



Recognizing and Reporting **Abuse and Neglect**

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completing this module, you will be able to:

- Describe different **types** of abuse and neglect
- Identify **signs** of abuse and neglect
- Discuss the importance and steps necessary to **report** suspected abuse and neglect



ABUSE AND NEGLECT

While abuse and neglect are issues that everyone should be concerned about, there are certain professions where reporting suspected abuse and neglect are **required by law**.

This group includes [healthcare workers](#), firefighters, police officers, EMTs, teachers, clergy, etc.



WHAT IS ABUSE?

- Abuse, in context for this education, is **the physical, psychological, financial and/or sexual maltreatment of a person.**
- Abuse occurs in all cultural, socioeconomic, ethnic, and occupational groups.
- These can be inflicted on groups such as the elderly, children, and/or domestic partners.
- Abuse/Neglect of patients can be inflicted by:
 - family and significant others
 - caregivers
 - healthcare workers (staff to patient abuse)
 - other patients/residents (patient to patient abuse)



TYPES OF ABUSE

There are several types of **abuse**, and oftentimes **more than one type** is inflicted on a victim

Neglect

Physical Abuse

Psychological/
Emotional Abuse

Sexual Abuse

Financial Abuse



NEGLECT

- Neglect is a form of abuse.
- Neglect is described as **the failure to obtain or provide for a person's needs** as defined by law/regulation or by an individual's plan.
- There are two types of neglect: Physical and emotional.
 - **Physical neglect** is the refusal or failure to fulfill the physical needs of a person.
 - **Emotional neglect** is the emotional or social isolation or ignoring of a person.



WARNING SIGNS OF NEGLECT

- Consistently dirty
- Untreated injuries in various stages of healing
- Old, torn, or inadequate clothing
- Lice or other parasitic infections
- Malnutrition and/or dehydration
- Unattended medical or dental needs, including hearing, dental, and/or vision needs
- Consistent lack of supervision, alone for long periods at a time, isolation and/or loneliness
- Victim states there is no one home to provide care
- Beggars for or steals money or food

PHYSICAL ABUSE

- Physical abuse is **the intentional act of using physical force that causes or may cause bodily injury or pain.**
- Examples of physical abuse include:
 - pushing/shoving
 - striking with a hand or object
 - shaking, slapping, punching
 - kicking
 - burning
 - handling roughly
 - physical restraint
 - force feeding
 - inappropriate drug use used as chemical restraint
 - physical disfigurement
 - death

WARNING SIGNS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE

- Bruises in different stages of healing and in areas that are likely to be grabbed, such as wrists, shoulders, arms, etc.
- Black eyes, broken eyeglasses/frames
- Lacerations in different stages of healing
- Dislocations
- Internal injuries/bleeding
- Welts
- Rope/restraint marks
- Imprints – hands, belt buckles, etc.
- Burns – cigarette, iron, immersion, etc.
- Lethargy, overdose

PSYCHOLOGICAL/EMOTIONAL ABUSE

- Psychological/emotional abuse is **the infliction of anguish, pain, or distress through verbal and non-verbal acts.**
- Oftentimes, this accompanies physical abuse or neglect, but can also occur by itself.
- Examples of psychological/emotional abuse include:
 - verbal assaults
 - name calling
 - insults
 - threats
 - harassment
 - intimidation
 - humiliation



WARNING SIGNS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL/ EMOTIONAL ABUSE

- **Without justifiable explanation**, requires an assessment if victim appears:
 - withdrawn
 - fearful
 - upset
 - agitated
 - depressed
 - demoralized
 - loss in interest, environment, or previously enjoyed activities
 - self-blaming

SEXUAL ABUSE

- Sexual abuse is defined as **non-consensual sex contact**. This includes people who are **unable to give consent**.
- Examples include:
 - rape
 - incest
 - molestation
 - exploitation
 - harassment
 - inappropriate or unwanted touching
 - pornographic or obscene photography or filming



