

# Limerick Seniors Forum

*“Limerick Seniors Forum seeks to use our skills, expertise and resources to support and advance our common goals, to retain our rights, dignity and entitlements as senior citizens and to effectively continue our positive contribution to society”*

**January 2018**

## **Crimes Against Older Adults**

Limerick Seniors Forum would like to acknowledge the support we have received from the Limerick Gardaí. Our engagement with [REDACTED] has been a much welcomed and appreciated one. We have always experienced a prompt, accessible and professional response. We do appreciate the many challenges An Garda Síochána are faced with, we cannot stress enough the concerns we share in growing older in a society where older adults have been subjected to atrocious crimes. Collectively we are of the mindset that the main cause of rising crime is a direct result of the recruitment embargo in 2012 and reduced resources.

We urge the Policing Commission to consider the human grief, anguish and fear of older adults who have suffered at the hands of brutal organised criminals and individuals who we believe are gaining strength and building networks throughout the Republic when An Garda Síochána numbers appear to be depleting and the necessary resources needed to address rising crime is being unheeded.

We would like you to consider the following:

1. Mandatory sentencing for crimes against older adults, with consideration of the affects that crime has on the older adult who may never recover from the experience and the associated costs when an individual has suffered mental and/or physical harm.
2. When an older adult appears in court because of a crime committed against them their identity and the details of where they live is protected from being published in the media, their dignity and privacy must be maintained.
3. A multi-agency approach to gather and communicate in a timely manner the experience of older people subjected to all forms of abuse. The establishment of an Elder Abuse Team within each jurisdiction that has responsibility to report cases of elder abuse directly to the Minister of State for Older People, in conjunction with findings from the HSE, Central Statistics Office, National Representative Groups such as Age Action, The Irish Senior Citizens Parliament, Alone, Active Retirement Groups and Community Groups.
4. In order to achieve a society that meets the human and civil rights of all its citizens the National Positive Ageing Strategy, An Garda Síochána Older Persons Strategy and the Age Friendly Initiatives Cities & Counties, all of the above requires a multi-agency approach to ensure the true experience of older adults is realised.
5. Findings from the Health Service Executive show a staggering 50% of reported cases of elder abuse, the perpetrator was identified as an adult child. At present a family member is not required to be vetted by the HSE or the Department of Social Protection when applying to be a paid carer, we believe that all people regardless of their relationship who has put themselves forward to be a carer for an older person

should be vetted. With the hope that from the onset the care giver will be made aware of their responsibilities and the Duty of Care they are placing themselves in.

6. We also believe representation at national level requires immediate development, a full Ministerial Office for Older Adults and an Older Persons Act similar to that of the Children Act of 1991 is required to fully protect older adults.
7. The replacement rate within the force, staggering the entry age in an effort not to lose valuable experienced personnel at retirement age. Personal and Professional Development of staff is a continual feature throughout the garda's career.

**Thanking you**

**Limerick Seniors Forum**



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