

CMS 310, Task 7
LTSS Webinar
Elder Justice in Indian Country
June 27, 2012

Nicole: Well, thank you everyone for joining us today. Today we're going to be talking about Elder Justice in Indian Country and facilitating will be Cynthia LaCounte the Director for the Office of American Indian Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian programs and she's joined by Meg Graves, the Program Specialist for the same office and Paula Carter is with us today as well. She's the Research Specialist for the National Resource Center on American Indian Aging. Just as a reminder, you can mute your line by pressing star six and you can also unmute it by pressing star six again. At the end there will be a Q and A and that would be the best time to do that. So we can get started.

Cynthia: Good afternoon and thank you for joining us. We're going to talk about... Oh, I see other folks are joining us as well. Welcome. We're going to be talking about a huge issue in the elderly world today and that is elder abuse and neglect. With tribes first formerly began programming about elder abuse and neglect services in 1985 and we started with three grants from the Administration on Aging to provide public awareness and education around the issue. And those first three grants were awarded to the Yakima Nation in Washington state, to the Navajo Nation and to Great Lakes Intertribal Council in Wisconsin, which is a consortium of the 11 tribes in Wisconsin. And I was working for Great Lakes Intertribal at the time, so that was also my first awareness and work with elder abuse. So it's very exciting to see the work that has progressed since that time and the steps that tribes and native programs have taken in responding to the needs and first recognizing the issue and then in responding to the needs of our tribal elders and in developing services or a response in some way to elder abuse and neglect, and protecting our elders. Nicole, do you want to switch slides please? Thank you. We start off today with a quote from our Assistant Secretary on Aging, Kathy Greenlee, who said, 'Elder

abuse is wrong. To fight it effectively, we need to build and sustain research, prevention, law enforcement, and services.’ And the elder justice initiative and elder abuse and neglect programmings are very high on the list of issues that Kathy Greenlee wants us all to work hard on and to provide services and assistance. Next slide. Elder abuse which is also through the Administration on Aging defines elder abuse as ‘any knowing, intentional, or negligent act by a caregiver or any other person that causes harm or a serious risk of harm to a vulnerable adult’ and in defining caregiver that can often be - as you know in Indian country, it can often be family members, not normally paid caregivers, but family members, direct family, or other relatives who are helping care for that elder. So elder abuse is a big issue and certainly the biggest hurdle that I think we encountered back in 1985 in introducing this topic in Indian country was many of us moving out of denial and recognizing that even though we pride ourselves as Indian people in caring and revering our elders that elder abuse and neglect is occurring in Indian country and it is an issue and a problem that we need to address. Next slide. I think I’ll turn it over at this point to NIEJI, to Twila Baker-Demaray with the National Resource Center on American Indian Aging at the University of North Dakota and to Paula Carter, who works as a Research Associate, I believe - I hope I’m not saying that wrong Paula - with the University of North Dakota Resource Center and the National Indigenous Elder Justice Initiative and you folks can go ahead and talk about elder abuse and each particular kind and we’ll all chime in. This will be a team presentation this afternoon. So go ahead Twila or Paula.

Paula: I think we’ll start with definition and like the infant of our NIEJI project. Nationally, it’s in its infancy in terms of defining elder abuse and really without an agreement or a consensus on a definition it’s harder to move on to preventative issues. So some of the abuses that are included: physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, neglect, financial, self-neglect, and spiritual abuse. And spiritual abuse I know we’ve just begin to look at that. Twila is going to be doing

more work with spiritual abuse in terms of looking to see what we can find out there in terms of literature and things like that. I think from what I know just from reading some of the statistics that financial exploitation is kind of at the top of the rung on that ladder and I think one of the stats was for every five... Is it Twila?

Twila: Yeah. For every one case that is actually reported of elder abuse there are five cases that go unreported and that statistic is from the National Center on Elder Abuse. And they're describing in stream populations. They're talking about everybody. So there isn't really an actual handle on numbers or understanding of the statistics in Indian country just yet which is why NIEJI was formed.

Paula: And I know with...in lieu of that statistic, I think I read like financial exploitation for every case that's reported, 25 cases go unreported.

Twila: Right.

