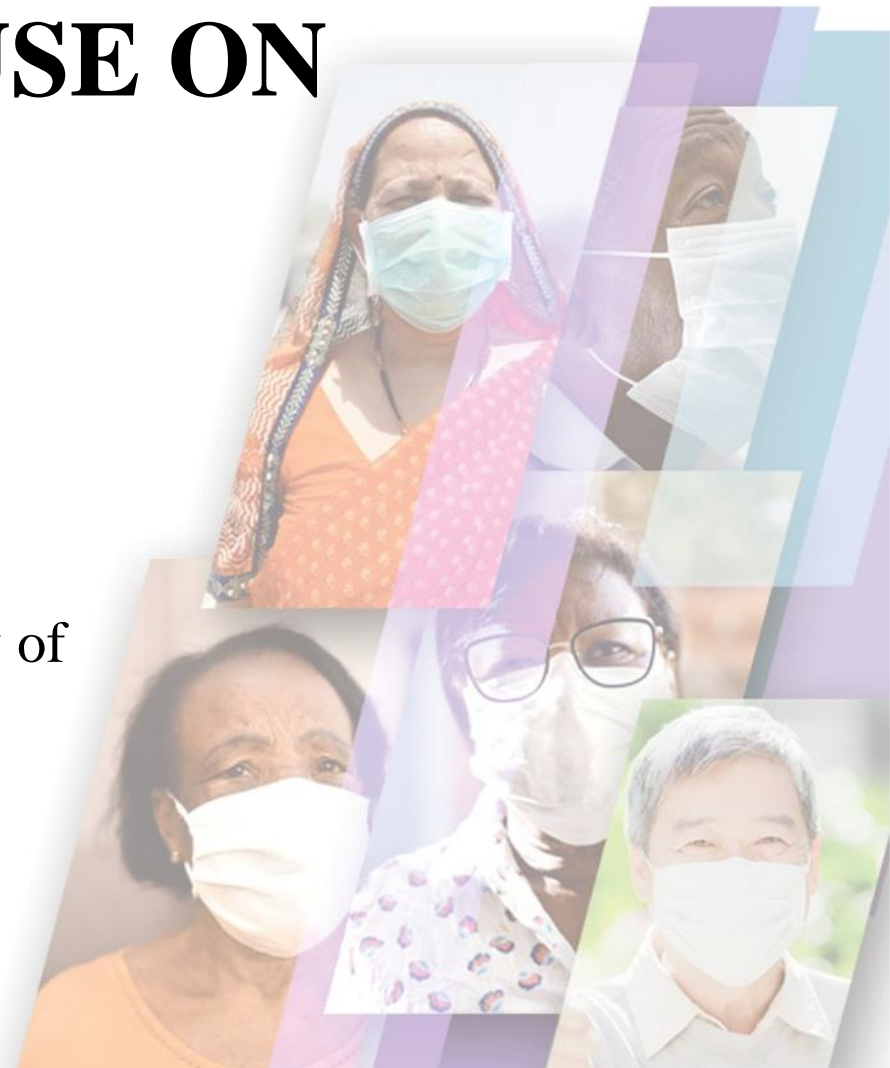
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THE EFFECT OF ELDER ABUSE ON OLDER PERSONS

- Social isolation, fear and loneliness
- Psychological consequences including depression and anxiety.
- Paranoia disorder
- Physical impairments -hospitalization depending on the severity of the injury; serious and permanent damages can result in death (WHO, 2020).
- Low self-esteem





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BERMUDA'S RESPONSE TO ELDER ABUSE THAT JAMAICA CAN ADOPT

- ❑ Bermuda's current population: 62,090.
 - ❑ 54% Black, 31% White, 8% Multiracial, 4% Asian, 3% Other (2010 Census)

- ❑ Bermuda – Senior Abuse Register Act 2008
 - ❑ Legislated by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty with the advice and consent of the Senate and the House of Assembly of Bermuda.
 - ❑ The Act protect seniors from abuse:
 - ❑ Establishes a register for persons who abuse seniors
 - ❑ Mandatory reporting of the abuse of seniors – Ageing and Disability Services which is the Senior Abuse Registrar





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BERMUDA'S RESPONSE TO ELDER ABUSE THAT JAMAICA CAN ADOPT CONT'D

- Perpetrators who commit the offence – charged a fine not exceeding \$10,000 (BMD) or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 years, or both.
- Offenders name are entered in the Register
- Prohibited to work as a care provider or involved in managing the finances of older adults.





