

Elder Abuse, Neglect & Exploitation:

Kris Fredrickson, MSW, LICSW

Senior Clinical Social Worker

Geriatric Research, Education and Clinical Center (GRECC) &

Geriatric Primary Care (GPACT)- Puget Sound VA

206.764.2188,

Kris.Fredrickson@va.gov

ELDER ABUSE DEFINITION

- ▶ “The willful action or inaction that inflicts injury, unreasonable confinement, intimidation, or punishment on a **vulnerable adult...**
- ▶ Abuse includes sexual abuse, mental abuse, physical abuse, and exploitation of a vulnerable adult and improper use of restraint against a vulnerable adult...”

RCW 74.34.020

WHO IS A VULNERABLE ADULT

- ▶ (a) Sixty years of age or older who has the functional, mental, or physical inability to care for themselves; or
- ▶ (b) Found incapacitated under chapter 11.88 RCW; or
- ▶ (c) Who has a developmental disability as defined under 71A.10.020 RCW; or
- ▶ (d) Admitted to any facility; or
- (e) Receiving services from home health, hospice, or home care agencies licensed or required to be licensed under chapter 70.127 RCW; or
- ▶ (f) Receiving services from an individual provider; or
- ▶ (g) Who self-directs his or her own care and receives services from a personal aide under chapter 74.39 RCW.

Types of Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

- ▶ Neglect: Active, Passive and Self
- ▶ Financial Exploitation, Scams, Fraud
- ▶ Physical Abuse, Inappropriate Restraint
- ▶ Psychological Abuse including Trafficking
- ▶ Sexual Abuse
- ▶ Undue Influence: Virtually any act of persuasion that over-comes the free will and judgment of another..., including deceit, isolation, threats, deprivation of sleep or necessities of life, manipulation of medication, withholding information, inducing guilt, creating siege mentality, dependency, fear, fake worlds...”

Quinn, MJ., (2014) Defining undue influence: A look at the issue and at California’s approach. Bifocal-a journal of the commission on law and aging volume: 35 issue: 3, 72-75.

STATS AND FACTS

- ▶ **Prevalence of elder abuse is approximately 10% including all types of abuse, financial exploitation, and neglect.**

Lachs, M., & Pillemer, K. (2015). Elder abuse. *New England journal of medicine*, 373, 1947-56. Doi:10.1056/nejmra1404688

- ▶ **A 2010 study found that 47% of participants with dementia had been mistreated by their caregivers.**

Wiglesworth, a., Mosqueda, L., Mulnard, R., Liao, S., Gibbs, L., & Fitzgerald, W. (2010). Screening for abuse and neglect of people with dementia. *Journal of the American geriatrics society*, 58(3), 493–500. Doi:10.1111/j.1532 5415.2010.02737.X

THERE ALWAYS A LOT MORE GOING ON THAN WE KNOW ABOUT

WA Adult Protective Services (DSSH-APS) reported in article of 6.3.2020 that adult abuse remains a concern during COVID-19 crisis

- ▶ 48,000 reports in 2017
- ▶ 60,000 in 2018
- ▶ 70,000 in 2020

Dshs.wa.gov



RISK FACTORS

- ▶ Female
 - ▶ Physically/ medically disabled
- ▶ Diagnosed with dementia, MH issues, and/or substance abuse
- ▶ Socially isolated/unmarried/divorced
 - ▶ Live with caregiver in their home
 - ▶ History of previous trauma
- ▶ Age

- Acierno R., Hernandez, M.A., Amstadter A.B., Resnick H.S., Steve K., Muzzy W., & Kilpatrick D.G. (2010). Prevalence and correlates of emotional, physical, sexual, and financial abuse and potential neglect in the united states: the national elder mistreatment study. *American Journal of Public Health* 100(2), 292–297. doi: 10.2105/AJPH.2009.163089

Mr. A

- ▶ 92 yo African American, WWII Veteran, 100% SC, widowed 30 years ago
- ▶ Diagnoses-Alzheimer's Disease, Arthritis, and Stage 3 Kidney Disease, Macular Degeneration. History of Falls and uses a Wheelchair.
- ▶ 65 yo, unemployed son lives with him and his adored toy poodle "Killer" and helps with his ADLs and IADLs including money mgmt and cooking
- ▶ Mr. A says he is losing weight because he doesn't eat very much and doesn't like the food son makes.
- ▶ He appears to be unkempt and inappropriately dressed for the weather
- ▶ Church is only held virtually, and he has no computer skills. Senior center is closed, and other family/friends haven't visited.
- ▶ **The son brings him to clinic and wants his pain meds refilled.**

CASE- CAGE

2013 Seattle TIMES

Woman restrains 89 yo mother in cage-like structure boyfriend made.

“We weren’t trying to harm her... Keeping her safe...was an ill-advised attempt to help my parents... to keep the family together...”



