
Information about:

ELDER ABUSE

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Elder Abuse is the intentional or negligent causing of physical or emotional pain, bodily injury or general harm or preventing an elder from essential services, or the use of elder finances or property to the benefit of another. There are many different types of Elder Abuse including physical, emotional, and/or psychological harm. Elder Abuse can also take the form of financial exploitation. The abuse can happen in the home or in a setting such as a hospital or nursing home.

TYPES OF ELDER ABUSE:

Physical Abuse is inflicting, or threatening to inflict, physical pain or injury on a vulnerable elder, or depriving them of a basic need.

Signs of Physical Abuse:

- Bruises or pressure marks
- Certain types of burns
- Broken Bones or Abrasions
- Repeated unexplained injuries

Sexual Abuse is the infliction of non- consensual contact of any kind.

Signs of Sexual Abuse:

- Stained or bloody undergarments
- Venereal diseases or infections

Emotional or Psychological Abuse is the infliction of mental or emotional anguish or distress on an elder person through verbal or non-verbal acts. Includes threats, harassment and/or humiliation.

Signs of Emotional or Psychological Abuse

- Uncommunicative and unresponsive
- Unreasonably fearful or suspicious
- Lack of interest in social contacts
- Chronic physical or psychiatric health problems
- Evasiveness

Financial or Material Exploitation is the illegal taking, misuse, or concealment of funds, property, or assets of a vulnerable elder. Financial exploitation includes fraud, taking money under false pretenses, forgery, forced property transfers, purchasing expensive items without permission, or denying the older person access to his or her own funds or home.

Signs of Financial Exploitation

- Sudden changes in an elder's bank practices or balances
- Unauthorized withdrawal of elder's funds
- Abrupt changes in elder's will or financial documents

Neglect is the refusal or failure by those responsible to provide food, shelter, health care, or protection for a vulnerable elder.

Signs of Neglect

- Bed sores
- Poor personal hygiene
- Sunken eyes or loss of weight
- Unsanitary or unclean living conditions
- Under or over medicated

Abandonment is the desertion of a vulnerable elder by anyone who has assumed the responsibility for care or custody of that person.

PREVENTING ELDER ABUSE

- Stay aware of elder abuse by taking note of your elderly neighbor's conditions.
Be sure to pay particular attention to the elderly abuse warning signs.
- Report your suspicions to local adult services or law enforcement agency.
- Volunteerism is a great way to ensure elders are well taken care of and are not lonely.
There are many local programs geared toward working with the elderly.
- Look into local programs and support services (i.e. Meals on Wheels). The programs allow elders to defend against abuse by maintaining their independence, health and overall.

New Mexico Aging and Long Term Services Department

www.nmaging.state.nm.us

www.newmexico.gov/other-affected-services/aging-and-long-term-services-department

Help For Seniors from the New Mexico Agency on Aging

www.needhelppayingbills.com/html/new_mexico_agency_on_aging.html

Department of Health Hotline / Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation Reporting

1-800-445-6242

Adult Protective Services

1-866-654-3219