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PROS OF BERMUDA'S APPROACH

Pros: -

- Prevent and protect older adults from abuse
- Investigate suspected cases of elder abuse
- Screen potential employees who expressed an interest to work with older persons
- Prosecute perpetrators for the offence
- Helplines for potential victims
- Promote networking and partnership with stakeholders
- Public awareness campaigns on elder abuse
- Caregiver support interventions
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CONS OF BERMUDA'S APPROACH

Cons: -

- Scarcity of resources
- Victims refusing to report abuse because of negative views on ageism which results in societal acceptance
- Back log of cases
- Lengthy implementation of the Act





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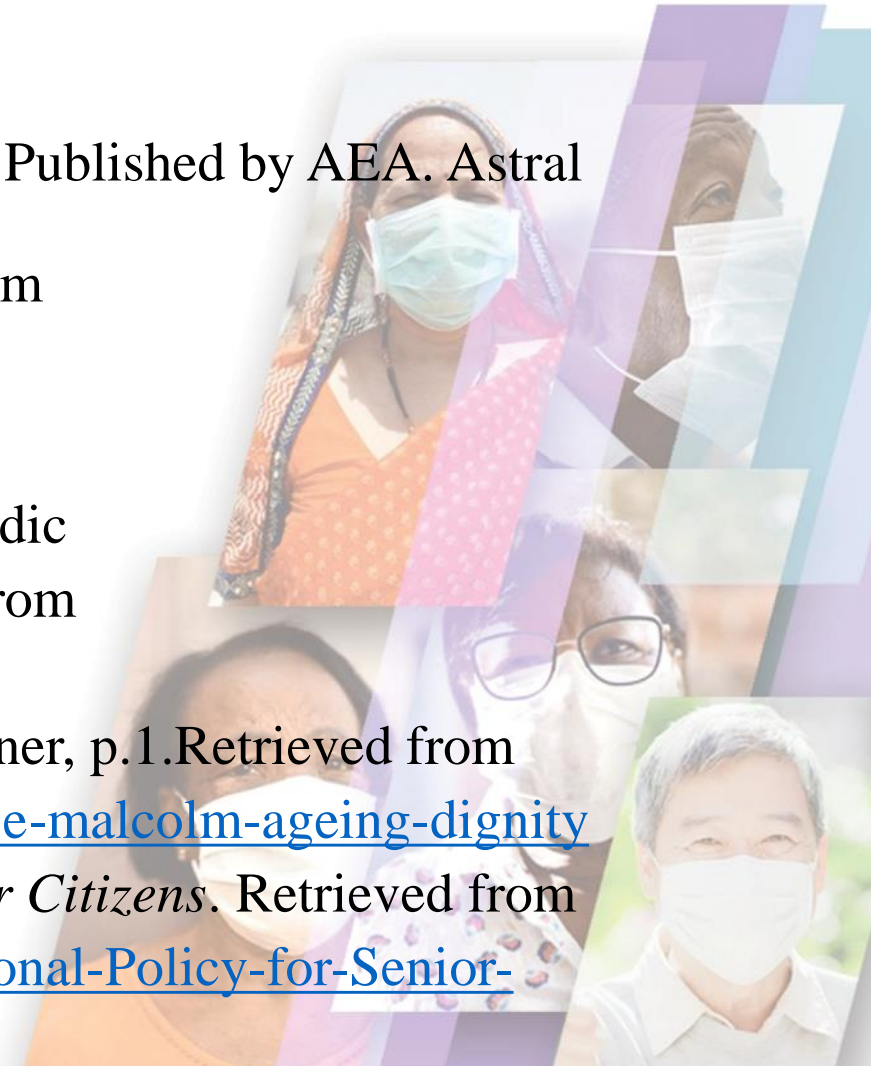
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