

Telephone Scams

It is always unfortunate to hear about people being taken advantage of as a result of telephone fraud. It is doubly so, to hear that the name Extendicare is being used as the lure. We have recently learned that family members of one of our Ontario facilities have been the targets of a scam.

Phone calls have been placed, allegedly from Extendicare, either soliciting funds for resident outings or for an outright donation. In addition, requests for credit card numbers have been made.

The police have been notified and an investigation is underway.

At Extendicare, we pride ourselves on our strong relationship with our residents and family members. We do not solicit for funds over the telephone, nor do we accept credit card payments of any kind. If there is any question regarding Extendicare's practices, family members are encouraged to immediately contact the facility's administrator for clarification.

***PhoneBusters* provides these tips:**

Take care of yourself and your family members. If you suspect that someone you know has fallen prey to a deceptive telemarketer, don't criticize him or her for being naïve. Encourage that person to share their concerns with you about unsolicited calls or any new business or charitable dealings. Assure him or her that it is not rude to hang up on suspicious calls. Keep in mind that criminal telemarketers are relentless in hounding people – some victims report receiving five or more calls a day, wearing down their resistance. Once a person has succumbed to this ruthless fraud, their name and number will likely go on a "sucker list", which is sold from one crook to another.

Warning signs

- High pressure or threatening telemarketers who want you to contribute immediately.
- Someone calls and thanks you for a pledge you don't remember making.
- Copycat names. Names that might be misleading or deceiving.

What you can do

- If you receive a telephone call, ask for the information to be sent to you in writing. Ask how much of your gift will be used directly for the charity. Ask how much will go toward administrative costs. Legitimate charities have no problem giving you this information.

- Never give out your personal / financial information over the phone, or at the door. You may wish to make out a cheque payable to the charity. You can mail the cheque later.
- Call the charity. Find out if they know about the appeal and have authorized it and what percentage of your donation they will receive from your donation. Perhaps there is a better way to give, where 100 per cent of your donation will reach the charity.
- Ask if the charity is registered.
Contact Revenue Canada at 1-800-267-2384.
Ask them to give you the charitable tax number of the charity. Question any discrepancies.
- To file a complaint call your local police and *PhoneBusters* 1-888-495-8501.