

Calls for Elder Abuse
Prevention of Elder Abuse
ALMA, part of French system

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Elder Abuse :

Old stuff, new actions



- Elder abuse, specially against women exists since the beginning of humanity.
- A topic largely described in literature from different countries and epochs
- Social interest only since about 1980 !
- Many surveys these last twenty years
- But a few actions until recently to struggle against Elder Abuse



Action more efficient than Indignation



- In France, Pr Hugonot attempted to find a way to «treat» this situations rather than being indignant.... without doing anything.
- He created (1994) a network of helplines for receiving calls for elder mistreatments and to listen, counsel and follow up callers
- Now the network covers 74% of the French territory



Principles of ALMA (allo-maltraitance)

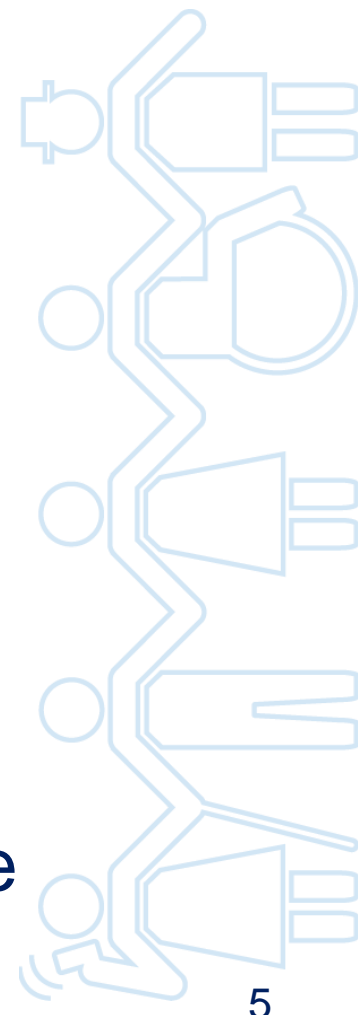


- Voluntary work : total independence, confidentiality, anonymity. It is better however to employ a salaried coordinator in each centre (when possible !!)
- Proximity : «referents» must know the local context and the local networks
- Competence : Each volunteer must be educated and trained and come with his/her professional experience

Principles of ALMA Ethics



- Confidentiality (without = no call !!!)
- Competence (pluridisciplinarity and multi professionalism - specific training)
- Independence
- Neutrality
- Respect of Autonomy of the victim
- Gratuity
- ALMA does not replace any public service

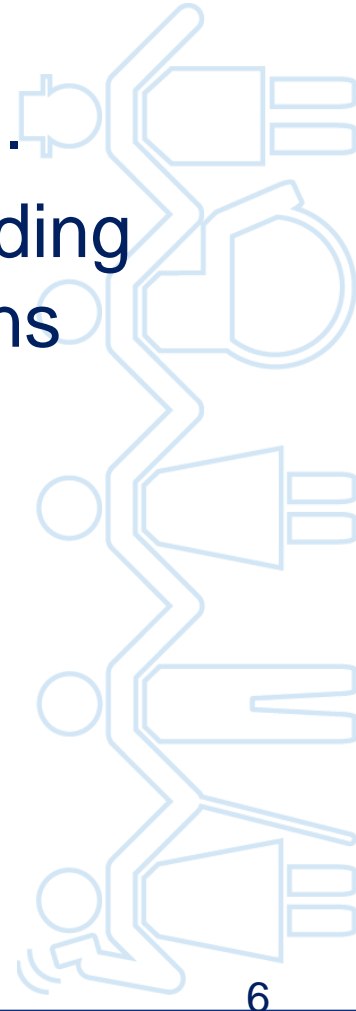


Actions of ALMA

Listening



- Two listeners, selected, educated, trained.
- Empathy, but keeping distance and avoiding manipulation, asking for useful informations
- How to answer to a delirious caller ?
- They can call back
- They do not give counsels



Actions of ALMA

Analysis of the case



- Referents (mainly retired but not exclusively) from different professions and disciplines (Social and medico -social, law, medicine, psychology, etc) study the situation with the listeners
- They ask some confirmations through their local networks
- They analyse the case for the best advice



