

# Daily Brew

## Renewed focus on seniors violence after 91-year-old woman dies following fight

By *Steve Merti* October 7, 2013 4:57 PM Daily Brew

<http://news.yahoo.com/blogs/dailybrew/renewed-focus-seniors-violence-91-old-woman-dies-205732283.html>



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The Parkland Clayton Park complex houses seniors with a large variety of health needs. The Evan Hall floor is for people with dementia who are physically well.

A fight between two residents of a Halifax home for people with dementia that resulted in the death of a 91-year-old woman is the latest example of what some see as a growing problem of violence among the elderly, especially those living in care facilities.

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*CBC News* reports police were called to Evan Hall on Saturday evening after a fight between the woman and a 74-year-old woman. The older resident fell and died in hospital Sunday of her injuries.

Halifax Regional Police Const. Pierre Bourdages said the death is being investigated as suspicious but the investigation is complicated by the dementia element.

"It does bring a unique twist to the investigation," he told *CBC News*. "Sometimes individuals might not recall what happened."

[ **Related: [Murder suspect, 95, to undergo psychiatric evaluation](#)** ]

As Baby Boomers move into their senior years, worries are increasing about the prevalence of Alzheimer's Disease and other forms of dementia. Along with that, there are concerns about violence in nursing homes, sometimes triggered by the mental changes dementia patients experience.

*CTV's W5* recently looked at the problem and identified at least 60 violence-related deaths in Canadian care facilities in the last 12 years. A previous investigation by the public affairs show turned up more than 10,000 incidents of resident-on-resident abuse in long-term care homes in one year.

The Halifax incident comes on the heels of the death last August of 85-year-old Bill May at a care facility for dementia patients at a Vernon, B.C., hospital after he was attacked by a 95-year-old Second World War veteran.

John Furman, a member of the elite Devil's Brigade commando unit, faces a murder charge but is undergoing a psychiatric evaluation.

May's family has said they do not blame Furman for the assault, *The Canadian Press* reported.

"We also have no hard feelings for the resident who committed the assault," son Paul May told reporters. "He could not have been motivated by any personal animosity towards Bill."

The *W5* investigation was triggered by the 2011 death of Frank Alexander, an 87-year-old Navy veteran who died at the hands of 70-year-old Joe McLeod, who has dementia. Charges were laid but later dismissed in court when McLeod was found unfit to stand trial.

[ **Related: [Study says dementia strongest predictor of need for nursing home care](#)** ]

Alexander's family filed a suit last spring against McLeod, the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority and Parkview Place Personal Care Home, where both men lived.

"It's not about the money," Michael Alexander, Frank Alexander's son, told *Global News* last March. "It's about making those responsible for wrong doing being held accountable."

McLeod had been arrested in 2010 for assaulting his wife but was later released and placed in Parkview Place.

McLeod's daughter, Faye Jashyn, told *W5* she had expressed her concern about her father's violent behavior to Parkview officials but was told the staff was trained to handle someone with his history of violence.