



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

Older Persons Information Centre (OPIC) Elder Abuse Reports and Management of Cases



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Older Persons Information Centre

- OPIC is a referral service in which the Division of Ageing receive requests for information and also records complaints of abuse against older persons.
- Via the OPIC, persons can:
 - Obtain information on services geared towards older persons
 - Lodge complaints concerning older persons in private residences
 - Lodge complaints concerning older persons in Homes for the Aged





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How to access OPIC

- Users of the OPIC can access assistance and information in a number of ways
 - Phone in 800-OPIC (6742)
 - Walk-In
 - Email correspondence at opic@social.gov.tt
 - Written letters addressed to the Division of Ageing





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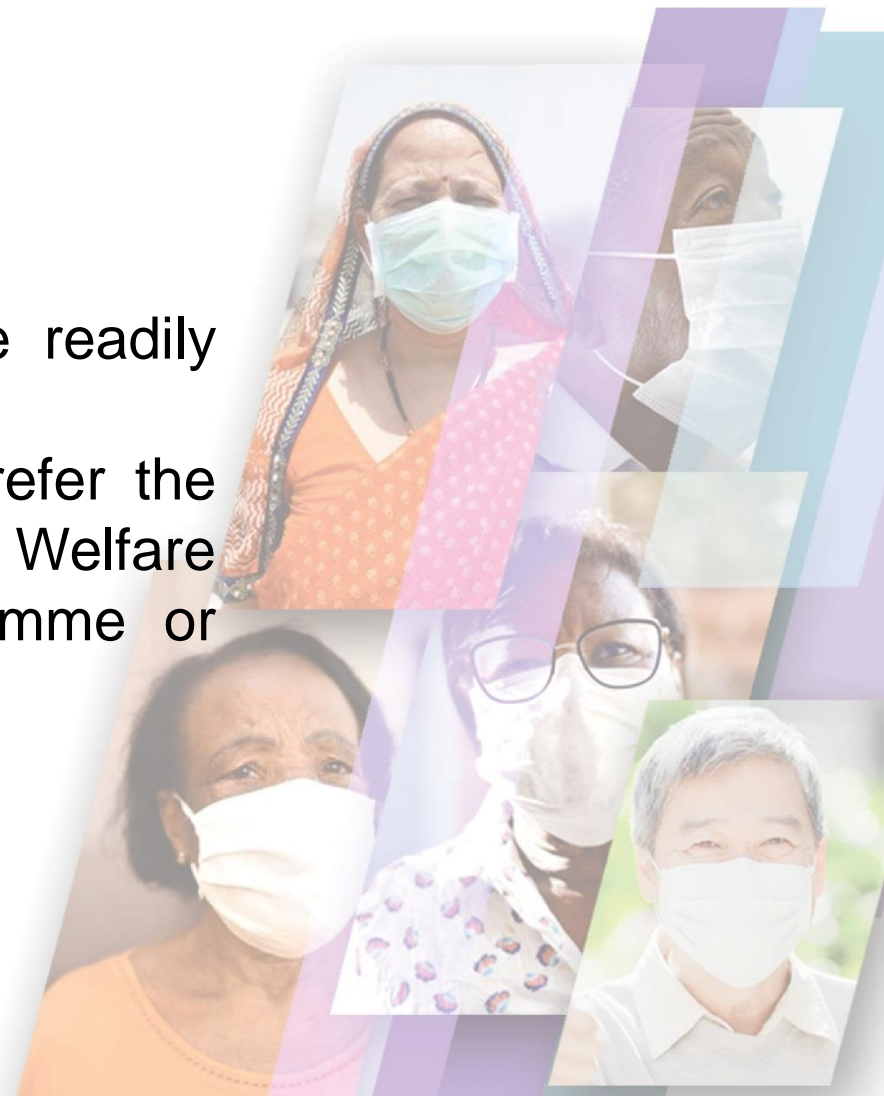
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Information Requests

- The information that the client requested may be readily available and provided to the caller.
- Alternatively, if it is not available, the officer will refer the client to the relevant agency such as Social Welfare Division, Geriatric Adolescent Partnership Programme or Ministry of Health to obtain the relevant information.





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OPIC – Private Residence

- Cases of abuse, mistreatment and neglect of older persons, occurring in private residence or domiciles are often reported via the OPIC.
- These cases cover a range of issues including but not limited to:
 - Financial Abuse - e.g. pension theft or misuse
 - Physical abuse e.g. bodily harm, restraints, pinching
 - Neglect-e.g. squalid living conditions, lack of care
 - Emotional abuse- e.g. threats, verbal abuse, isolation of the older person





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What actions are taken once an OPIC complaint is received?

