

Advice and fraud prevention information for elderly people

Training social care sector staff to give anti-fraud advice to vulnerable elderly people.

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Updated

23 September 2024

Key details

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| Stage of practice | Untested |
| Purpose | Prevention |
| Topic | Community engagement Financial and economic crime Fraud |
| Organisation | Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner |
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| Region | East Midlands |
| Partners | Police Government department |
| Stage of implementation | The practice is implemented. |
| Start date | March 2021 |

Key details

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|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Scale of initiative | Local |
| Target group | Adults Communities Workforce |

Aim

This initiative aims to:

- prevent fraud offences from occurring through education
- raise awareness of fraud, enabling social care staff to pass on advice in person to those most at risk in our communities – the elderly and vulnerable

Intended outcome

1. Identify victims who would otherwise have gone undetected.
2. Form partnerships with other organisations.
3. Deliver crime prevention advice to those who need it.
4. Deliver crime prevention advice daily or weekly.

Description

This practice is also referred to as Operation Repeat. Offences of fraud are growing. Fraud associated with telephone, mail or at the doorstep is vastly under-reported – with National Trading Standards inferring that only one in five offences are reported, and Age UK placing the figures at one in ten.

This practice involves a minimum of 12, three-hour training sessions over 12 months, delivered by ex-police officers to a minimum of 10 health and social care workers per session. It aims to train them to deliver prevention advice around doorstep crimes and scams to elderly and vulnerable people. This involves:

- arranging training sessions with relevant organisations
- supplying training staff – ex police-officers
- using existing networks to maintain knowledge of local crime trends
- maintaining a secure attendance register
- supplying certificates to all trained persons (containing partnership details from relevant area)
- maintaining monthly contact with area police named person
- maintaining monthly contact with Trading Standards named person
- delivering crime information to specified person if reported during training
- maintaining contact with organisations trained
- maintaining contact with trained persons
- arranging a local reporting procedure
- advising re internal organisational training

The model is to develop between 120 and 240 trained social care staff within the first year. This will grow to between 240 and 480 in year two, and so on. This will create a network of carers visiting vulnerable people, who are equipped with fraud prevention knowledge and training on what to do if they spot something that seems wrong. Crime prevention is everyone's business because it safeguards people.

The aim is to prevent such crimes from occurring, removing the huge cost of investigation and the physical and financial impact on victims. Crime prevention advice is calculated to cost as little as 0.04p per day, per person protected.

Overall impact

Within this financial year:

- 12 training sessions have been delivered
- 141 members of staff have been trained
- staff have delivered this advice and knowledge to 1,413 older and vulnerable members of the Northamptonshire community

Feedback from a session held in November 2021 revealed that 100% of respondents:

- reported an improvement in knowledge
- feel more confident in supporting potential victims

- would recommend this training course to others

Attendees report having a list of actions they will take as a result of the training, such as changing passwords regularly and checking privacy settings.

Learning

This practice brings together police fraud teams and Trading Standards. It explains how fraud occurs and the types of tactics criminals adopt, all broken down into easily-digestible bite-size pieces of information.

While the project is outsourced to reduce demand on local fraud teams, who often have limited capacity, the training works particularly well when a member of the fraud team can talk through the national picture. This gives trainees a local crime context. Trading Standards can provide an angle on reports coming through their routes too.

Fraud is complicated, with 55 classifications. However, the social care staff that attend this training are engaged and see themselves being part of the solution. They want to protect their vulnerable clients.

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Tags

Fraud Crime reduction Vulnerable people Cybercrime Safeguarding