



# ELDER ABUSE

## Nursing Home Abuse and Neglect





# Overview

- Nursing Home Regulations
- Prevalence of Nursing Home Abuse/Neglect
- Types of Abuse/Neglect
- Examples of Abuse/Neglect
- Signs of Abuse/Neglect
- Reasons Abuse/Neglect Occurs
- Courses of Action



# Nursing Home Regulations

- Federal Nursing Home Regulations
  - “the resident has the right to be free from verbal, sexual, physical, and mental abuse, corporal punishment, and involuntary seclusion.”
  - Abuse - an intentional infliction of injury, unreasonable confinement, intimidation, care/ service deprivation or punishment that results in physical harm, pain or mental anguish
  - Neglect - a failure, intentional or not, to provide a person with the care and services necessary to ensure freedom from harm or pain; a failure to react to a potentially dangerous situation resulting in resident harm or anxiety

# Prevalence of Abuse/Neglect

- National Center on Elder Abuse

- 3.2 millions residents reside in Nursing Homes (2008)
- 6 out of 7 are over 65 (2008)
- 1 out of 3 Nursing Homes were cited for violation of physical harm or potential to cause harm (1999-2001)
- A 2000 study of Nursing Home residents stated that 44% reported abuse and 95% reported neglect
- This same study reported that over 50% of the staff admitted to mistreating older patients
- It is estimated that only 1 in 14 cases of abuse or neglect is reported
- 1 out of every 10 residents experiences abuse or neglect
- Over 90% of the Nursing Homes have been cited for at least one deficiency



# Types of Abuse or Neglect

- Mental
- Physical
- Nursing Home Environment
- Financial Abuse





# Mental Abuse Examples

- Fear, Agitation and/or Hesitancy
- Depression and/or Withdrawal
- Sudden Behavior Changes
- Unusual Behavior Patterns
- Unwillingness to Communicate
- Disorientation and/or Confusion
- Unjustified Isolation
- Rude, Humiliating and/or Derogatory Comments by Staff
- Specific Complaints by Residents





# Physical Abuse Examples

- Wounds, Cuts, Abrasions
- Burns, Bruises, Welts, Swelling
- Broken Bones
- Sudden, Inexplicable Weight Loss
- Unexplained/Hidden Injuries
- Unwarranted Restraints
  - Physical or Chemical
- Specific Complaints by Residents





## Nursing Home Environment Examples

- Presence of Bed Sores
- Unsanitary Conditions
- Malnutrition
- Dehydration
- Smells of Urine and/or Feces
- Unkempt Appearance
- Poor Personal Hygiene
- Untreated Medical Condition
- Specific Complaints by Residents







# Financial Abuse Examples

- Sudden or Unjustified Selling of Property
- Missing or Stolen Money or Property
- Radical Changes in Handling Financial Affairs





## Recognizable Signs of Abuse

- Unexplained Bruises, Cuts, Burns, Sprains, or Fractures in Various Stages of Healing
- Bedsores or Frozen Joints
- Unexplained Venereal Disease or Genital Infections
- Vaginal or Anal Bleeding
- Torn, Stained, or Bloody Underclothing
- Sudden Changes in Behavior





## Warning Signs (continued)

- Staff Refusing to Allow Visitors to see Resident
- Delays in Allowing Visitors to see Residents
- Staff Not Allowing Resident to be Alone with Visitor
- Resident Being Kept in Over-Medicated State
- Loss of Resident's Possessions
- Abrupt Changes in Will or Finances





# Reasons Abuse/Neglect Occurs

- 91% of all Nursing Homes are understaffed. Ratio is 1:15 to 1:30 (recommended - 1:3).
- Nursing Aide turnover is 71%. The average hourly rate is \$8 an hour.
- 1/3 of all Nursing Home Residents are on antipsychotic medications.
- No background checks are required. 92% employ at least on convict.
- Budget cuts have led to Nursing Home owners skimping or cutting corners.
- Many Nursing Home Residents are unwilling or unable to complain. Over 50% don't have family/friends to check on them.





# Courses of Action

- Register your concerns with management
  - It is important to remember that signs of abuse or neglect don't always = abuse or neglect
- Report the suspected abuse or neglect to the appropriate local and state agency
  - Elder Abuse Hotline
  - Alabama Department of Senior Services
  - National Center on Elder Abuse
- Seek Legal Advice