Paula: It's looking like that's one of the higher rungs on the ladder.

Twila: Yeah. More pervasive forms of elder abuse and one of the things that we have been struggling with with NIEJI is just helping people to understand the different types of abuse. So we're going to be talking a little bit about the different types of abuse that occur, because immediately when people talk about elder abuse they go right to physical abuse and they're talking... They kind of shut down because it's... *(Phone ringing in background.)* For some people it's a very shameful thing to talk about. Elder abuse is beyond that. So, we'll move to the next slide. Okay. These are some examples of physical abuse in terms of like a lot of your caregivers are your informal caregivers. They might be family members. These are just a few examples that we give.

Paula: And also with the physical abuse in terms of what's out there in terms of statistics I think we probably have more of a grasp on that when you look at nursing homes nationally and

incidences of physical abuse. But here are the examples of some of the cases that can be in the realm of physical abuse.

Twila: Okay. Next slide. Okay. Emotional abuse kind of comes in when you can be like browbeating somebody that you're supplying care for or you know these very... These are pretty well painted examples here in terms of just causing distress in the elder, whether you are making them worry about their money, if they are fearful for their safety, fearful for their possessions being taken away, if they're being intimidated or threatened, those are different types of emotional abuse. They're afraid of getting in trouble or things like that. That can be a different type of emotional abuse as well.

Paula: And even if you think about the position that the elder is in in terms of being vulnerable and the caretaker being their only source of care, there would be a power differential and even like shaming or things of that nature.

Twila: Bullying.

Paula: Right. Bullying are...you know fall into the realm of emotional abuse.

Twila: Okay. You can go to the next slide. These are just additional examples. Children of using alcohol in an elders home if they reside in the home with them, hollering at elders or verbally abusing them, threatening to put them into a nursing home or not engaging them at all. That can be a form of emotional abuse. Not listening to them when they're asking for help or if hen they're speaking or treating them like they are children or as if their opinions and thoughts don't matter anymore. Those are all different types of emotional abuse.

Paula: And with the connotation of definitely disrespect, mistreatment.

Twila: Exactly. Okay. The next slide. Neglect is another form of abuse when you're not properly providing for the needs of your elder, leaving them for long stretches at home without any type of social engagement or causing their isolation. Family members not checking on an

elder or perhaps injury because he or she is not very mobile, or there's a frail adult and they can't properly provide for them self so they are suffering from malnourishment or bedsores, or things like that, a sense of neglect.

Paula: And also to go back to spiritual abuse, neglect would fall into that category if elders aren't, you know their needs aren't fulfilled in the spiritual sense like being taken to ceremonies, you know, powwows and things like that. So, neglect you would see in the spiritual realm also.

Twila: Okay. Next slide. This is the one that people probably had the most difficulty talking about because it's something that Indian people have suffered from sexual abuse and forms of sexual abuse throughout their life spectrum and it's always been this huge specter that just kind of just sits in the background and causes a whole lot of havoc and causes a whole lot of strife. People aren't willing to talk about it. When they talk about child abuse, rape, domestic abuse, it does actually fall into the elder abuse category as well. You can see some of these examples here. Grandmothers being raped by, say an alcoholic nephew or somebody breaking into the homes or anything like that. Also, people using intimate relationships as a means of power and control over an elders resources is another form of abuse.

Cynthia: Twila?

Twila: Yes.

Cynthia: I would like to interrupt. This is Cynthia LaCounte again. That last example is one that I actually encountered in my work, my early work with elder abuse. I was at one of the tribes and I was trying to get the tribal council to approve that we begin programming and so I was doing some presentations to seniors. And I had gone to an elderly apartment complex one evening and we had had our discussion about it and we had finished the discussion and there was some of us still lingering and I noticed this very handsome older gentleman in a wheelchair kind of pulled away from the group of us that were lingering. So I went up and talked to him and he's

