

CARE FOR U PLUS

177 Franklin Corner Rd, Ste 2B
Lawrenceville, NJ 08648
Phone: 609-985-0188
Fax: 609-895-0729

800 N. Kings Hwy, Ste 507
Cherry Hill, NJ 08034
Phone: 856-330-4797
Fax: 856-330-4806

100 Plainfield Ave, Ste 5
Edison, NJ 08817
Phone: 732-603-0020
Fax: 732-603-0025

Identification and Reporting Elder Abuse

Elder abuse is a single or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust, which causes harm or distress to an older person. This type of violence constitutes a violation of human rights and includes physical, sexual, psychological, and emotional abuse; financial and material abuse; abandonment; neglect; and serious loss of dignity and respect.

Scope of the Problem:

Elder abuse is an important public health problem. A 2017 study based on the best available evidence from 52 studies in 28 countries from diverse regions, including 12 low- and middle-income countries, estimated that, over the past year, 15.7% of people aged 60 years and older were subjected to some form of abuse.

This is likely to be an underestimation, as only 1 in 24 cases of elder abuse is reported, in part because older people are often afraid to report cases of abuse to family, friends, or to the authorities. Consequently, any prevalence rates are likely to be underestimated. Although rigorous data are limited, the study provides prevalence estimates, drawing on all available studies, of the number of older people affected by different types of abuse.

Data on the extent of the problem in institutions such as hospitals, nursing homes, and other long-term care facilities are scarce. However, systematic reviews and meta-analyses of recent studies on elder abuse in both institutional and community settings based on self-report by older adults suggests that the rates of abuse are much higher in institutions than in community settings.

Abuse Types:

Physical: Willful infliction of physical pain, injury, or mental anguish or unreasonable confinement.

Psychological: Recurring or ongoing pattern of inflicting psychological or emotional suffering by words or actions which are designed or likely to humiliate, provoke, intimidate, confuse, or frighten.

Neglect: An act or failure to act by a caretaker or an elder themselves (self-neglect) who is actively involved with an elderly or disabled person, which results in the inadequate provision of care or services necessary to maintain the physical and mental wellbeing of the person which can result in a serious or life-threatening situation.

Financial Abuse/Exploitation: The illegal use or gross mismanagement of a person's funds, assets, or property.

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Indicators of Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of the Elderly:

Physical Appearance:

- Burns, especially unusually located Bilateral bruises on upper arms, from shaking
- Clustered bruises on trunk from repeated striking
- Bruises resembling an object
- Old and new bruises (injury repeated)
- Bone fractures/welts/black eyes
- Bed sores, unhealed sores, untreated injuries
- Tremors
- Broken glasses/frames
- Lack of prophetic devices
- Clothing inappropriate for weather, filthy, torn, too big, rags
- Lack of clothing, same clothing all the time
- Shoes on wrong feet, odorous
- Fleas, lice, rash, impetigo, eczema
- Malnutrition
- Wheezing, persistent cough
- Unintentionally non-communicative
- Untreated medical condition
- Swollen ankles (heart/kidney ailment)
- Decayed teeth, swollen eyes
- Severe or constant pain

Behavior of Family or Caregiver:

- Marital or family discord
- Continuous friction
- Striking, shoving, beating, name calling, scapegoating
- Conflicts with others in community
- Hostile, secretive, frustrated, shows little concern, poor self-control, blames client
- Denial of problems
- Arguments within extended family on care provided to client
- Manipulates client into paying bills, lending of money
- Resentment, jealousy
- Unrealistic expectations of client
- Someone other than caregivers bringing client for treatment
- Prolonged interval between treatment and injury
- Doctor hopping
- Explanation of injury not feasible
- Other unreported injuries found
- Inconsistent explanation of injury

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- Sudden appearance of previously uncaring relations
- Transfer of property, savings, insurance or wills
- Unexplained cash flow
- Unusual household composition
- Recent family crisis
- Alcohol or drug use by family
- Family has other ill members
- Resentment by caregiver
- Caregiver lacks knowledge of client's condition and needed care
- History of mental illness in family
- Client left alone for extended periods of time
- Excessive payment of care
- Caregiver does not provide needed personal care, withholds food or medication
- Overly frugal
- Client looked away
- Caregiver does not allow visitors
- Family does not interact with client

Adult Protective Services:

Services for persons 18 years and older who are at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation; who are unable to protect their own interests because of ignorance, incompetence or poor health. Any voluntary or court-ordered social, legal, financial, medical, or psychiatric services.

Services are provided without regard to income.

Local Adult Protective Services Provider (by County):

Atlantic:	Atlantic County Division of Intergenerational Services	(888) 426-9243
Bergen:	Bergen County Board of Social Services	(201) 368-4300
Burlington	Burlington County Board of Social Services	(609) 518-4793
Camden	Camden County Board of Social Services	(856) 225-8178
Cape May	Cape May Division on Aging and Disability Services	(609) 886-2784
Cumberland	Resources for Independent Living	(856) 825-0255
Essex	FOCUS, Hispanic Center for Human Dev., Inc.	(866) 903-6287
Gloucester	Gloucester County Division of Social Services	(856) 582-9200
Hudson	Hudson County APS	(201) 537-5631
Hunterdon	Hunterdon County Division of Social Work Services	(908) 788-1300
Mercer	Mercer County Board of Social Services	(609) 989-4346
Middlesex	Family and Children Services	(732) 745-3635

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Morris	Morris County Division of Aging, Disabilities and Community Programming	(973) 326-7282
Ocean	Ocean County Board of Social Services	(732) 349-1500
Passaic	Passaic County Board of Social Services	(973) 881-2616
Salem	Salem County Office of Aging and Disabilities	(856) 339-8622
Somerset	Somerset County Board of Social Services	(908) 526-8800
Sussex	Sussex County Division of Social Services	(973) 383-3600
Union	Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Newark (CCAN)	(908) 497-3902
Warren	Warren County Division of Aging and Disability Services	(908) 475-6591

By law, immunity from a civic suit is granted to any person making a report on a person believed to be in need of protective services.