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About the CFPB

- The CFPB works to make consumer financial markets work for consumers, responsible providers, and the economy as a whole.
CFPB’s work

- Empower
- Enforce
- Educate
Office for Older Americans

We help older consumers:

Prevent unfair, deceptive and abusive practices aimed at them

Make sound financial decisions as they age

Learn more about us at consumerfinance.gov/older-americans
Study of elder financial protection networks
Report and Recommendations

Report and Recommendations: Fighting Elder Financial Exploitation through Community Networks

Resource Guide

What is a network?

A sustained, and largely voluntary, collaborative effort or partnership that works to prevent, detect, and/or respond to elder financial exploitation.
Gaps in the field

Existing research has focused on networks that fight elder abuse. We had a limited understanding of:

- How networks fight elder financial exploitation, and the kinds of activities that they conduct
- Their benefits to individuals, professionals and communities
- Their coverage across the United States, and their capacity
- The structures they follow and their membership
- The challenges and opportunities for sustainability and replication
Our research to understand networks

Methodology

- Literature review
- Interviews with experts
- In-depth qualitative study of 23 networks
  - One-on-one interviews & group discussions
  - Site visits
- Analysis of existing lists of networks
  - County-level analysis
Selected findings
Networks benefit seniors, professionals and their communities

- Improve response to cases of financial exploitation,
- Increase reporting of cases,
- Enhance members’ skills and capacity to address financial exploitation, and
- Improve coordination, including the use of community resources.
891 networks nationwide
Networks primarily follow three models of collaboration:

- **Triads**
- **Other networks**
- **MDTs**

The bar chart shows the distribution of these models, with Triads being the most common, followed by Other networks, and MDTs being the least common.
Triads

- Coordinate between law enforcement, elder service professionals, and older community members,
- Promote crime awareness and prevention.
- Provide education and training to law enforcement, seniors, caregivers, and professionals,
- Perform activities involving crime reduction and safety.
Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDTs)

- Provide resources, consultation, and advice regarding elder abuse cases,
- Bring together experts from multiple disciplines,
- Provide education or training to members and the public.
Financial Abuse Specialist Teams (FASTs)

- A type of specialized MDT focused on financial exploitation.
- Provide consultation and support to agencies who investigate cases of elder financial exploitation.
- Members are comprised of public agencies but may include private sector experts.
Other types of networks

- Often known as task forces or coalitions.
- Focus on elder abuse and elder financial exploitation,
- Engage in a variety of activities ranging from education to advocacy and including case consultation and review,
- May focus on abuse of vulnerable adults of all ages.
Most networks addressing financial exploitation do so as part of a broader focus on elder abuse.
Networks protect seniors in hundreds of communities
Networks Coverage
Triads provide significant geographic coverage
Most networks are in counties with large populations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County*</th>
<th>Total Population over 65</th>
<th>Number of networks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles County, California</td>
<td>1,149,893</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook County, Illinois**</td>
<td>649,182</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maricopa County, Arizona</td>
<td>513,536</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange County, California</td>
<td>382,179</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Diego County, California</td>
<td>382,162</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miami-Dade County, Florida</td>
<td>379,862</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harris County, Texas</td>
<td>371,250</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kings County, New York</td>
<td>302,335</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queens County, New York</td>
<td>300,885</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palm Beach County, Florida</td>
<td>300,710</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* **Bolded** county names indicate that the county has at least one network exclusively focused on financial exploitation.
** Cook County has multiple networks that serve specific townships and villages within the county.
Other key findings

- Most common ways networks fight financial exploitation are through community education, professional training, and case review.

- Networks share some common features and needs, including a resourceful coordinator, start-up funding, technical assistance support, and long-term funding and staffing.

- Most networks do not require significant funding to start up or continue functioning.

- Existing networks are often the catalyst for new networks; effective networks seek opportunities for replication and ensuring statewide coverage.
Recommendations and Resources
Coverage and focus

- Professionals working with or serving older adults should create networks in communities where they do not currently exist, especially in communities with a large number of older people.
- Networks should seek to expand coverage into rural areas by creating regional networks through which resources can be shared, and by using teleconferencing and videoconferencing in lieu of travel when necessary.
Capacity and effectiveness

- Elder abuse networks that do not focus on financial exploitation should develop activities and the capacity to respond to elder financial exploitation.
  - Engage financial institutions

- Networks in areas with older Americans of diverse linguistic, ethnic and racial backgrounds should seek to engage stakeholders that serve these populations, and deliver educational and case review services relevant and appropriate to these populations.
  - Engage community-based groups and faith based organizations that serve these communities
Long-term sustainability

- Financial exploitation networks should implement strategies to institutionalize the coordinator role as a permanent staff position.
- Networks engaging in educational activities, especially those networks with limited resources, should use existing federal, state and local educational resources.
A resource guide for networks

Tips and resources on:

- Steps for starting a network
- Funding and sustainability
- Traits of successful network coordinators
- Organizing effective meetings
- Education and case review
Money Smart for Older Adults curriculum

- An awareness program developed in collaboration with the FDIC.
- Content on common issues facing seniors, including how to identify a potential fraud or scam or other forms of exploitation
- Curriculum for trainers
- Resource Guide available in bulk at no charge
- Available in Spanish
Money Smart for Older Adults

- Instructor Guide and Presentation slides available at
  Fdic.gov/moneysmart

- Order copies of the Resource Guide at
  https://go.usa.gov/xXCvA
Managing Someone Else’s Money

- **CHALLENGE:**
  - Declining capacity to handle finances can make older adults vulnerable
  - People with diminished capacity often need surrogate to handle their money
  - Lay fiduciaries – critical source of help; often have no training; some commit fraud
Managing Someone Else’s Money, cont’d

- CFPB INITIATIVE:
  - Released a set of national guides called *Managing Someone Else’s Money* in 2013
  - User-friendly “how-to” guides for four types of fiduciaries:
    - Agents under powers of attorney
    - Guardians of property
    - Trustees under revocable living trusts
    - Social Security representative payees and VA fiduciaries
Help for agents under a power of attorney
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Questions?