the one who told me about this and this was happening to him. That there was this young woman on the reservation, who was coming to him in her short little miniskirts and carrying her babies and flirting with him and always needed money. The husband, the child's father was not involved, and asking for money. 'I need diapers. I need food.' And then soon it moved on to, 'My car broke down and I need a new car. Can you loan me X amount of dollars to purchase this car? I'll start paying you back immediately.' And, of course, the money was never paid back and after that she faded away and was no longer involved with the senior or coming to visit the senior and he was so ashamed. He had never talked to anyone about it before and he came and asked if there was a way I could help him. And it ended up that he was related to... In fact he was the uncle of one of the tribal council members. So I talked with him and asked him if he would talk to that tribal council person and tell his story to help us to enable our programming to come onto the reservation and he did. And they were able to file charges in tribal court against this young woman and facilitate his repayment. So I saw this happen myself and the shame involved with that senior in admitting it and coming to grips with what had happened.

Paula: And shame is probably the glue that keeps that silence in place.

Cynthia: Uh huh. Absolutely.

Paula: Also with sexual abuse.

Twila: That's kind of a good segue into the next slide: Exploitation. It's probably one of the most pervasive forms of abuse in terms of... I've actually seen this myself within my own family as well, and in particular now there's... You know with all of the oil development going on back at my home reservation there's a whole lot of this. This has picked up quite a bit back at home and I think a lot of us have examples that we can think of of people who have been exploited whether it's the way that you're talking about Cynthia or if it's you know people using their young children or grandchildren as essentially pawns saying 'you can't see your grandchildren

unless you pay up some money or give me your Social Security check' and that was the example that I think of all the time when I think of exploitation. One of my aging aunts who was... Essentially she was close to dying. She was on her deathbed and one of her nephews coming in, my cousin was trying to get her to sign her Social Security check when she couldn't even... She didn't even... She wasn't really cognizant or aware of where she was anymore, but he wanted that check signed, and when she couldn't and when we told him that he needed to leave, he tore the check to pieces. So if he couldn't have it then she couldn't either. And it was just heartbreaking. It was just absolutely heartbreaking to see that. But that's you know just another story and they're just everywhere and we hear about them all the time here at NIEJI now. People you know will send us e-mails or they will send us private mes... *** *(static sound)* (18:01). We try to address this, because *** *(static sound)* out loud. So we're trying to get people to shine a light on these problems.

Paula: And I think with shining the light on these problems like Twila says, I've been reading more and more information that banking systems and businesses are starting to take a look at this also and have their eyes open for elder abuse with the *** *(static sound)* (18:28).

Twila: Next slide, please. Another form of exploitation that we see a lot of is exploiting a grandparents time or resources, whether a grandchild is taking a car and wrecking it. Now this grandparent is left with no means of transporting him or herself, cashing their checks, borrowing money and not paying it back, people moving in on grandparents, living with them and without any type of faithful or rent or anything like that, taking advantage of relatives, using their houses, to leave their grandchildren. I see that quite a bit in my *** *(static sound)* (19:14.) It's almost a form of child abuse as well. Giving a vulnerable young person in the care of someone who can't hardly take care of themselves, then you know there's twice the damage being done there. It can really be a pervasive form of abuse.

Paula: I agree Twila with the last part when you're talking about *** (*static sound*) (19:45) grandparents and children. I was speaking to an elder from the Pacific Northwest and he's one of the community leaders and I asked him about his community and he said two of the things they are seeing is that with the increase of the methamphetamines, usage that they're seeing a lot more things that you typically didn't see 10, 15, 20 years ago and he said, many times grandparents are becoming parents *** (*static sound*) (20:19) and definitely they're going to take up the duty of being a parent again, but with very little resources if any. So that's definitely an issue.

Twila: Okay. We'll move to the next slide. And spiritual abuse is something that's kind of an emerging form of abuse and it's not very well understood, but the way we're couching it...we're actually working on a fact sheet for this one in terms of spiritual abuse for Native American elders is when say they're in a care facility and care providers are unwilling or don't want to release elders for their ceremonies or they don't allow ceremonies, or sage to be burned or sweetgrass or say singing of songs or anything like that. That can be a form of spiritual abuse. The same thing with taking elders regalia and personal items and their sacred items, taking those things away from them or limiting access for them for whatever reason. These can be forms of spiritual abuse and they lend to depression. They lend to that isolation. If you are taking somebody's spiritual items and then selling them to a pawn shop or whatever, that's such a huge form of disrespect. It's very difficult to understand that. So we're trying to pin that one down as well. I think that last bullet there is a reference to the...with a guide that the Yakima Indian Nation actually put together some years ago talking about this type of abuse. Correct me if I'm wrong, Cynthia. I think that's what it was. I think that was in... I've seen that one before.