CONTRIBUTORS

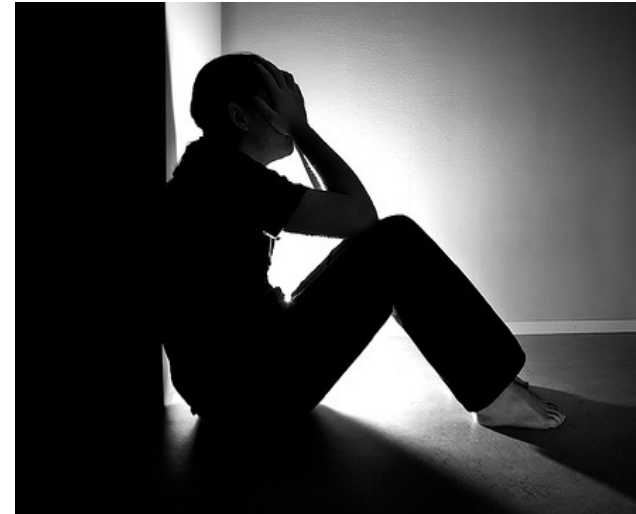


CAREGIVER STRESS

- Inadequate coping skills
- Feeling without help or options
- Dependency in the relationship increases resentment

ENTITLEMENT THINKING PATTERNS

- a desire to exert and maintain power and control over a victim.
- Intergenerational transmission of violence- formerly abused person exerts “payback”



COVID IMPACT

- ▶ **SOCIAL DISTANCING/ ISOLATION-** Less access to family, health care providers, community professionals, community social support structures, long-term care facilities closed or low staffed
- ▶ **VIDEO/PHONE APPOINTMENTS-** Controlled by abusers, less opportunity to reveal abuse, no comprehensive exams
- ▶ **MORE SOCIAL STRESSORS-** Financial issues, employment lost, trauma, less stress management activities
- ▶ **INCREASED TIME WITH LOVED ONES-** Intimate partner violence, interpersonal
- ▶ **STIMULUS CHECKS-** Tempting to exploiters and scammers

Taub, A. (2020, April 6). A new COVID-19 crisis: domestic abuse rises worldwide. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/06/world/coronavirus-domestic-violence.html>

Elman, A et al. (2020). Effects of the COVID-19 outbreak on elder mistreatment and response in New York City, *Journal of Applied Gerontology*. DOI: 10.1177/0733464820924853

Ta, M et al. (2020.) Child & elder maltreatment in king county, WA: March – September 2020. Public health Seattle & King County; assessment, policy development and evaluation unit.

WHAT TO REPORT

“I would like to make a report of abuse...”

- ▶ Name, age, and address of the vulnerable adult
- ▶ Name, address, and phone number of the vulnerable adult’s power of attorney, or legal guardian
- ▶ Name, address, and phone number of the alleged perpetrator
- ▶ Nature and extent of the injury or injuries, neglect, sexual abuse, exploitation
- ▶ Any other information that may be helpful in establishing the cause of the abuse or the identity of the alleged perpetrator (collateral contacts, other caregivers)

***** FOR PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY, ONLY DOCUMENT, DETAILS PERTINENT TO THE ABOVE AND WHAT IS NECESSARY TO INVESTIGATE THE REPORT.**

STEPS TO REPORT

- ▶ **CALL 911 IF IN IMMEDIATE DANGER, WEAPONS, CRIME**

- ▶ **ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES**

NATIONAL 1.866.ENDHARM 1-877-734-6277

https://www.apscentralintake@dshs.wa.gov

Fax: 1-833-866-5590 TTY: 1-833-866-5595

- ▶ **RESIDENTIAL CARE SERVICES- if living in a facility in WA**

1.800.562.6078/fax: 253-815-8173

<https://www.Waombudsman.Org/>

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER APS REPORT?

The vulnerable adult has the right to make his/her choices and has the right to refuse or change their mind and withdraw consent for services

- ▶ assigned to investigator
- ▶ unannounced home visit (pre-COVID)
- ▶ interview other individuals
- ▶ offer protective services
- ▶ law enforcement may be called upon

If “substantiated” APS may:

- ▶ assign a case manager
- ▶ seek emergency resources and ensure safety
- ▶ help get an emergency VAPO
- ▶ refer for legal assistance

WHO ELSE TO CONTACT

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RESOURCES

- ▶ NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE 1.800.799.SAFE (7233) or TTY 1.800.787.3224.
- ▶ DOMESTIC ABUSE WOMEN'S NETWORK (DAWN) 24-HOUR CRISIS HOTLINE: 425.656.7234
- ▶ NEW BEGINNINGS 24-HOUR HELP LINE: 206.522.9472
- ▶ VA INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (IPVAP) :

<https://www.socialwork.va.gov/IPV/Coordinators.asp>

SENIOR RESOURCES

- ▶ **ELDERCARE LOCATOR NATIONAL LINE**
1.800.677.1116
WWW.ELDERCARE.ALC.GOV
- ▶ NATIONAL CENTER ON ELDER ABUSE
HTTP://WWW.NCEA.AOA.GOV
- ▶ LOCAL AREA AGENCY ON AGING

SEXUAL ASSAULT

- ▶ NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT 24-HOUR HOTLINE 1-800-656-4673
- ▶ SEXUAL ASSAULT AND TRAUMATIC STRESS CENTER
206.714.1600/ 206.744.1616 TDD/
206.744.1614 FAX

INTERVENTIONS

- ▶ **Respite-** Temporary rest/“time off”
- ▶ **Powers of Attorney**
- ▶ **Vulnerable Adult Protection Orders (VAPO)**
- ▶ **Guardianship** (WA RCW 11.88.010.)