



**It's Not Right!**

Neighbours, Friends & Families for Older Adults



# Older Women Fleeing Violence:

- Intersections
- Promising Approaches

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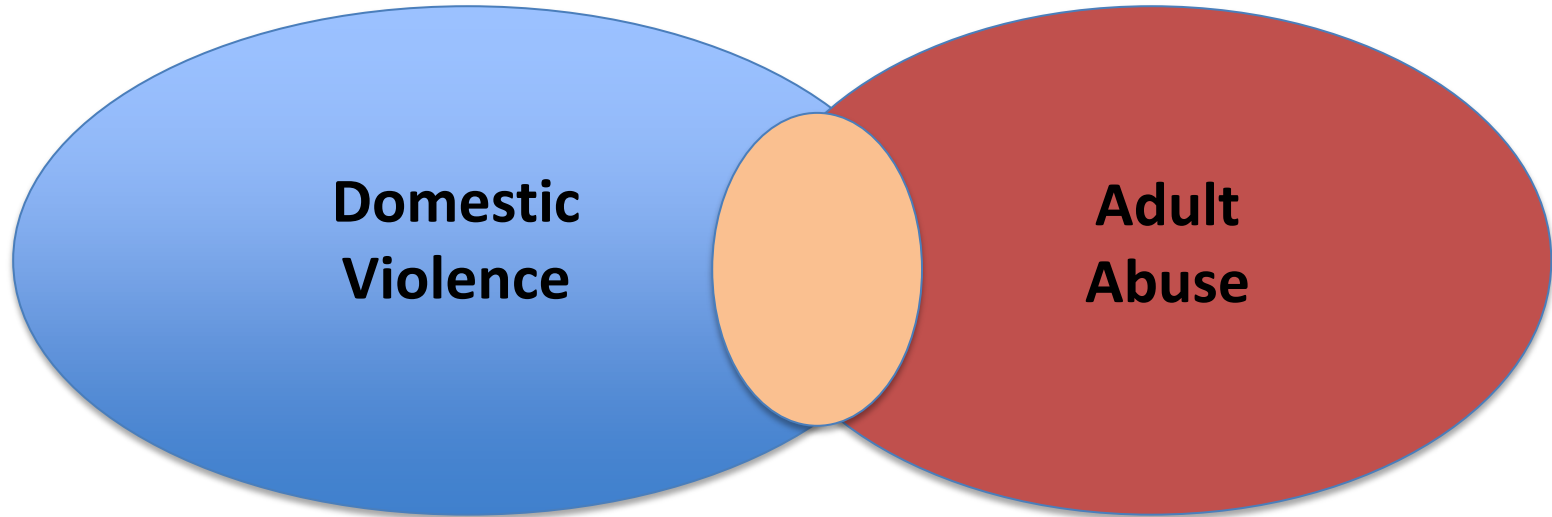
- Two Systems – Intersections

# The View from Here...

- Scan of two fields



# Intersections – Abuse and Aging



# Projects Bridging Fields

- **ATIRA**
  - Issues
  - Realities
- **Older Women's Dialogue**
  - Depth
  - Themes
- **Article**
  - Journal of Elder Abuse and Neglect

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# Learning from Projects

- Analysis of two fields
- Time investment for relationship building is the ONLY way
- Common understanding of collaboration
- Loads of communication
- Developmental evaluation to keep on track

# Systems Intersections to respond to Violence in Older Women's Lives



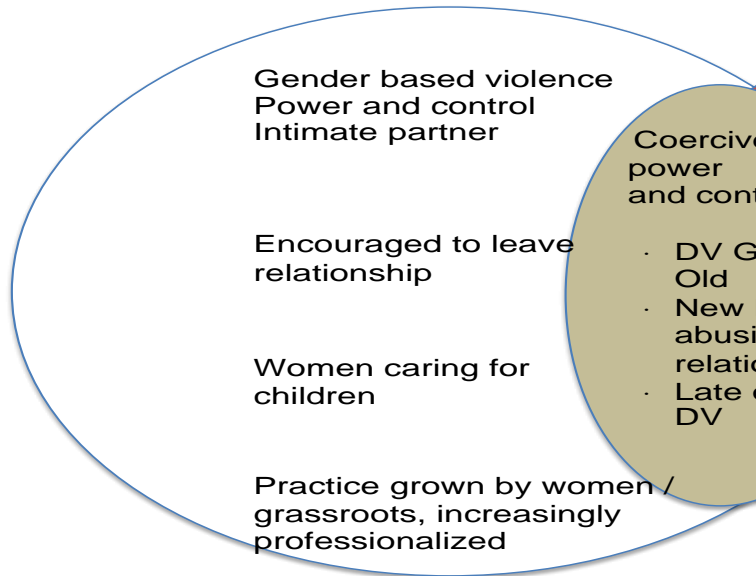
# Systems Intersections to respond to Violence in Older Women's Lives – Or this