Cynthia: Yes. You are correct, Twila.

Twila: And then...

Paula: Some of the causes of elder abuse and neglect.

Twila: Oh, yeah. Next slide, please.

Paula: Definitely a loss of culture. Again, when I spoke to the elder from the Pacific Northwest, he had major concerns about his community and the loss of language and with the loss of culture. He definitely thought that was a large factor in some of the things that were taking place. Caregiver stress. There can be very high levels of burnout for caregivers, especially in Indian country where resources are more scarce and programs haven't really been built to take up the slack in terms of providing resources. So there's a lot of caregiver stress involved. Violence, society, entitlement, greed, ageism, power and control, all of the above.

Twila: Next slide. Okay. Yeah. We'll talk about some of the risk factors here. Why does elder abuse happen? Part of it could be just the nature of elders. They provided for this generation of...their generation of children or these young people for a long time, so naturally these young people are going to provide for them. That may not always be the case. They are perceived to be easier to fool or are *** (24:10) on them and it's easier to get their resources away from them. They have a steady, reliable source of income, whether it's a Social Security check or a pension. They can be isolated. Here, to isolate them especially if you've got frail elders or elders who can't or aren't fairly mobile. There's other reasons why it happens. There's lots and lots of reasons as to why elder abuse happens.

Paula: And Twila mentioned one earlier I think that's important to mention again in terms of why does this happen? Also, when you look at the housing crisis on the reservations, many of the elderly they have established homes and so younger ones if they don't have a home or they're in line for home but don't have one will move in with the elderly. That's not an uncommon situation and again we talked a little bit about shame. Shame is one of those things that keeps this happening because it adds to the silence.

Twila: Next slide, please. Okay. The financial effects of elder abuse. Elders can lose thousands in these types of situations. If their pension is drained by somebody who is taking their money and naturally they're not going to be able to pay for their bills or pay for their house or whatever they happen to be living in, wherever their place is. Restitution can be...might not be coming or it could be too late. They don't have time to rebuild their assets. They are later on in life; so it is difficult to just restart another career or anything like that. Loss of choices for older adults and loss of independence. Again like what I was saying with the frail adults or folks who don't have as much mobility. There's a higher reliance on others for their financial support. Intergenerational transfer of wealth is impacted, so they don't have anything to pass on to the next generation. And they are more quickly spending down to Medicaid status. So even if they happen to have a savings built up or things like that, if that disappears then what do you have to do? You have to rely on those social programs that don't necessarily have as good of care as private programs might have even if it's an elder and saved all their life to be able to retire.

Okay. Next slide. Okay. We're talking about risk situations here in terms of people who are at higher risk to be abused. It might be those folks who...with say Alzheimer's or those who have mental health or dementia or problems like that. Also, those folks, those elders that are dealing with substance abuse or depression or those types of issues, they can be at higher risk for suffering abuse because they require a greater level of care. People who feel stressed or burdened are more resentful of elders, are more likely to be abusive. Not every elder has provided the greatest amount of care for their caregivers. Say if you have an elder, who was abusive to their children earlier on in their life than they could be at higher risk receiving abuse once they get older.

Paula: And as Twila mentioned earlier, we have a high...we have a state high risk situation right now with this oil boom and Twila could probably speak to this more in terms of people that are literally being driven from their homes.

Twila: Yeah.

Paula: And so there is a very high stress, high risk situation and definitely some are losing their homes and will have to live with someone else. And so it's that high risk...

Twila: Right. It's almost a perfect storm over here in North Dakota. We're talking to you from North Dakota and the oil boom is going on in the western end of the state. And you're seeing more and more people having to move in together because the rent... the people who are...the renters are raising the rent on everybody to make a bigger buck, but elders who are living alone can't pay that rent. So they've got to move in with their daughters or their sons and thus you get a situation that's higher risk elder abuse. So yeah. And I think we'll move onto the next slide. Okay. Screening for abuse. I think this was Jackie's slide.

