

“Shining a Light  
on the Darkness of Elder Abuse”



The Catholic Health Association of BC  
73rd Annual General Meeting and Conference

Thursday, September 19, 2013  
Executive Plaza Hotel  
435 North Road, Coquitlam

Almost one-sixth of B.C.'s population is over 65 years old. Over the next 20 years, the number of seniors will almost double from 699,363 to an estimated 1,355,701. Based on available Canadian data, it is estimated that between 4 and 10 percent of older adults in Canada experience some type of abuse. With an aging population, elder abuse is an increasing concern across Canada.

Elder abuse is any action or inaction by ANY person that causes harm or risk of harm to an older person. It includes physical, mental or emotional harm, or damage or loss in respect of financial affairs. Examples include intimidation, humiliation, physical assault, sexual assault, overmedication, withholding needed medication, censoring mail, invasion or denial of privacy or denial of access to visitors, neglect and self neglect. Elder abuse is a serious social and public health issue that undermines the independence, dignity, health and sense of security of the victim.

- Elder abuse can be at the hands of a spouse, an adult child or other family member. It can be inflicted by a caregiver, a service provider, or other person in a situation of power or trust. Abuse can happen when a senior is living in an institution or a private residence.

Elder abuse prevention is a shared responsibility with multiple ministries and agencies, as well as community and individual partners, all playing important roles. The prevention of and response to abuse is fostered through community and individual awareness, education, information, and access to effective, coordinated services. Our speakers today will touch on each of these key priorities in combating the abuse and neglect of older adults: prevention, early identification, assessment, referral, response, support and follow-up.

It is hoped that the steps that we take now, individually and collectively, may ensure that “older adults in British Columbia live in age-friendly communities free from abuse, and are supported to live active, socially engaged and independent lives.”

## Agenda for the Day

- 9:00 am Mass with Archbishop Michael Miller  
and priests of the Archdiocese
- 9:45 am Coffee/Juice/Muffins
- 10:30 am Welcome/President's Report
- 10:45 am Gerry Herkel  
"Legacy Project"
- 11:00 am Will Johnston, Vancouver family physician  
"Assessing the Capacity of Elders  
to Make their own Decisions "  
Questions and Answers
- Noon Lunch
- 12:45 pm Executive Director Report  
Treasurer's Report  
Ethics Committee Report  
Pastoral Care Committee Report
- 1:00 pm Teresa Robitaille, Social Work Consultant  
"Responding to the needs of vulnerable adults who are  
experiencing abuse, neglect and self-neglect"  
Questions and Answers
- 2:00 pm Stretch Break
- 2:10 pm Sherry Baker, Executive Director, BC Association of  
Community Response Networks  
"It's Not Right: Elder Abuse is Everyone's Responsibility"  
Questions and Answers
- 3:10 pm Nominating Report  
Missioning Ceremony
- 3:30 pm Adjournment

## Our Presenters . . . .

Dr. Will Johnston




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● Dr. Will Johnston is a Vancouver Family Physician and Surgeon. His practice includes assessing seniors for their capacity to make their own decisions regarding their finances and their living arrangements. He sees many instances where individuals are coerced into making decisions against their will – where individuals are bullied into doing things they wouldn't normally do.

Will is also the President of the *Euthanasia Coalition of BC*. He says that if we are already unable to identify and prevent elder abuse with respect to finances and living arrangements, how can we possibly think we can prevent elder abuse when it comes to assisted suicide?

Will has been a tireless advocate for Canada's laws to remain unchanged on this issue to continue to protect our vulnerable populations – the elderly and the disabled. His talk will give us some insight into the assessment cases that come before him.



## Teresa Robitaille



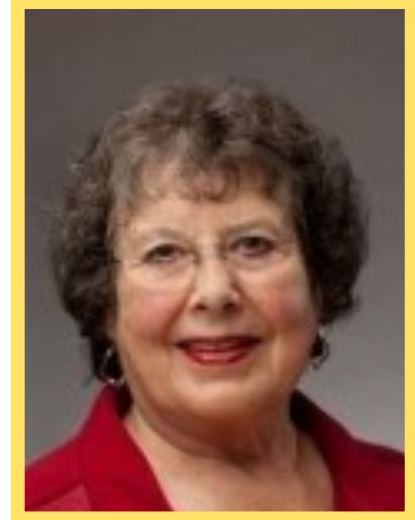
Teresa Robitaille has been working in Vancouver with older adults as a social worker in health care for over twenty years. She has worked in residential care, acute care, emergency room and outpatient clinics. Teresa currently works for Providence Health Care as a Social Work Consultant for front-line staff in cases of adult abuse, neglect and self-neglect.

Teresa is actively involved in regional and provincial initiatives to work towards addressing issues of clinical practice: facilitating staff education developing practice guidelines; and advocating for systemic change to better meet the needs of older adults who are experiencing abuse, neglect and self-neglect.

Teresa is a member of the BC Adult Abuse and Neglect Prevention Collaborative.



## Sherry Baker



Since July 2010, Sherry Baker has been the Executive Director of the BC Association of Community Response Networks. She has also owned and operated a private consulting and counselling practice since 1990. Sherry Baker and Associates offers small business, non-profit and boards support, strategic planning and organizational development.

Sherry has sat on, and chaired many provincial, regional and local boards over the years. She is the past Chair of the BC Coalition to Eliminate Abuse of Seniors and past chair of the South Fraser Family Court and Youth Justice Committee, as well as a founding Board Member of the Minerva Foundation for BC Women and a founding member of the United Community Services Co-op. Sherry has been a Rotarian since 1992 and is a member of Soroptimist International of the Langleys. She was awarded the Canada 125 Medal "in recognition of signification contribution to compatriots, community and to Canada" and was also awarded a Paul Harris Fellowship by Rotary International.

Sherry holds a Masters in Applied Behavioral Science from City University in Seattle, a Bachelor of Home Economics from the University of British Columbia and a Diploma of Business Administration from Fraser Valley University.

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## **Conference Registration**

The Executive Hotel and Conference Centre

405 North Road, Coquitlam

(Within walking distance of Lougheed Town Centre Skytrain Station)

For room reservations, call 1-888-433-3932 and quote

“CHABC Conference”.

A block of deluxe rooms at the rate of \$109 will be held

for conference registrants until August 20th.

Parking is available in the hotel lot at a rate of \$8 for the day.

### **Registration for the day, including lunch: \$140**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Please include your cheque with your registration,

payable to “CHABC” and mail to:

Catholic Health Association of BC

9387 Holmes Street

Burnaby, BC V3N 4C3

### **Conference registration deadline: September 13th**

**Sorry; late registrations will not be accepted**

**and no registrations at the door.**



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