# Intersections – Abuse and Aging

Violence Against Women

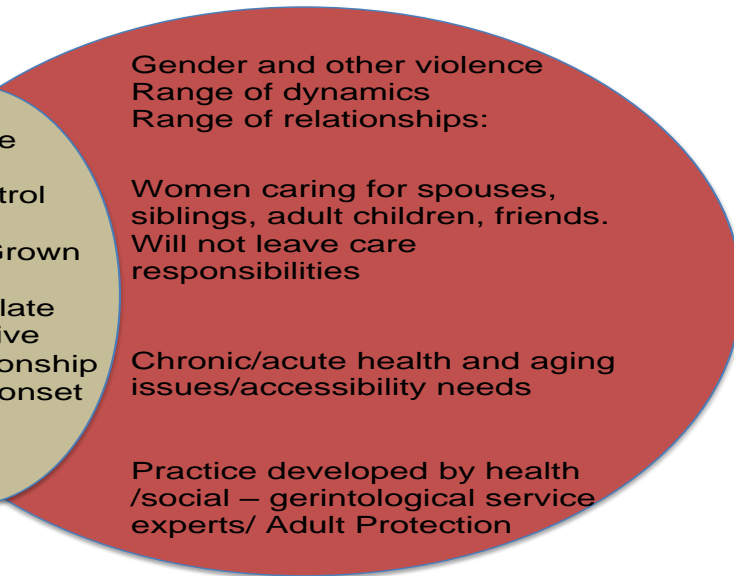
Age 16-50



Desired Outcome: Safe Independence

Abuse of Older Adults

Age 50 - 95



Desired Outcome: Optimal Independent or dependent/ supported living

# Align Services with Needs - adaptive

<b>VAW – T Houses Etc.</b>	<b>Socio - gerintological</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Physical facility adaptations</li><li>· Train on aging</li><li>· Support approach altered re relationships</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Train all staff in VAW</li><li>· Assess for VAW / EA</li><li>· Flag VAW – divert to specialist</li><li>· Safety practices</li></ul>
Coalition	
Cross training of staff	

# Align Services with Needs - generative

- Collective response - Coalition
  - Peer relations –how and what
  - Re-defining together (REFLEXIVE)
  - Coordination
  - De-Siloing
- How to get there?

# Collaboration

- Meta view
- Extreme partnershiping
- Increase the 'narrow radius' of trust-build social capital
- Solve problems within the agreed process
- Budget implications

# Recommendations

## **Come together – Thought Leaders**

- Ways to Work
- Lenses
- Project – Co – Designed

## **Dialogues VAW / EA - AOA – Prov + National**

- Common ground
- Build model (mutually acceptable)
- Networks –spectrum
- Joint training
- Developmental Evaluation

# Who Wants to Think This Through??



# Older Women Fleeing Violence:

- Promising Practices

# Pan Canadian 3 Yr project\*



**Promising Practices**  
ACROSS CANADA FOR  
HOUSING WOMEN WHO ARE OLDER AND  
FLEEING ABUSE

May 2015



atira  
WOMEN'S RESOURCE SOCIETY



CANADIAN CENTRE FOR  
ELDER LAW

\*

# Promising Approaches



## **Writers /developers**

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Lawyer

**April Struthers**

Consultant / researcher  
and author in field of  
adult abuse, promising  
approaches,

**Raissa Dickinson**

CCEL Staff Research Assistant  
Raissa holds a Masters in  
Public Health from the  
University of British Columbia

# Why Great Project

- Feminist research
- Joint Domestic Violence / Elder Abuse project
- 2 key partners, one national
- Collaborative to a point
- National in scope

# Why Great Project

- In depth inquiry
- Based on initial evaluation of 2 operations
- 18 EDs, staff and Directors of Transition houses, Women's shelters, safe houses, older adult safe residences
- First Nations, Inuit and Francophone members
- The 'HOW' as important as the 'WHAT'