(Laughter.)

Paula: Well, I think when you... You know when I think of Indian Health Service and their ambulatory care form, there would be variables put into the form to do a real brief type of screening for abuse. I'm thinking that that would be a standard screening.

Twila: Also, I just find those issues that would put an elder at higher risk in terms of like asking what their living situation is. If they're living in a home with somebody else or if they're living with relatives or if they're living with a roommate or those types of things.

Paula: Or raising grandkids.

Twila: Yep. Raising grandkids and those can all be indicators. And that's something that we're working on here at NIEJI in conjunction with the Resource Center to try to identify not so much straight out prevalence or anything like that, but indicators, red flags, things that people should

look for that would put an elder at higher risk or for elder abuse. As opposed actually from it occurring.

Cynthia: And Twila we could get as complicated with that as we want to and even look at how we're coding. If we're aware of elder abuse and we have patients coming into our facility who we're treating because of abuse, are we coding that correctly within our IHS or our tribal health systems so that we can really begin to get a handle on the number of cases and what type of cases those are.

Twila: Absolutely. And then talking to the elder too and really getting a good feel and understanding of where their heads at, where they're at in terms of their mental health and whether they're depressed or if they're actually doing well, how they're doing with their situations and stuff.

Paula: And when you think about the Electronic Health Record now in terms of hospital care or medical care, definitely there are systems in that Electronic Health Record that's red...that flags certain purpose of visits. You know even the pharmacy system has them. So there's ways to definitely work at it.

Twila: Right. I think that that's what the next slide is about. Ask the elder. Essentially we're just making sure that we're engaging the elder in their care. As long as they're able to provide their own opinions, their own thoughts, we should be speaking to our elders and making sure that we're keeping the lines of communication open and that there is something or someone there that they can talk to.

Paula: And we definitely... The second part of that, normalize talking about a difficult topic.

Twila: Yes.

Paula: This is definitely one of the first things we talked about as a NIEJI group. You know how to not only normalize but sensitize it also. You know and maybe talk about disrespect and mistreatment you know to help the elder speak about it.

Cynthia: In those early years in the 80's when we began our public awareness and education programming and all of us in all three projects definitely went to the seniors and had them help us define elder abuse. 'What do you see as abuse? What do you see as neglect?' And I'll never forget the discussion about defining elder abuse that I had in LaCoudera, Wisconsin with some elders there that were very near and dear to my heart and there was a grandpa named Joe Homesky who was absolutely the love of my life and he talked about... He was placed as a foster grandparent in some of the schools at LaCoudera and he talked about...he had had a series of strokes and I think he had Parkinson's. He was very shaky and needed a cane to walk with, and his voice shook and was very unsteady when he spoke and he talked about how it felt when the little kids bullied him and laughed and made fun of how he walked or how he talked or he talked about little kids running through the hallways of the senior apartment complex and knocking on all the doors and then running out the end door and you know it disturbs the seniors. They get up to answer the door. There's no one there. They are fearful. And they also helped me define what we talked about earlier when young moms, granddaughters or nieces or daughters, whomever drops their children off to babysit for a few hours while we go play bingo. And then those few hours turns into a few days. And the stress that those seniors felt having... And how hard it was for them to include that in an elder abuse definition, but the stress in that in that they don't know where the mother is. They don't know when she is going to return. Is she safe? They are giving up their bed. They are using food to feed those children that they might've needed for the entire week. So that was a really, really hard definition and a really, really hard discussion we had.

Twila: Yeah. I think that leads us into the next slide. Financial abuse. Talking to your elders and speaking to people about financial abuse and how to prevent it. Part of that is planning ahead and staying connected *** (35:27) back into each other and making sure that decisions that are made with elder resources are wise, and are fruitful for the elder, and provide for their well-being. There's also being cautious, being cautious with their spending, with who they are spending with, and that these people are trustworthy and reporting their suspicions to people. Again talking. Making sure that people are able...feel safe talking about these things. Somebody who is like a third party as opposed to having their caregiver or whomever is enacting abuse. This can even happen... Financial abuse can even happen from...you have the charlatans like on television asking for donations for spiritual or for whomever or whatever.