WARNING SIGNS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

- Bruises in different stages of healing around breast or genital area
- Unexplained genital or venereal diseases or pregnancy
- Unexplained genital or anal bleeding
- Torn or bloody underclothing
- Difficulty walking or sitting
- Bedwetting
- Nightmares



FINANCIAL ABUSE

- **Intentional act resulting in loss or misuse of an individual's money or personal property.**
- Financial exploitation is a **criminal offense.**
- Examples of financial abuse include:
 - requiring a victim to pay for a service that is normally provided
 - requiring a victim to pay for items used by several individuals
 - misrepresentation
 - coercion
 - theft
 - withholding money
 - refusing to allow a victim access to their funds/accounts
 - misuse of a victim's money
 - cashing checks or writing checks without consent or authorization

WARNING SIGNS OF FINANCIAL ABUSE

- Victim does not understand why funds are insufficient or property is missing
- Victim has inaccurate knowledge of finances. “My sister handles all that for me.”
- Unexplained or sudden inability to pay bills, purchase food, etc.
- Fear or anxiety when discussing finances
- Extraordinary interest by caregiver in the victim’s assets



REPORTING ABUSE

- Self-reports of abuse should never be dismissed or ignored.
- Ensure individual's immediate safety and well-being.
- All allegations of abuse are reportable.
- Allegations can come from victims or other eyewitnesses.
- Allegations can't always be proven but **must be reported.**

REPORTING ABUSE

- Law requires report to be made as soon as possible when there is a “reason to believe.”
- Does not require the reporter to have conclusive proof.
- Does not require proof beyond reasonable doubt.
- Information must be such that a reasonable person would rely upon it, including hearsay.
- Law enforcement must keep the identity of the reporter confidential.
- May share the name of the reporter with each other to further their investigations.
- Reporter may also be required to testify.



REFERENCES/ATTACHMENTS

- Adult Protective Services Healthcare. (2013, December). Abuse: Recognizing and Reporting. In *Health Care Quality Unit Adult Protective Services Healthcare*. Retrieved June 16, 2014, from <http://www.hcqa.apshealthcare.com/content/overview/Abuse-Recog%20and%20Rpt%20PPT%20Dec13.pdf>
- Growing Up With Us. (2004). *Grown Up: A Newsletter for Those Who Care for Adolescents, Adults and Aging Adults* (9th ed., Vol 9). In M. M. Dunlap & . (Eds.), *Editor-in-Chief* (pp. 1-2). Durham, NC: Growing Up With Us Inc.
- <https://humanservices.hawaii.gov/ssd/files/2015/10/Guidelines-for-Mandated-Reporters.pdf>
- [Statutory Reporting of Abuse or Neglect of Vulnerable Adult Policy #6626-07-02](#)
- [Statutory Reporting of Child Abuse or Neglect Policy #6226-07-01](#)

REPORTING ABUSE POLICY

Read and review the Kaiser Hawaii policies on reporting child abuse and adult abuse.

- Any employee not in the capacity of manager, or supervisor, who knows or has reason to believe that a person has been abused or suspects substantial risk exists that abuse or neglect may occur in the reasonably foreseeable future, shall provide an oral report to their chief, manager, or supervisor immediately.
- Any manager or supervisor who becomes aware of an unreported case of abuse or suspected abuse of a person, either through direct patient contact or oral report, shall investigate and assess the matter immediately.
- If abuse or neglect or suspected abuse or neglect is determined, then the chief, manager, or supervisor shall immediately orally report the matter to the Department of Human Services (DHS) or to the police department.
- In addition, the chief, manager, or supervisor shall notify the Social Services Department in order to initiate the involvement of a social worker.
- A written report shall be prepared for submission to the DHS or the DHS investigator as soon as possible.
- Immunity from civil and criminal liability is provided to those persons who in good faith make a report in accordance with the statute.