# Feminist Research / Methods

- Planning Committee
- Preliminary Participatory Evaluation
- Electronic Survey-400 shelters T Houses
  - Phone interviews re survey (80)

# Feminist Research / Methods

- National advisory / knowledge committee (18)
- Interviews (47) re practice
- In person Meetings (3)
- Stories developed collectively

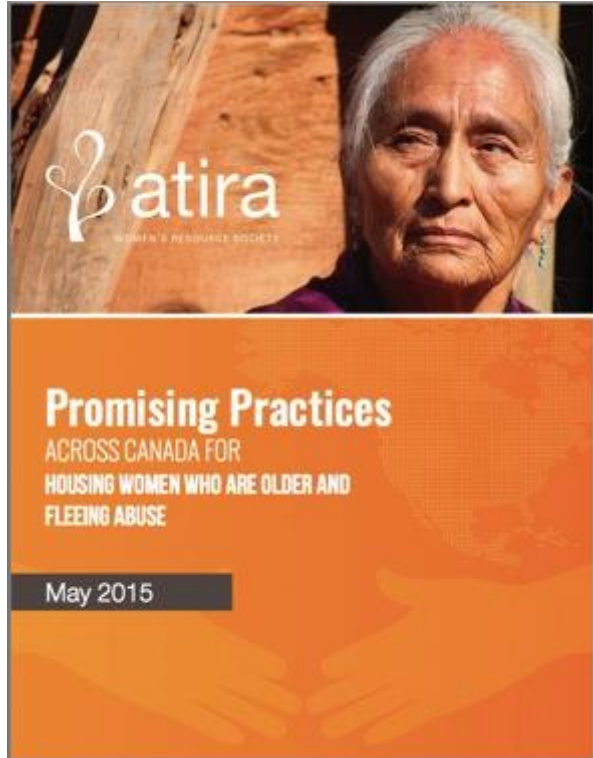
# Feminist Research / Methods

- Literature review
- Overall evaluation – Arbor
- Editor and Gender Equality Advisor

# Why Great Project

- Explores women's lives across race, class, gender, sexual orientation and ability
- Challenges assumptions about women who are older
- Reflects a lived experience from small towns and rural Canada, small and large cities, all Provinces and territories

# Why A Great Document



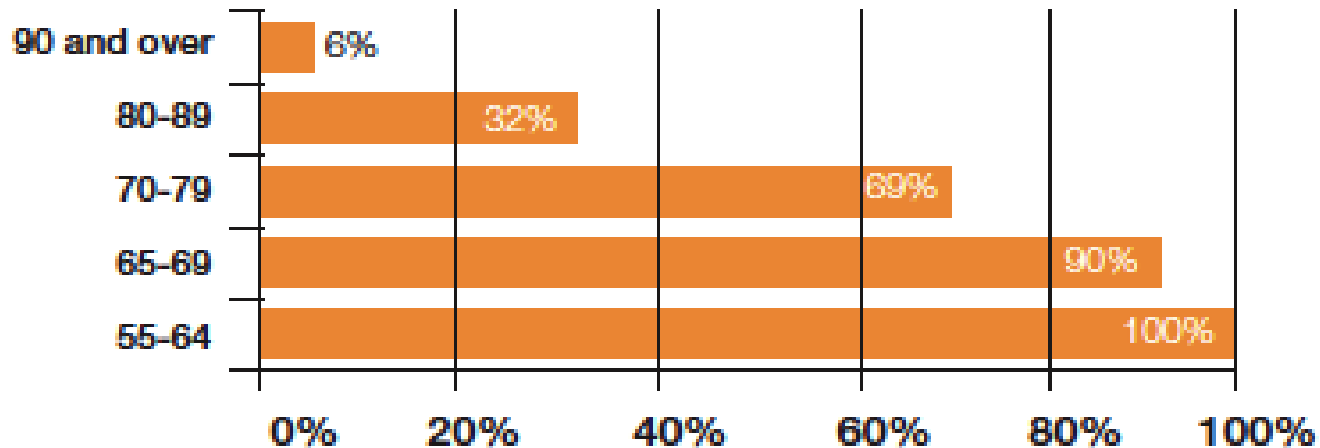
- Practices not documented before
- Simple language/Beautifully desk top published
- Gender based approach

# Numbers, Ages, Services

Atira Women's Resource Society commissioned an electronic survey of over 400 organizations in 2014 (across Canada)

