

# **EVERY OLDER PERSON HAS THE RIGHT TO BE FREE OF ABUSE, NEGLECT, AND EXPLOITATION**

Victims of elder abuse need to have their voices heard and issues addressed. An adequate public-private infrastructure and resources need to be in place to prevent, detect, treat, understand, intervene in and, where appropriate, prosecute elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

## **ELDER PROTECTION**

We all have basic rights that must be protected, therefore:

- Preventative measures should be in place at the community level to protect at-risk elders.
- Technical, investigative, coordination, and victim assistance resources should be available to law enforcement and others to support elder justice cases.
- "Safe havens" should be created for seniors who are not safe where they live.
- Programs that focus on the special needs of at-risk elders must be developed.

## **AWARENESS OF ELDER JUSTICE ISSUES**

In order to identify and address elder justice issues, we need more and better information from numerous resources:

- An Elder Justice Resource Center and Library should provide information for consumers, advocates, researchers, policy makers, providers, clinicians, regulators and law enforcement officials.
- A national data repository should collect data about elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation to increase the knowledge base of elder justice issues and inform those that work in this field.
- Enhance and promote information from research and clinical practice, and broadly disseminate information on training and services.
- Tools to train health professionals in both forensic pathology and geriatrics, and to train public health, social service, and law enforcement officials to detect and combat elder abuse, neglect and exploitation.

## **PUBLIC RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

It is the government's responsibility to help create systems to ensure elder justice. The government should:

- Create authority to provide programmatic, grant-making, policy and technical assistance related to elder justice.
- Create a council to coordinate activities of all relevant federal agencies, states, communities, and private and not-for-profit entities.
- Adequately fund these critical programs and responsibilities.