

Elder Abuse

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Elder Abuse

- ▶ Physical Abuse
 - ▶ Sexual Abuse
 - ▶ Neglect
 - ▶ Exploitation
 - ▶ Emotional Abuse
 - ▶ Abandonment
 - ▶ Self-neglect
- ▶ Elderly Abuse is a violation of human rights and a significant cause of illness, injury, loss of productivity, isolation and despair – (World Health Organization)

Size of the Problem

- ▶ The most recent major studies on incidence reported that 7.6%–10% of study participants experienced abuse in the prior year.^{1,2}

1. Lifespan of Greater Rochester, Inc., Weill Cornell Medical Center of Cornell University, & New York City Department for the Aging. (2011) Under the Radar: New York State Elder Abuse Prevalence Study. New York: Author.

2. Acierno R, Hernandez MA, Amstadter AB, Resnick HS, Steve K, Muzzy W, et al. (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

Why

- ▶ **Dementia and Cognitive Impairment**
Elders with dementia are thought to be at greater risk of abuse and neglect than those of the general elderly population.
- ▶ **Domestic Violence Grown Old**
It is important to acknowledge that spouses make up a large percentage of elder abusers, and that a substantial proportion of these cases are domestic violence grown old
- ▶ **Personal Problems of Abusers**
Particularly in the case of adult children, abusers often are dependent on their victims for financial assistance, housing, and other forms of support.
- ▶ **Living with Others and Social Isolation**
Both living with someone else and being socially isolated have been associated with higher elder abuse rates

- Elder abuse can happen to anyone – a loved one, a neighbor, and when we are old enough, it can even happen to us.
- Elder abuse affects seniors across all socio-economic groups, cultures, and races.
- Elder abuse can occur anywhere: – in a person’s own home in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and other institutional settings, in hospitals.
- Based on available information, women and “older” elders (80 years old and older) are more likely to be victimized, and mistreatment is most often perpetrated by the victim’s own family members.

▶ Administration on Aging– Prevention of Elder Abuse

http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/AoA_Programs/Elder_Rights/EA_Prevention/index.aspx

▶ National Center on Elder Abuse

<http://www.ncea.aoa.gov/>



When should a PT/Patient advocate access to these services?

- ▶ Bruises, pressure marks, broken bones, abrasions, and burns may be an indication of physical abuse, neglect, or mistreatment.
- ▶ Unexplained withdrawal from normal activities, a sudden change in alertness, and unusual depression may be indicators of emotional abuse.
- ▶ Bruises around the breasts or genital area can occur from sexual abuse.
- ▶ Sudden changes in financial situations may be the result of exploitation.
- ▶ Bedsores, unattended medical needs, poor hygiene, and unusual weight loss are indicators of possible neglect.
- ▶ Behavior such as belittling, threats, and other uses of power and control by spouses are indicators of verbal or emotional abuse.
- ▶ Strained or tense relationships, frequent arguments between the caregiver and elderly person are also signs

Reporting...

- ▶ If the danger is not immediate, but you suspect that abuse has occurred or is occurring, please tell someone. To report elder abuse, contact the Adult Protective Services (APS) agency in the state where the elder resides. You can find the APS reporting number for each state by:

http://www.ncea.aoa.gov/Stop_Abuse/Get_Help/Report/index.aspx

Virginia State Resources

Training for PT and health care staff

- ▶ National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA) provides
 - Videos
 - Training curriculum

<http://www.ncea.aoa.gov/Training/Tools/Video/index.aspx>

Patient/Consumer Information

Awareness Information Through NCEA

- How to Answer Those Tough Questions about Elder Abuse
http://www.ncea.aoa.gov/Resources/Publication/docs/ToughQuestions_2012.pdf
- Red Flags of Abuse
http://www.ncea.aoa.gov/Resources/Publication/docs/NCEA_RedFlags_web508.pdf
- Protect Yourself From Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation
http://www.ncea.aoa.gov/Resources/Publication/docs/NCEA_ProtectYourself_web508.pdf
- 11 Things that Anyone Can Do to Prevent Elder Abuse
http://www.ncea.aoa.gov/Resources/Publication/docs/NCEA_11things_web.pdf
- Nursing Home Compare
<http://www.medicare.gov/NursingHomeCompare/search.aspx?bhcp=1>

*Post your local department of social services number at your clinic – Virginia 1-888-832-3858

PT

- ▶ **Background and Purpose:** It is estimated that only 1 in 5 cases of elder abuse is reported. Physical therapists (PTs) should recognize elder abuse and how to report it. The purpose of this study was to determine the knowledge that PTs possess in 3 areas of abuse management: recognition of signs/symptoms of physical abuse, awareness of state mandatory reporting laws, and knowledge of facility protocols for reporting abuse.
- ▶ **Method:** A survey was distributed to 400 randomly chosen licensed PTs who reside in one county in Michigan; 137 surveys were completed for a 36% return rate with 31% being usable. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and independent t-tests.
- ▶ **Results:** Facility training was a significant factor in the knowledge of the mandatory reporting law. Facility training showed a trend towards improving the knowledge level of the signs and symptoms of abuse. Twenty five percent of respondents had suspected abuse of one of their patients, however, over half failed to report their suspicions.
- ▶ **Conclusions:** This study identified a lack of knowledge in recognition and management of elder abuse. Although required by law, all therapists that suspected abuse did not report their suspicions to proper legal authorities. Continued professional education and research in this area is needed.

Journal of Geriatric Physical Therapy (2004)
*Trained Elderly Abuse Clinic

Questions...



http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mAuk-r_s0EM