

Geriatric Committee

This is a committee that the Regional and local Kitchener HSJCC supports noting the importance of the topic and the ongoing concerns that is across sectors.

In the Waterloo Region, we have seen a steady increase in geriatric cases in the Criminal Justice System. While some are the 'usual suspects' simply aging, of significant concern are the number of persons with dementia and other mind-altering diseases coming into conflict with the law. The most common cases we are seeing in that population are cases of domestic violence. While the safety of the victim is paramount in any case domestic violence, there are unique challenges to cases in which

Accused suffers from dementia or other geriatric conditions. Among these challenges are: the Accused compromised mental state, perhaps even to the point of being unfit to stand trial; the lack of a suitable alternative residence being readily available and the resulting need for incarceration pending a suitable bail plan; the effect of any incarceration on the compromised mental state; and the often-increased vulnerability of the victims.

The hope is to bring together professionals from the community, hospitals, and justice sectors to discuss these challenges and look for solutions that protect the victim and the community while at the same time preserve the dignity and mental health of the Accused as much as possible throughout the criminal justice process.

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