Actions of ALMA Counsel



- Counsels are given to the caller (victim, witness, parent of the victim) or to a near parent of the victim, able and wanting to act
- In conformity of the wishes of the victim (mainly if the author is a parent)
- If nobody can act, ALMA center will do it



Action of ALMA Follow up



- Have the counsels be followed.
- Have the counsels got some outcomes
- New targets or services have to be contacted to stop the mistreatment ?
- Often a long term follow up : complex situations inside families, inertia and silence in public services : try again

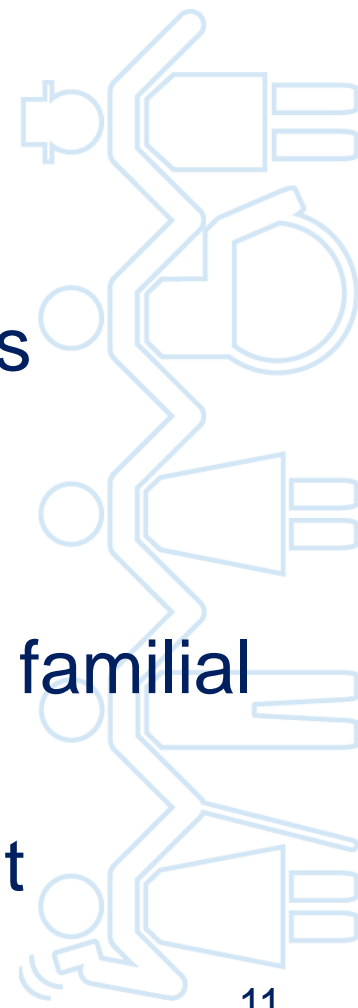


ALMA present situation

- A national phone number 39 77 (HABEO) send the calls to local helplines.
- Each local ALMA centre has its line(s)
- 61 ALMA centres cover 74 departments (French districts) (+ 2 with other associations) on 101), 5 in creation.
- Funds : Ministry of Social Cohesion, + sponsors + benefits of «sensitizations»

ALMA helplines : results

- Calls 18 500 / year
- Files for mistreatments : 4000 files /year
- Community >75 %,mainly financial abuses
- Institution < 25 %, mainly neglect
- Women > 75 % of victims
- Women 51 % autors (but >90 % of carers familial or professional)
- 20 % calls : suffering without mistreatment



ALMA and prevention : sensitizations and awareness



- Prevention always better than «treatment»
- = Actions of «sensitization» towards staff of nursing homes and home care (12-15.000 professionals/ year)
- = Documents (leaflets, DVD) for public
- = Conferences, workshops for professionals



Messages

- - « well - care » : not the contrary of mistreatment but a positive attitude (in french : « bientraitance »)

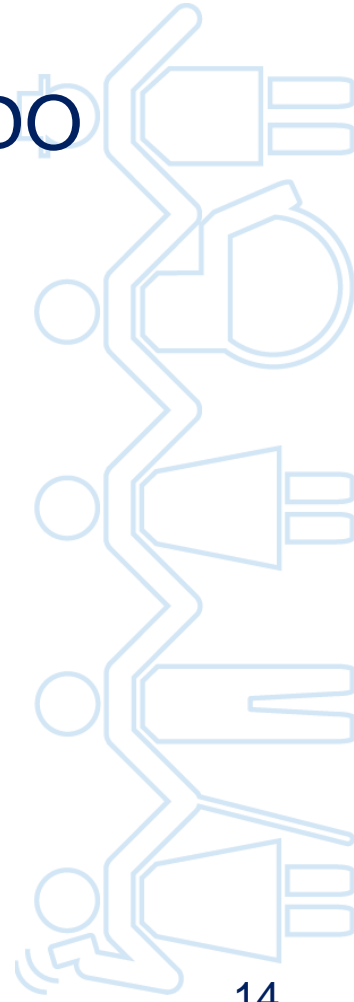
- «Mistreatment is not an accident»

Professional knowledge, team working in collegiality and awareness of «pillars» of Elder Abuse may limit mistreatments

Is it possible to break up mistreatment circle?