Paula: Yeah. There's a lot of them on TV lately.

Twila: Yeah. And I've seen reports where people have taken absolutely everything that an elder has because that elder is driven by the need or the wanting to do something good for such and such church or whatever or some group and then they are left with nothing. Okay. Next slide. Okay. What can we all do? Part of that is you can join with us, with NIEJI and National Center on Elder Abuse to address elder abuse in Indian country and beyond. We are working with tribal governments and tribal organizations to get elder abuse into tribal codes, whether it's adult protective services or their elder programs, elder advocacy groups. We're trying to get the word out there and we've been doing... These guys have been, boy, on the go, go, go since NIEJI was started to get the word out about elder abuse. Spreading the word. Sharing the information about elder abuse, the signs of it and resources that people can tap into if they suspect it's happening in their communities. You can assist in identifying the problem locally with elders that you work with in particular, or with whomever. Support elder abuse prevention and community awareness. Just spreading the word. Wearing purple.

Paula: Right.

(Laughter.)

Paula: And with the June 15th World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, I mean just the component of awareness is like you know a big, big part of it and I and Twila are sitting here wearing our NIEJI purple shirts as we speak.

Twila: Yeah. We are. You guys can't see us, but we have our purple on right now.

(Laughter.)

Paula: But you know we did several different things for that day and I think definitely it was a good day.

Twila: Yep. It sure was. We got an article in Indian Country Today, media network as well with an interview on elder abuse and that's a very good piece. So we sure appreciated their help on getting the word out.

Paula: Definitely.

Twila: The next slide is contact information for NIEJI, how you can get a hold of us. Our website is up and running and our little public service announcement that we did for World Elder Abuse Awareness Day is on there as well so you can view that and there's also plenty of the resources that we've worked on thus far there for people to use. And if all else fails, you can get a hold of us directly. Let's see. Some of the projects that we've been working on - on the next slide. For year one was to essentially establish NIEJI. So NIEJI was started last year.

Paula: Right. I think we're coming up to a year here in the fall.

Twila: Yep.

Paula: So we'll have our first year under our belt. And it was a lot of infrastructure building of course.

Twila: Uh huh. Yeah. And we've got some of our resources on the webpage for people who are interested. We've got quite a few tribal codes, existing tribal codes addressing elder abuse for people to access on the website. And right now we're working on developing our focus groups where we'll be gathering more information on elder abuse and definitions of elder abuse and some other projects in the coming year. Next slide. Okay. Year two is when we're going to be kind of ramping up in the data-gathering. We're going to be conducting the focus groups in different communities throughout the United States. We're hoping to use or gather input from indigenous elders and from care providers.

Paula: Law enforcement.

Twila: Yep. Law enforcement.

Paula: Tribal *** (40:51).

Twila: Yep. All through the spectrum, all people working with elders and who would have concerns or might have the ability to help us address elder abuse. And then why don't you tell them what we're going to do with that information.

Paula: Once we get our data complete we're going to look at some of the tribal codes and we hope to come up with a model code which would be based probably regionally, maybe AOA regions in terms of the uniqueness of each region and what kind of template we can offer so that more tribes would have codes in their tribal amendments to address elder abuse. And of course toward the end of our three-year mission, we'll be looking to get some journal articles published and make all of that available on our website.

Twila: Yep. And the next slide. The third year is when we're going to be developing the model elder abuse code toolkit for people to use. This is something that people have been asking about. From the very start of this project people want to know where the codes are, where can I get my hands on one, and how do we implement these in our tribal immunities? So this is a big project

for us. We want them to be regionally specific, which is about as specific as we can get. We know that it runs the gamut in terms of elder law and tribal law and things like that, so we went with regionally specific. We want to make them available online for people to access and we want to be able to provide technical assistance for tribes in implementing these or how it's going and to gather more information, just really help people along the way. And our big flashy thing in that year is going to be our Native American Restorative Justice Conference where we are going to...we'd like to bring everybody to the table and talk about elder abuse and what we are calling restorative justice where we restore those relationships for elders because from what we understand and from what we see in the literature, elders don't want necessarily to punish perpetrators so much as they want the abuse to stop and restore those relationships that were broken.