- The DOA is tasked with conducting preliminary investigations to ascertain as much information as legally possible in order to better inform the agency in which the case will be referred to.
- Examples of these referral agencies include *inter alia*:
 1. Ministry of Health (MOH): District Health Visitor, Mental Health Officer (MHO) etc.
 2. Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS)-Gender Based Violence Unit (GBVU), Victim and Witness Support Unit (VWSU), Fraud Squad etc.
 3. National Family Services Department (NFSD)
 4. Social Welfare Division





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NEWS

Investigation into claim of elderly abuse at care facility

NARISSA FRASER SUNDAY 25 OCTOBER 2020



Social Development and Family Services Minister Donna Cox and staff from the Division of Aging enter the elderly-care home in Diego Martin on Sunday. - Vidya Thurab





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Still shot picture from a video of an older person being physically abused



Older person living in squalor





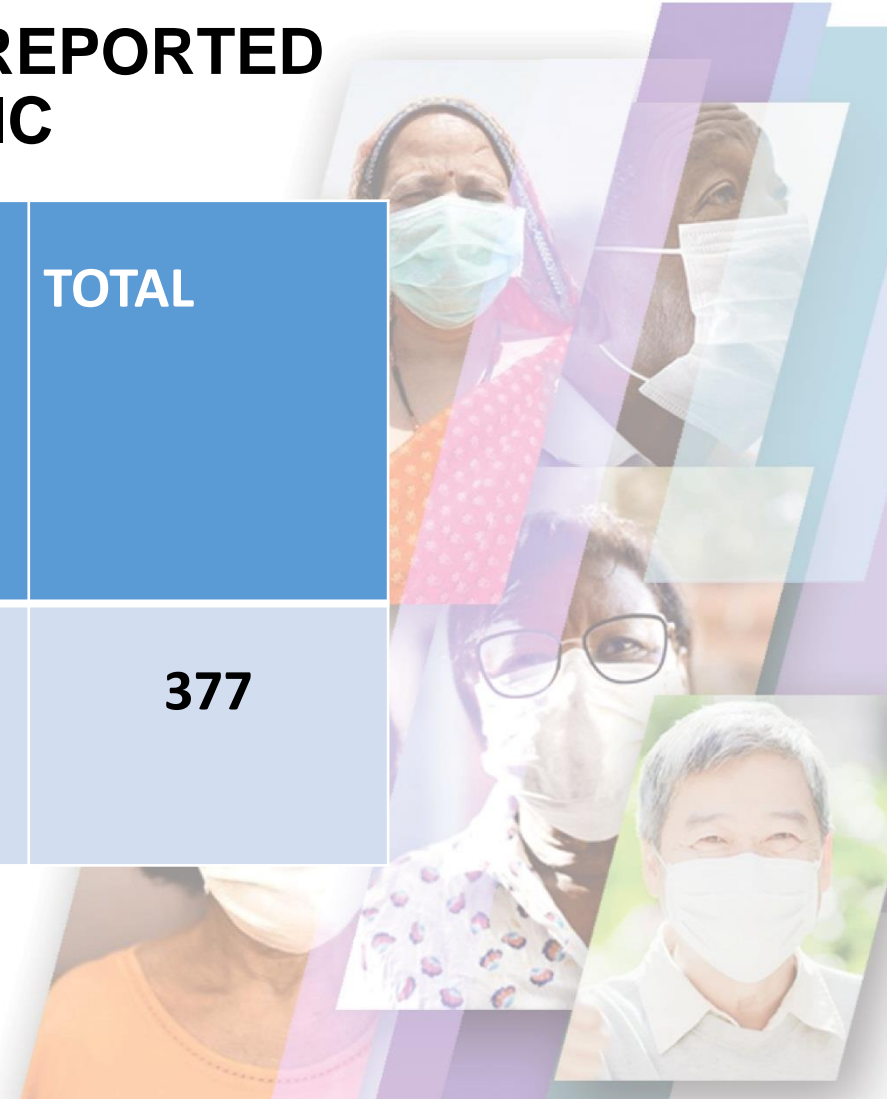
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PROVISIONAL DATA ON ELDER ABUSE CASES REPORTED BETWEEN OCTOBER 2020 TO JUNE 2021 via OPIC

Fiscal Year	PRIVATE RESIDENCE	HOMES FOR OLDER PERSONS	INFORMATION REQUEST	TOTAL
(Oct 2020 to June 2021)	154	32	191	377





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Provisional data on number of cases received based on type of abuse

Types of Abuse	Total
Neglect	60
Financial	45
Complaint on HOP	32
Verbal/ Psychological	25
Physical	21
Housing Accommodation	10
Inhumane living conditions	8
Social Abuse	4
Poor Supervision/ Complaint Against Caregiver	3
General Info	3
Missing Person	1
Medical Abuse	1
TOTAL	213





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OPIC –Homes for Older Persons

- All Homes are currently governed by the Private Hospitals Act, no. 2 of 1960 which falls under the purview of the Ministry of Health.
- The Homes for Older Persons Act, 2007 is assented to but is not yet proclaimed. This Act, once proclaimed will fall under the purview of the MSDFS.





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Please feel free to contact the OPIC

Thank you for your attention

