

What is abuse, neglect and exploitation?

For information, support or to make a report, contact the **NSW Ageing and Disability Abuse Helpline on 1800 628 221 (M-F 9-5)**.



FINANCIAL ABUSE

- Threatening or coercion in signing documents such as assets or wills.
- Taking control of the adult's finances against their wishes and denying access to their own money.
- Abusing Power of Attorney.
- Stealing goods such as jewellery, credit cards, cash, food, and other possessions.
- Unauthorised use of banking and financial documents.



Look out for unexplained inability to pay bills, significant bank withdrawals and/or changes to wills, inability of the person to access bank accounts or statements or stockpiling of unpaid bills or an empty fridge

PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE

- Pressuring, intimidating bullying, name calling, and verbal abuse.
- Treating the adult person like a child.
- Threatening to harm the person, other people or pets.
- Threatening to withdraw access to grandchildren, family, friends, services, telephone or placement in a care facility.
- Preventing a person from engaging in religious or cultural practices.
- Moving the person far away family or friends.



Look out for depression, agitation, feelings of helplessness, unexplained paranoia or excessive fear, disrupted appetite or sleep patterns, unusual passivity or anger, sadness or grief at the loss of interactions with others, worry or anxiety after a visit by specific persons.

PHYSICAL ABUSE

- Pushing, shoving, or rough handling.
- Kicking, hitting, punching, slapping, biting, and/or burning.
- Restraining: physical or medical.
- Locking the person in a room or home or tying to a chair or bed.
- Intentional injury with a weapon or object.
- Overuse or misuse of medications.



Look out for evidence of hitting, punching, shaking, pulling in the form of bruises, lacerations, choke marks, hair loss or welts, sprains, dislocations and fractures, pressure sores, pain on touching, broken or healing bones, lacerations to mouth, lips, gums, eyes or ears, missing teeth and/or eye injuries.

This information sheet is a guide to some common examples of abuse, neglect and exploitation. Any concerns about the immediate safety of an older person or adult with disability should be reported to emergency services (000).

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SEXUAL ABUSE

- Non-consensual sexual contact, language or exploitative behaviour.
- Rape and sexual assault.
- Cleaning or treating the person's genital area roughly or inappropriately.
- Enforced nudity of the person against their consent.



Look out for unexplained STI's or incontinence (bladder or bowel), injury and trauma such as scratches, bruises to the face, neck, chest, abdomen, thighs or buttocks, trauma including bleeding around the genitals, chest, rectum or mouth, torn or bloody underclothing or bedding, anxiety around a person and other psychological symptoms.

NEGLECT

- Failure to provide basic needs such as food, adequate or clean clothing, heating, medicines.
- Under or over medicating.
- Exposure to danger or lack of supervision, such as leaving the person in an unsafe place or in isolation.
- An overly attentive carer in the company of others.
- Refusal to permit others to provide appropriate care.



Look out for inadequate clothing, complaints of being cold or too hot, poor personal hygiene, unkempt appearance, lack of medical or dental care, or injuries that have not been properly cared for, absence of required aids, exposure to unsafe, unhealthy, and /or unsanitary conditions, unexplained weight loss, dehydration, poor skin integrity.

EXPLOITATION

- The most common type of exploitation is financial. This means someone takes money, assets or allowances from a vulnerable person for their own use and without permission.
- Exploitation can also be someone who sells, transfers or changes property titles without the property owner knowing.



Look out for unexplained selling or leasing of a persons house without a clear explanation, inability of the person to access bank accounts or statements or stockpiling of unpaid bills or an empty fridge