Paula: I'm thinking that's going to be one of the crown jewels...

Twila: Right.

Paula: ...is our conference, because definitely we want to stress... You know, a complete process includes that restorative piece and definitely focus on getting help for victims and perpetrators of abuse, but yet any time if the abuse is through...by a family member, that family still will be...have to live together or be around one another. So we definitely are looking forward to working on that restorative piece.

Twila: Right. Okay. And the last slide there is the NIEJI staff. There's myself, Twila Baker-Demaray, and Jackie Gray who's talking about this very same thing right now at the IHS Behavioral Health Conference in Minneapolis and Dr. Carter is here with us. Jacob Davis is the Project Coordinator. Our Administrative Assistant Karen Speaker and we've got two student assistants who are both in law school, Whitefishwoman and she's no longer an undergraduate, but she's moving into law school. Our other student assistant Janie Schroeder. And they are all

tribal people and they all have ties and they all have a personal tie to the work that we're doing here at NIEJI. So we're really happy to have them all. Right now we'll take some questions if people have them.

Female: How can I get a copy of the slides? The webinar didn't work if it's back on the last completing slide?

Nicole: Hi there. The presentation will be available on the website in a few days here and you can download it to your computer.

Female: Okay. Thank you.

Female: Hello.

Cynthia: Yes.

Female: Yeah I have a question. So is there a higher prevalence of elderly abuse in the AIAN community versus non-native populations?

Twila: I don't know.

Paula: I would... Yeah. We don't know because we have such *[limited]* *** (46:05) statistics that we've gathered. So I would have to say we don't know.

Female: Okay.

Twila: That's part of the reason that it was intercepted was because people don't... They know it's happening, but they are not sure in terms of prevalence and you know the straight out numbers.

Cynthia: There has been so little research done on elder abuse generally and no research done in Indian country yet. We are just beginning that. So we do not have an answer to that. However, there are... I'm going to introduce Meg Graves now quickly with the Administration on Aging to talk about a grant opportunity that is looking for just that type of information. Go ahead, Meg.

Meg: Actually, if we can switch slides. As you see on the next slide... Uh, the next one. It should be there. I'm not sure where it went.

Cynthia: Maybe it's back. Was there a slide about the grants?

Nicole: I do see a blank one, Meg.

Meg: Okay. Well, I had put in some information on one of the versions we had. Right now we have a program announcement that's asking for federally recognized tribes or tribal organizations representing federally recognized tribes to apply for funds to develop or test elder abuse, neglect, or exploitation, prevention, interventions in Indian country. These applications are due July 31st. We have \$500,000 to fund two to three cooperative agreements. So the grants would range from 150 to \$250,000. It's a three-year project period. And the announcement can be found on AOA.gov the website under grant funding opportunities and I'm sorry, but the slide is not there because we did have the information there and the slide will be added to the PowerPoint that will be available after this webinar.

Cynthia: Thank you.

Meg: But if you have any questions, I will be the Project Officer, so if you want to give me a call my number is 202-357-3502 and again my name is Meg Graves. I just want to let everybody know that this announcement is out there. Give it a peek at it and see if you're interested. It's a great opportunity at this time for us to start gathering in some information and I know we don't have a lot of time, but I think we'd like to go back to some questions and answers you may have either for myself or for the presenters today. Thank you.

Cynthia: Thanks Meg.

Chris: Hello. This is Chris Bird in Grand Forks, North Dakota.

Cynthia: Well, hello Chris Bird in Grand Forks, North Dakota.

Chris: How are you Cynthia? Um, you know, I'm trying to see how this could tie in you know with the State Plan Amendment they just did for CHR's to be able to do targeted case management in North Dakota. We have a lot of balls in the air trying to pull that together with the CHR program and the tribal health and it's just you know thinking that one of the things that we've been encouraged to do by CMS is get as many elders enrolled into Medicaid. So when the time comes and they need care, we can go right to services, and I'm just wondering if you know, would that be something if someone goes in maybe to getting people enrolled for Medicaid if they are eligible to try to *** (50:00) the whole picture of or does it look like there's... Are there any tools already available to kind of access that look like there are some of these red flags you know?