- The six pillars of Elder Abuse : WE CAN DO something on each :
- Frailty and Dependency
- Unawarenesss of needs
- Ignorance of good answers
- Isolation
- Silence, hush and taboo
- Human factor



1) Frailty and dependency

- Weakness and mainly dependency of a human help for daily life activities gives to one person an ascendancy and empowerment over another person : the main factor for abuse, violence and neglect.
- = Solving : to give awareness of this vital role and training for this responsibility.

2) Unawareness

- Unawareness of the needs of the disabled person
- Unawareness of the humanity of the person
- Unawareness of the outcomes of disease : « It is normal for her age »
- Unawareness of wishes and choices
- = SOLVING : Awareness, sensitization



3) Ignorance

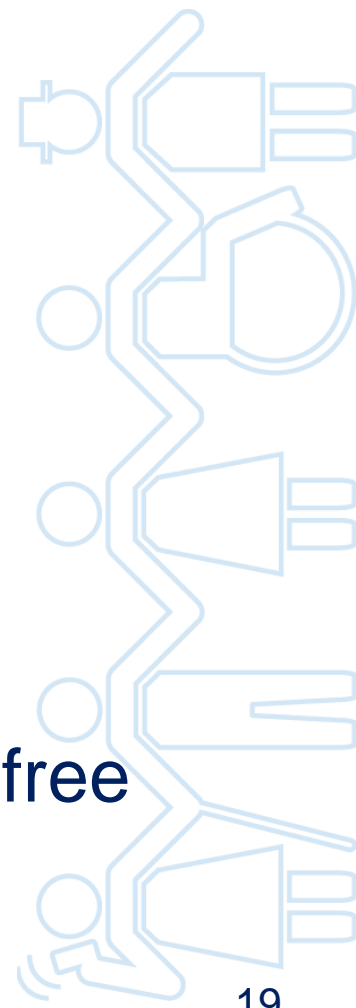
- Staff not educated and trained for their tasks (managerial staff included !)
- Ignorance of the good technical answer, of the good attitude, of the personal problems of the person (no transmission of data and objectives), etc
- Ignorance of other possible advices
- = SOLVING : information and education

4) Isolation

- **COMMUNITY** : Loneliness of the duo helped person - caregiver
- **NURSING HOMES** : Closed structures, without external look
- **LOCAL POWER** : no waves, « There is nothing to see.... »
- = **SOLVING** : to launch coordination of actors around the disabled person

5) Silence, hush and taboo

- **VICTIMS** : unable to speak
not any possible access to a listener
« It is not fair play to denounce »
unawareness of neglect
 - **WITNESSES** : fear of punishment
fear of reprisals, unawareness
- = **SOLVING** : independent helplines give a free way to speak (confidentiality)

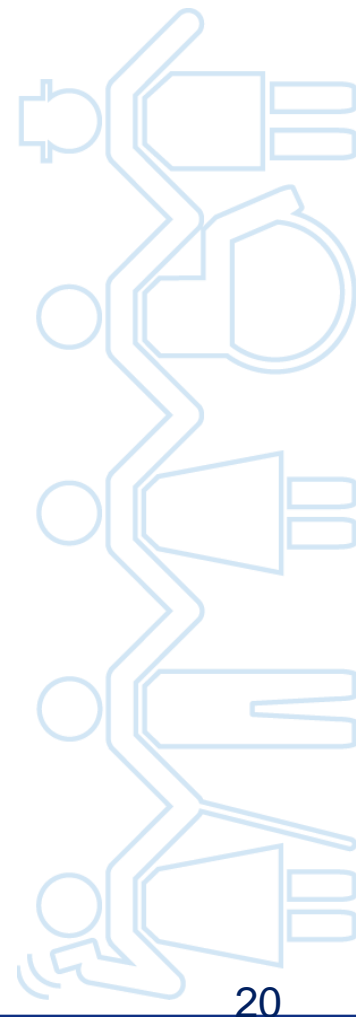


6) HUMAN FACTOR not deliberate

- CURABLE (counsels): guilty conscience
burn out
routine
familial conflict
= feasibilities of actions

