



## European project: „Breaking the taboo – Empowering health and social service professionals to combat violence against older women within families“

**funded within the DAPHNE II – Programme 2004-2008 by DG Justice, Freedom and Security**

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While there has been little research in European countries on violence against older women, those findings that have been reported show that violence and other forms of abuse often occur in the immediate family. Violence against older women is taboo and therefore even less visible in society than violence against younger women. There is a lack of awareness of this issue among the public and also a lack of provisions for older women who are victims of violence and abuse. Health and social service professionals who work with older people in their own homes are often the only ones who have access to older victims of violence. Therefore, their awareness concerning different types of abuse is especially relevant in order to help prevent violence against older people with families.

The **aim of the project** is to

- raise awareness concerning violence against older women in families
- empower health and social service professionals to recognize abusive situations and to help combat them
- develop awareness raising activities and materials
- develop tools and strategies to improve early recognition of violence against older women in the family and to support professionals to react accordingly

**Project work** will focus on a first research phase, including a literature overview, interviews with health and social service staff on their experiences as well as a short survey with health and social service organisations, which provisions they have for dealing with abuse against older women within families. The second project phase will be focussed on awareness raising activities for health and social service professionals at all levels, but also for those working in institutions addressing violence in general.

The **main products** of the project will be

- a European research report
- a brochure containing tools to recognise violence, strategies how to deal with violence and country specific information on the legal framework as well as organisations to turn to
- awareness raising workshops for professionals in the field in Austria, Italy, Poland and Finland
- an expert conference in Austria, Finland, Italy and Poland
- short summary of the experiences of the project for policy makers

The main activities of the project will be **carried out in** Austria, Finland, Italy and Poland. Collaborating partners are participating from Belgium, France and Portugal and the evaluation is carried out by a German partner.

## Project partners

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