Twila: There's some... Hi Chris. This is Twila.

Chris: Hi Twila. How are you?

Twila: Doing good.

Chris: Fancy meeting you here.

(Laughter.)

Paula: This is where all the cool people hang out.

Twila: Yeah. There are so much assessment tools that are available that are just being developed by one of our partners, Lori Jervis.

Paula: Four or five questions.

Twila: Yeah. About four or five questions in terms of screening. And I like the idea of going to the CHR's.

Paula: Right.

Twila: I think that that might be some place that you could go for determining prevalence.

Chris: Yeah. You know, I just got to thinking, because boy we're at the very beginning of this thing, this State Plan Amendment or targeted case management by CHR's is kind of just burst on the scene and I've talked with CMS people last week when there was a tribal CMS meeting in Bismarck and boy the health directors have to get on board and the CHR directors, but what we were encouraged to do is get everyone kind of at least to fill out a Medicaid application so we know that they're going to be able to get services for home and community-based services when they're in need.

Twila: Right.

Chris: So, I'm just thinking, well if we're going to try to get... We were going to try a pilot either at Standing Rock or maybe Spirit Lake to try to get everyone out there with a navigator or something to *** (*static sound*) (51:39) some Medicaid applications and then try to guide them through that process in case they are eligible and then if they need services for home and community-based services in their home and then I'm wondering if part of that should be kind of like are they okay in their home, you know?

Twila: Yeah, exactly. I like how you think. We can talk in the future about something like that.

Chris: Right. Well, I'm glad there's a tool like something four or five questions would be real possible you know.

Twila: Right.

Paula: Chris, this is Paula Carter. I've got a question for you.

Chris: Yeah.

Paula: Whose idea was this about CHR, because I think it's a great idea.

Chris: Um, you know the CHR's in the Dakotas have been pretty outstanding as a group.

Paula: Well, I think coming from Turtle Mountain you know, if you look at the most effective healthcare delivery that's the skilled health nurses and the CHR's. So, I'm really glad to hear someone you know knew that and they are like the front-line people.

Chris: Well, and we're trying to work out... Part of the case management that actually will allow CHR's to go out and do a home community-based assessment like for a personal care under the state plan *** *(static sound)* (53:03) then they can make a referral to a QSP and we won't have the big bottleneck we've experienced at the county level.

Paula: Exactly.

Chris: So we'll be able to by-pass some of that and get the Medicaid services into people's homes and so we like to look at things holistically. I mean this is kind of something I had not thought about at all that part of that assessment is 'Are they okay?' You know?

Paula: Right. And the elders know these people?

Chris: Yes. They'll trust them. Absolutely. And I guess the Turtle Mountain and Standing Rock CHR's I know have a number of people on their staff who have been there for a long time and would...are well trusted you know.

Cynthia: Chris, do you want to talk a little bit about Standing Rock's Adult Protective Services Committee and how they're dealing with elder abuse.

Chris: Well, you know I don't have a lot of inroad there Cynthia. I do know John's involved with it and the CHR's have been involved with it. When we were doing a little grant writing this year, it talked to the Elderly Protection folks and I was trying to get a handle on how many *** *(static sound)* (54:19) ended up in long term care settings and that was kind of heartbreaking. They were telling me how many people who don't have someone in their family that could take care of them at home you know like under home and community-based system, are so far away and many people never get visitors and they're just kind of abandoned you know and Elderly

Protection does go out and try to visit them once a month if they can, but some of them are in Rapid City and there are also people with disabilities you know. So that's the angle that we were going at like with this QSP program and the Medicaid Waiver Services and stuff, there would be no reason why someone couldn't be cared for at home.

Cynthia: Exactly.

Paula: Thank you Chris. Are there any other questions?

(Silence.)

Paula: Well, you have all of our contact information. If you have questions at any time please get a hold of one of us and thank you for joining us this afternoon and let's all remember to honor our elders. Thank you everyone. Thank you UND.

Twila: Yeah. Sure.

Paula: Thanks Nicole.

Nicole: Definitely.

(End of webinar - 55:43.)