Not CURABLE

Silliness, stupidity



6 bis) HUMAN FACTOR deliberate

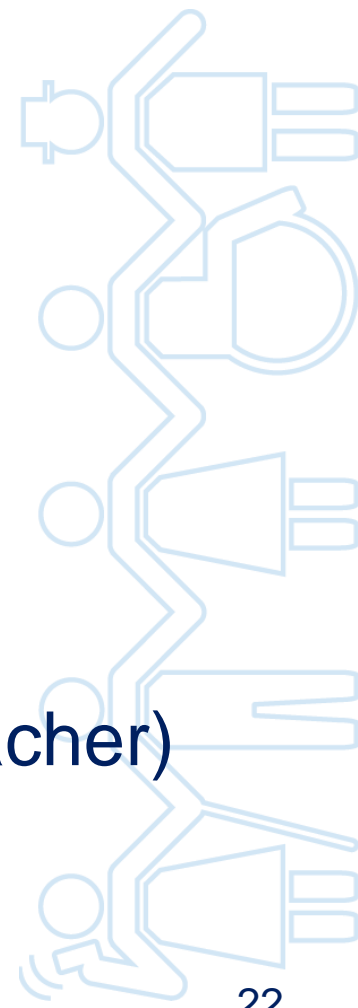


- RELEVANT OF PUNISHMENT :
theft , misappropriation, etc «Opportunity makes the thief». BUT how to do when the robbery is inside the family ?
- NOT CURABLE (except fear of punishment) :
perversions,
- Cupidity



Methodology of sensitization

- What are the needs of the staff ? Of the management ?
- What are the waitings of the staff ? Of the management ?
- To begin by managerial staff
- To take the whole team all together
- Triple assesment (staff, management, teacher)



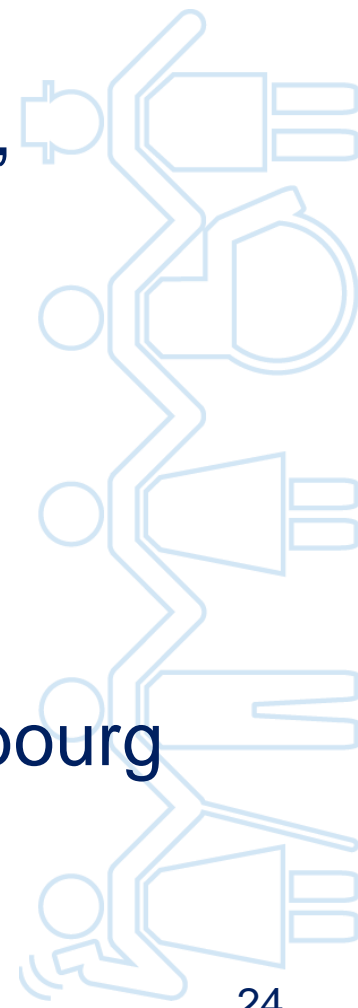
Education and training: new targets for ALMA

- - Guardianship, tutor, proxies
- - Managerial staff of home care
- - Social workers
- - familial caregivers
- - Staff for homes for mental disablement
- - Officers of public services accountable of elder abuse «treatment»



Transposable methodologies

- Development in France 62 ALMA centres, covering 74 departments (on 101) + 2 independent associations
- Respect Seniors in Belgium (Wallonny)
- SOLIMAI and UNRCA (Ancona) in Italy
- Proposals in Czech Republic and Luxembourg



Conclusion

- An independent associative network may be a powerful tool for answering to the calls for Elder Abuse
- It warrants confidentiality, neutrality and competence
- It makes easier the work of authorities without any substitution
- It is cheap and feasible ! !



Messages to take back to home

- A pertinent answer for mistreatment needs confidentiality, independence, proximity, pluridisciplinarity, a long term follow up
- Education and awareness can avoid a majority of mistreatments, mainly neglect.
- A national network of associative centres is an efficient way to «treat» E A situations
- A minority of EA needs to resort to Law



Thank you for your attention

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