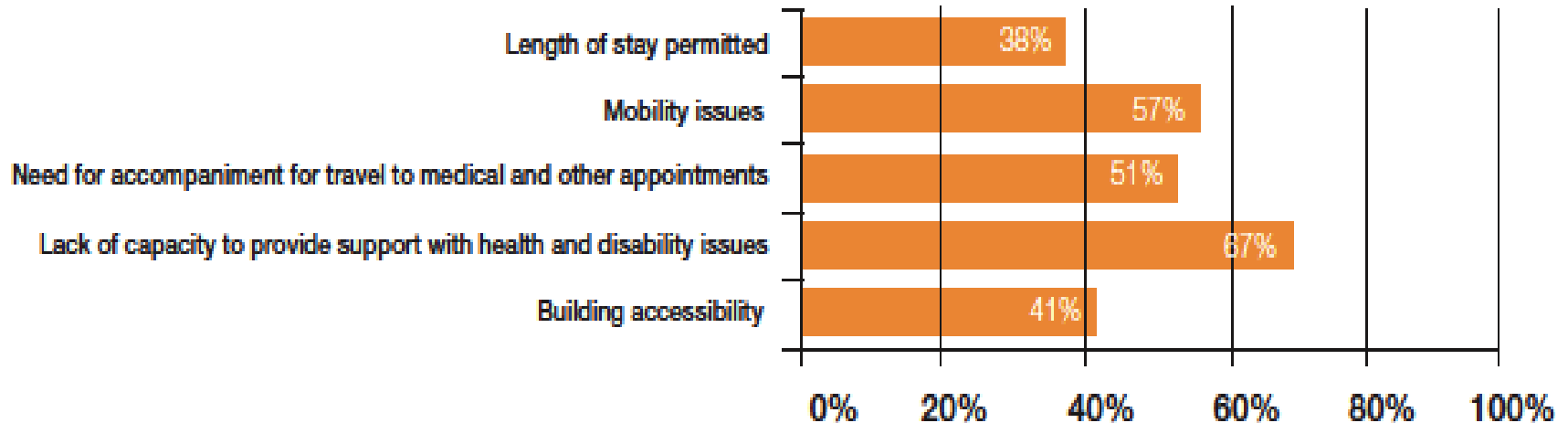
# Numbers, Ages, Services

**Which age group(s) of older women does your organization have experience delivering services to?**



# Barriers to Services for Older Women

**What barriers have you encountered in delivering services to older women?**



# Older Women's Unique Challenges

- Type of violence
- Providing or receiving care
- Myth of caregiver stress
- Loss of home

# Unique Challenges

- Threatened autonomy (facilities)
- Financial security (navigating pensions, health insurance, benefits)
- Loss of community (especially immigrant women)
- Generational beliefs

# Unique Challenges

- Abuser is your child
- Family dynamics – may minimize abuse or fear caregiving responsibilities
- Remote / rural life (geographic and social isolation, roots to land / livestock)

# Unique Challenges

- LGBTTTQ (fear of further victimization by service providers)
- Lack of knowledge about transition houses and other services (maybe struggles with mobility / disability, language barriers, availability)

# Promising Practices

- Nurture an environment that values women who are older
- Develop outreach strategies tailored to women who are older
- Provide individualized, woman-centred support for women who are older

# Promising Practices

- Focus on relationships and relationship-building for women who are older
- Focus on safety for women who are older

# Promising Practices

- Facilitate access to health care for women who are older
- Develop strategic partnerships to help women who are older get the services they want and need
- Provide women who are older with more time to transition

# Promising Practices

- Support women who are older after they leave the transition house
- Integrate evaluation into practice, including documentation of use of services by women who are older
- Work towards system change for women who are older

# Promising Practices

- A step towards producing best practices
- Benefit organizations developing safe, supportive, housing specifically for women who are older.

# Further research

## Supporting women who are older and:

- Living with a disability, chronic disease or mental health issues
- Who identify as lesbian, queer, transgender, two-spirited, intersex
- Socially and geographically isolated and requiring additional outreach

# Questions?

- Thanks for your interest!

# Links

- <http://www.bcli.org/project/promising-practices-in-housing-older-women-fleeing-violence-or-abuse>
- <http://www.bcli.org/project/older-womens-dialogue-project>
- <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/08946566.2015.1082528>

# Contact

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# Intersections – Service Systems and Aging

