

Indicators of Financial Abuse

- Older adult is unaware of monthly income and bills and not given access
- Important possessions, documents or credit cards are missing
- Bills are unpaid
- Caregiver refuses to spend the older adult's money on the older adult
- The older adult has given many expensive gifts to the caregiver
- Checks are made out to cash
- Caregiver asks or coerces an older adult to sign a blank check or to give him the ATM card and then misuses or steals the money
- Significant withdrawals from the elder's accounts
- Sudden changes in elder's financial condition
- Suspicious changes in wills, power of attorney, titles, policies
- Addition of names to elder's signature card
- Unnecessary services, goods, or subscriptions
- Important financial documents are forged

For More Information:

Community Education Director
 YWCA of Greater Memphis
 Abused Women's Services
 (901) 458-2550
 eshelley@memphisywca.org

Some of the information within this document was provided by Office of Violence Against Women (OVW) in partnership with National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life (NCALL) and Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC)

Indicators of Healthcare Fraud and Abuse

- Duplicate billings for the same medical service or device
- Evidence of over/under medication
- Evidence of inadequate care when bills are "Paid In Full"
- Problems with the care facility
 - Poorly trained, poorly paid, or insufficient staff
 - Crowding
 - Inadequate responses to questions about care

Environmental Indicators of Abuse

- An unclean or unsanitary living space
- Strong odors of urine and or feces
- Lack of food
- Lack of medication or assistive devices
- Lack of utilities
- Safety issues
- Abused or neglected pets
- Damage to home caused by abusive behavior – broken door frames, holes punched in walls, broken items like phone, etc.
- Infestation of insects or rodents
- House, roof, yard in disrepair
- Evidence of hoarding things

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Victim Indicators of Abuse

- Suddenly withdraws from routine activities
- Is afraid to speak in the presence of the abuser
- Is confined (tied to a piece of furniture or locked in a room)
- Is isolated
- Denies, minimizes, or blames self for what has happened'
- Unexplainable changes in behavior
- Fails to seek out appropriate medical treatment, misses appointments, or changes doctors or hospitals frequently'
- Visits hospital or physician with vague complaints such as anxiety, headaches, or digestive problems
- Provides implausible or inconsistent explanations about what has occurred
- Appears afraid, embarrassed, ashamed, withdrawn, or depressed
- May report that they are being abused, neglected or exploited

What You Can Do To Help

- Watch for warning signs and report abuse and document them
- Take a look at medications. Does amount jive with prescription dates?
- Watch for signs financial abuse
- Call and visit as often as you can and allow the person to confide in you. Help them to not be isolated.
- Offer to stay with the older adult so the caregiver can take a break
- Remind elderly people that they deserve to be treated with respect

Indicators That Someone is An Abuser

- Provides inconsistent and conflicting explanations about the older adult's injuries
- Belittles, threatens, or insults the older adult
- Handles the older adult roughly
- Ignores the older adult's need for assistance or is reluctant to help
- Has a past history of being abusive
- Does not speak to or provide companionship to the older adult and isolates him or her from the outside world, friends or relatives
- Controls and dominates the older adult, is always present when anyone talks with the older adult, speaks for him/her. And is overly protective or defensive
- Portrays self as a victim or only caring person in older adult's life
- May be charming and helpful to outsiders and even victim when others are present
- Abuses the older adult's pets
- Controls and dominates the older adults activities
- Justifies and minimizes own actions

In Tennessee it is the law for anyone who suspects elder abuse in any form to report it. Failure to report is punishable under TCA 71-6-103 (b) as a Class A Misdemeanor.

To report this crime, call Adult Protective Services of the Dept. of Human Services 1-888-277-8366

Indicators of Sexual Abuse

- Infections, pain or bleeding in genital area
- Difficulty walking or sitting
- Torn, stained, and/or bloody clothing, including underwear, bedding, or furnishings
- Bruises to outer arms, chest, mouth, genitals, abdomen, pelvis, or inside of thighs
- Bite marks
- Unexplained STDs or HIV
- Inappropriate remarks from elder such as: "I may be pregnant" or "he makes me do bad things" or "he's my man"

(Sexual Elder Abuse is any unwanted sexual contact or sexual activities such as pornography, nudity, etc. or any intrusive un-prescribed care of the elders genitals)

Indicators of Neglect

- Dehydration or malnutrition
- Presence of untreated bedsores
- Under/over medicating
- Leaving an older adult in feces, urine
- Failure to follow recommended turning procedures for older adults who are bedridden
- Poor hygiene
- Unexplained changes in weight
- Inappropriate clothing for conditions
- Dirty or unused bathroom or kitchen
- Broken, or absence of needed medical equipment such as eyeglasses, hearing aids, walkers, wheelchairs
- Unsafe living conditions

Indicators of Physical Abuse

- Unexplained bruises, welts, black eyes, lacerations - especially as they appear symmetrically on two sides of the body
- Open wounds, cuts, punctures, untreated injuries, burn marks
- Injuries in various stages of healing
- Patterned injuries such as finger marks or blunt objects
- Injuries in locations NOT normally associated with accidents such as inside of legs, scalp, around throat, face, soles of feet, inside mouth, behind ears, on the trunk, genitalia, buttocks
- Dismissive remarks about injuries
- Broken bones, sprains, dislocations
- Refusal to go to the same emergency room or doctor for injuries
- Report of drug overdose or apparent failure to take medication
- Broken eyeglasses or frames
- Signs of being restrained such as marks on wrists
- Caregivers refusal to let anyone see the elder alone
- Skull Fractures
- Unexplained changes in behavior
- Appears afraid when a specific person or persons are around

In Tennessee:

- ❖ **Only 1 in 23 cases is reported.**
- ❖ **More than 2/3's of elder abuse perpetrators are family members**



What Is Elder Abuse?

- Infliction of physical, emotional, psychological or sexual harm on an older adult
- Neglect by a caregiver or family member
- Self-neglect
- Confinement and Restraint
- Financial Exploitation
- Stalking
- Healthcare fraud and abuse
- Internet and Telephone Fraud
- Other types of fraud such as construction, landscaping, real estate, etc.

Community Resources

- Adult Protective Services** 888-277-8366
- Aging Commission** 901-576-6600
- YWCA**
Women's Shelter & Crisis Line 901-725-4277
- Family Services of the Mid-South**
"Fighting Back for Seniors" 901-271-5472
- MIFA Long Term Care Ombudsman**
Abuse in Facilities 901-527-0208
- Memphis Sexual Assault Resource Center**
901-272-2020
- YWCA Immigrant Women's Program**
Abuse of Immigrant Women 901-458-2550
Shelter & Crisis Line 901-725-4277

A vertical banner with a black background. At the top, the YWCA logo is displayed in orange and white, with the tagline "eliminating racism empowering women". Below the logo, the text "Abused Women's Services" is written in white. A large, bold, white text "ELDER ABUSE" is centered in a grey horizontal band. Below this band is a black and white photograph of an elderly woman with her arms crossed. At the bottom, the text "For More Information Call:" is written in white, followed by the phone number "458-2550" in large, bold, orange digits.