

## Home Instead and Gardaí team up for senior safety



From left: Sergeant Finbarr O'Sullivan, Danette Connolly and Ray Powe (Home Instead Senior Care) and Garda Bernard Dowling (Community Policing Unit). | Photo: John Power

Given the increase in crimes against older people by bogus callers, Cleaboy-based Home Instead Senior Care have teamed up with the Gardaí to sponsor the provision of 300,000 bogus caller check cards to help older people feel safe.

Many people routinely employ door-to-door traders and repair people and unfortunately, some of these people carry out very little work and charge exorbitant amounts of money for their services. This is criminal behaviour and if you suspect bogus callers are in your area or are working in a vulnerable neighbour's home, never hesitate in contacting the Gardaí immediately.

The initiative is supported by Home Instead Senior Care Waterford. According to Home Instead Manager Ray Power: "It is a sad, but true fact of life that there are people out there who will take advantage of the elderly. In many cases, seniors are seen as soft targets to extort money from by offering dubious and deceptive services. We cannot stress enough the importance of checking the credentials of any service person who cold - calls to the door offering maintenance or repair services."

Mr Power added: "The provision of these bogus caller check cards will allow older people to feel more confident and secure in their own homes. They are available from local GP's and pharmacists across Waterford City and County."

Genuine tradespeople will not be offended by any enquiries the Gardaí may make and may indeed welcome them.

If an unknown person calls to the door, it is advised to give them a bogus caller check card to fill out their details. A genuine person will typically co-operate and not have a problem filling out the card and the older person will have peace of mind answering the door.

An Garda Síochána advise that the bogus caller check cards are used in the following manner:

Look out the window, have a viewer fitted on your door, have a door chain fitted and keep the chain on, make sure your back door is locked before you go to the door, ask for ID - a genuine caller won't mind, son't be embarrassed to tell the caller to write and make an appointment, the basic rule is: if you don't know the person at your door, you shouldn't let them in and, if

anxious contact your local Garda station.