

VIMA

German version of the *Elder Abuse Suspicion Index*

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**Thomas Goergen
German Police University
thomas.goergen@dhpol.de**

German Police University (DHPol) as NICE / ICCE partner

- Students: Senior police officers going for a master's degree in police management
- Elder abuse / victimization in old age as one core research topic of DHPol's criminology department
 - Coordination of Federal programme „Secure life in old age“
 - Coordination of EU project „Intimate partner violence against older women“ (IPVoW)
 - Translation and dissemination of the Elder Abuse Suspicion Index
 - Study on homicide in old age (Student's master's thesis)

Using the *Elder Abuse Suspicion Index* in a German context

- EASI translated into German (including check via re-translation)
- VIMA = „**V**erdachts-**I**ndex **M**isshandlung im **A**lter“
- Slight variations regarding the original EASI in layout of questions 1, 2 and 6 (enumerations like "bathing, dressing, shopping, banking, or meals")

Phase 1:

- 7 physicians agreed to do 10 patient interviews each
- Weak compliance: only 13 completed EASI surveys returned (conducted by 2 physicians)
- Interviews conducted with 6 of the 7 physicians

Physicians' comments on EASI / VIMA instrument

Positive:

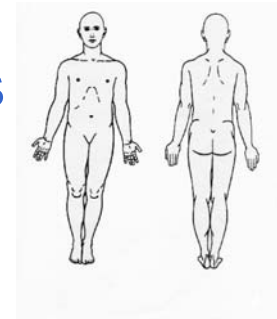
- Easy and quick to use; well-structured; innovative
- May help detection and raise physicians' awareness

Critical:

- Professional experience and knowledge of patients' living conditions superior to questionnaire data
- Victims won't disclose / are unable to disclose (dementia)
- Time constraints in physicians' everyday work

Physicians' suggestions regarding EASI / VIMA

- Computerized version (in addition to paper-and-pencil)
- Could be used by nurses as well.
- More weight could be given to inappropriate medication.
- Body scheme might be included to pinpoint injuries



Using the *Elder Abuse Suspicion Index* in a German context – Phase 2

- Unsuccessful attempts to make physicians (GPs) in Bonn area use German version of EASI (VIMA)
- Failed attempts to promote use of VIMA among physicians in a large geriatric institution in Bonn
- Dissemination of VIMA among psychologists working in the same geriatric institution; psychologists agreed to cooperate
- 4 psychologists conducted 90 interviews with geriatric patients 65 y.+; exclusion criteria: diagnosis of advanced dementia, major depression, or severe symptoms of schizophrenia

Psychologists' patient interviews: Basic findings

- Sample: 70 women, 20 men; 62-88 y.; mean age 73.8 y.

12 months prevalence rates of abuse / neglect

- | | |
|---|-------|
| ▪ emotional/psychological and verbal abuse: | 21,1% |
| ▪ physical/ sexual abuse: | 7,8% |
| ▪ financial abuse: | 3,4% |
| ▪ deprivation/neglect | 12,2% |
| ▪ <i>Any type of abuse / neglect</i> | 28,9% |

Interviews with head geriatrician / psychologist

- GPs could be of utmost importance for detection of abuse / neglect
- „They won't use it unless they get money for it.“
- „Nobody takes the problem really serious – only lip service“
- Home-care nurses and municipal counselling services for topics of nursing care might use VIMA /EASI

German federal programme “Secure life in old age”: Elder abuse related knowledge transfer (2008-2011)

- Targets specific areas of risk / insufficient victim support in old age
- 4 modules:
 - M 1: Property offences specifically targeted at old people
 - M 2: Homicide in old age (concealment / non-detection)
 - M 3: Intimate partner violence in old age (lack of victim support)
 - M 4: Abuse and neglect of older care recipients

Programme “Secure life in old age”

Module 4: Abuse / neglect in family caregiving

- Cooperation with 6 home care services in the city of Essen
- Approach: Nurses as possible key actors in prevention of abuse of older care recipients by family / household members
- Requires individuals and organisations willing and able to detect abuse / neglect and to respond adequately
- Programme activities focus upon organizational development and continuing education for nurses.
- *Brief Abuse Screen for the Elderly (BASE), Indicators of Abuse Screen (IOA) and EASI* offered as tools to home-care nursing services; nurses trained in using tools

Programme “Secure life in old age”

Module 4: Abuse / neglect in family caregiving

- BASE and IOA welcome as means of structuring nurses’ observations
- Home-care nursing services opt against EASI as a standard tool
 - requires dyadic nurse-patient interaction (unobserved by family members)
 - No “natural conversation”; “artificialness” of asking EASI questions
 - Fear of losing clients through use of EASI
 - However: content of EASI highly relevant and well-structured; suggestion to integrate it into an instrument based upon nurses’ observations (not on interviewing)

Thank you!

Prof. Thomas Goergen, Ph D
German Police University, Muenster, Germany
Department of Criminology and Crime Prevention
thomas.goergen@dhpol.de