



NEWS

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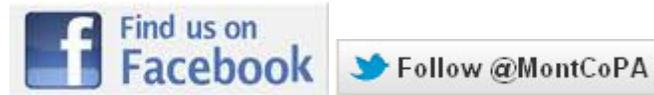
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 13, 2013

Montco Prepares for Elder Abuse Conference

Norristown, PA (June 13, 2013) – Elder Abuse Awareness Day is Saturday, June 15, and the Montgomery County Elder Justice Roundtable is working hard planning for an important conference slated for this fall.

The Montgomery County Elder Justice Roundtable includes leaders of Montgomery County agencies and departments as well as leaders of non-profits, hospitals, and others involved in the care of older adults and providing services to them.

The roundtable meets on the first Thursday of each month and is committed to bringing together the various stakeholders in the care of the elderly by enhancing communication, identifying systemic problems, sponsoring training, and improving access to justice in the Criminal, Civil, Family, and Orphans' Court divisions of the county court system.

“Abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation of older adults in our community is a very serious matter, and far too many cases go unreported and unaddressed. In addition to the upcoming conference, we are working on developing a resource card for law enforcement and others who provide services to older adults and need to know whom to call quickly,” said Judge Lois E. Murphy, a member of the Montgomery County Court of Common Pleas and a member of the roundtable.

Murphy said one of the most important aspects of the roundtable's work is to make sure that law enforcement and others who have contact with older adults are fully aware of the resources available from the Montgomery County Office of Aging and Adult Services and other agencies to help those who have been abused. Murphy also pointed out that many people believe “elder abuse” is something that takes place only in nursing homes. While some abuse occurs in nursing homes, nine in 10 cases are actually among family members, according to the National Center on Elder Abuse. She also pointed

out that many cases of elder abuse go unreported, because the victim is often fearful to report the crime or seek help.

Montgomery County District Attorney Risa Ferman is also a member of the roundtable, and has big expectations for its success.

“The Elder Justice Roundtable plays a critical role in protecting the elder residents of Montgomery County,” Ferman said. “It brings together at one table all of the county agencies that serve the elder population, and works with the private sector to educate the community, to investigate and prosecute those who prey upon the vulnerable members of our community, and to provide social services and other resources to those who need them most. It is county government working at its best.”

The roundtable is hoping the conference planned for Friday, October 18 at the Montgomery County Public Safety Training Campus in Conshohocken will go a long way towards raising awareness of the problem and bringing the disparate resources of the county together to provide a more coordinated response to elder abuse.

The keynote speaker for the all-day conference is Nora Dowd Eisenhower, former Pennsylvania Secretary of Aging. The conference will include numerous workshops on such subjects as identifying and reporting abuse and neglect; legal issues and community solutions; mental health, self-neglect and working with elders with dementia; and, the financial exploitation of seniors.

The target audience of the conference is senior-level health care and other professionals who work with seniors, but other employees, seniors themselves, and caregivers are welcome to attend.

Anyone who suspects an older adult has been a victim of abuse, neglect, or financial exploitation is encouraged to make an anonymous report to the Montgomery County Office of Aging and Adult Services hotline by calling 1-800-734-2020.