

MEDIA RELEASE

**CRIME STOPPERS AND “CARP” LAUNCH CAMPAIGN URGING SENIORS
TO WATCH FOR – AND ANONYMOUSLY REPORT - ELDER ABUSE**

WHITE ROCK, B.C. (January 24, 2019): Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers (MVCS) was joined today by seniors’ advocacy group **CARP** (formerly the Canadian Association of Retired Persons), **White Rock Block Watch** and **Surrey RCMP** in launching a new Crime Stoppers education program aimed at helping potential victims of elder abuse to report the crime.

Crime Stoppers’ “**See Something, Say Something**” elder abuse awareness presentation was given for the first time today to a group of seniors at the White Rock Community Centre, and marks the beginning of a series of presentations that will be held this year wherever seniors in the Lower Mainland gather.

Anyone wishing to contact Crime Stoppers and book one of these elder abuse prevention presentations will find information at Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers’ website solvecrime.ca. Crime Stoppers will also be active in reaching out to schedule presentations with organizations like retirement home operators, regional community centres and strata councils.

“Abuse of elderly people is one of the most underreported crimes in our society. It might go unreported due to embarrassment, fear of retaliation, or an unwillingness to get a family member in trouble,” says Linda Annis, Executive Director of Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers. “A further complicating factor is that Metro Vancouver is home to many immigrant families. Language and cultural barriers might prevent some elderly immigrants from reporting abuse if they don’t speak English or French well. The Crime Stoppers tips line has operators who speak more than 100 languages including Punjabi, Hindi, Mandarin and Cantonese.”

ELDER ABUSE IS A CRIME

Elder abuse can take many forms - from physical, emotional or psychological abuse, to bullying and financial abuse. All are forms of violence against some of our most vulnerable citizens. It’s a cowardly act, and it goes unreported much too often. Some of our most elderly citizens become victims of their own family members and feel they have nowhere to turn. *(See attached backgrounder for examples of often-ignored forms of elder abuse.)*

At each elder abuse presentation, a retired law enforcement officer is accompanied by a volunteer to give a talk and answer questions. They encourage seniors and caregivers to call in a tip anonymously to Crime Stoppers or to other law enforcement authorities. Seniors are also encouraged to watch out for one another and provide information to Crime Stoppers anonymously, so it can be forwarded to police.

Ramona Kaptyn, Chair of CARP's White Rock/Surrey chapter says although her members are the first to benefit from this program, she's urging seniors' groups all over the Lower Mainland to see the presentation. "Our polling shows that about 10 per cent of all older Canadians experience some form of abuse, and that's consistent with other research we've seen. That means there could be more than 500,000 elderly Canadians affected, and seniors with a disability tend to suffer even higher rates of abuse. We hope this new program will enable many more seniors to do something if they become victims."

"We're pleased to support this program and encourage neighbours to watch for signs of elder abuse," adds Julia Everett of White Rock's local Block Watch program, who presented along with Constable Chantal Sears of the White Rock RCMP. "It's a reportable crime like any other. Anyone with information that can help an elderly friend or neighbour can help by calling police directly, or Crime Stoppers if they want to pass on the information anonymously."

"The RCMP are committed to the well-being and safety of seniors right across Canada, and we frequently work with local organizations like Crime Stoppers to develop tools to help the public and police better recognize, prevent and respond to elder abuse," adds Assistant Commissioner Dwayne McDonald, Officer in Charge of the Surrey RCMP. "This Crime Stoppers program will help further the cause by taking the message to more Lower Mainland seniors."

About Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers

Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers is a non-profit society and registered charity that offers rewards for anonymous tip information about criminal activity and provides it to investigators in the communities of Metro Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. People can leave anonymous tips in a variety of ways including Crime Stoppers' new downloadable "P3" app for Apple and Android phones, calling Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477, online at solvecrime.ca, or by following the link on the Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers [Facebook page](#).

Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers accepts tips in 115 different languages and will pay a reward of up to \$2,000 for information leading to the arrest of a criminal, recovery of stolen property, seizure of illegal drugs or guns or denial of a fraudulent insurance claim. Tipsters stay anonymous by using code numbers to check back later and collect their rewards. solvecrime.ca.

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For media inquiries or interviews please contact:

Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers

Trevor Pancoust

tpancoust@pacegroup.com

604-646-3567

BACKGROUNDER – COMMON FORMS OF ELDER ABUSE

Physical abuse

- Acts of violence and other ways to coerce elderly victims
- Depriving them of life essentials
- Using medication to incapacitate them
- Locking seniors out of their homes
- Not providing or allowing adequate hygiene

Emotional or psychological abuse

- Withholding basic rights and privileges
- Restricting freedom to socialize with others
- Denying a safe secure environment
- Removing decision-making powers
- Bullying - insults, threats, intimidation, yelling, ignoring and isolation.

Financial abuse

- Withholding funds
- Selling property without the owner's consent
- Forcing elders to alter a will, or abuse power of attorney