



# Elder Abuse

## *Introduction: Diane Menio*



# Elder Abuse a Local Perspective

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- Mission
  - To improve the lives, well-being and autonomy of older persons through advocacy, education, and action
- Individual and systemic advocacy
  - CARIE LINE
  - Ombudsman
  - Health Care Fraud
  - Elderly victim assistance
  - Legislation and policy advocacy
  - Education and training programs for professionals and the community

# What is Elder abuse?

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The “willful infliction of injury, unreasonable confinement, intimidation or cruel punishment with resulting physical harm or pain or mental anguish, or the willful deprivation by a caretaker of goods or services which are necessary to avoid physical harm, mental anguish or mental illness.”

(1985 **Elder Abuse** Prevention, Identification & Treatment Act)

# So you have to WANT to hurt someone?

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Not exactly.....Abuse is not commonly “pre-meditated”, but doing something in “the heat of the moment” does not make it okay and it **does** constitute abuse!

# Since the most common type of elder abuse is neglect.....

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- The most common abuser is the overwhelmed or the impaired abuser.
- This is another “hot topic” because often we “don’t want to get someone in trouble that is trying to do good”
- We cannot lose sight of the elder person that is suffering.

# Incidence of Elder Abuse

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- Every five seconds, an elderly person is abused.
- California accounts for 10.6% of all elder abuse cases in the U.S.
- Alaska has the fewest number of cases in the U.S. at approximately 8,900 cases per year.
- Just five states account for over 1/3 of all elder abuse cases in the U.S.
- California, Florida, New York, Texas and Pennsylvania have the most cases of elder abuse annually.

- Feb. 15. 2010 Elder Abuse Daily

# Describing Elder Abuse

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- Elder abuse is the physical, emotional, financial or sexual mistreatment or neglect of older adults.
- 6 million: Cases of elder abuse each year
- 35%: percentage of older women more likely to be abused than men
- 33%: of alleged perpetrators were adult children
- 22%: of alleged perpetrators were other family members; 11% were spouses/partners
- 16%: of alleged perpetrators were strangers

Source: 2004 NCEA study



# Elder Abuse is Often Unrecognized

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- Communication deficits:
  - *Individual is unable to tell you what he/she needs*
- Physical impairments:
  - *Makes the individual more dependent*
- Cognitive and social impairment:
  - *Elder is a loner, passive, confused, combative, disruptive*
- Cultural biases promote paternalism and ageism
  - Interfere with recognition and intervention*

# Broad Spectrum of Abusive Behavior and Mistreatment

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- Physical
- Psychological
- Sexual
- Financial exploitation
- Neglect
  - Active
  - Passive
- Self-neglect

# Characteristics That Put Someone At Risk of Abuse

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- Behavioral problems:
  - *manipulative, repetitive, aggressive, abusive*
- Communication deficits:
  - *Individual is unable to tell you what he/she needs*
- Physical impairments:
  - *makes the individual more dependent*
- Cognitive and social impairment:
  - *elder is a loner, passive, confused, combative, disruptive*

# Reporting Elder Abuse

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- If a PACE organization *suspects an incident of elder abuse, it must notify the appropriate State agency with oversight for elder affairs.* – from PACE Level II Reporting guidance
- Abuse can be perpetrated by a family member, or other informal caregiver or a staff person.
- Be aware of reporting requirements in your state – your policy should include your responsibilities as a PACE provider plus your requirements as a long-term care provider in your state.

# Elder Abuse in PA

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- The total number of reports of need for protective services in fiscal year 2010 totaled 15,647, of these:
  - 73% (11,461) were determined to be appropriate for investigation
  - Of the investigations conducted, 3,930 (34%) of the cases were substantiated as needing protective services

PA 2009-2010 Protective Services Annual Report

# Characteristics of victims and alleged perpetrators in PA

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## Victims

- Elder abuse is most concentrated among the very old. The age group most often found to need protective services (54%) is over the age of 81. Additionally, the majority of older adults found to need protective services are Caucasian (78%) and are female (66%).

## Alleged Perpetrators

- Data reveals that 61% of perpetrators were 30-59 years of age. The distribution of perpetrators by sex reveals that the majority are female (62%). Pennsylvania's data is similar to national data in that the largest group of abusers is that of female caregivers.

PA 2009-2010 Protective Services Annual Report

# Mandatory Reporting in PA

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- Act 13 passed in 1997 provides for the reporting by employees and administrators of 'facilities' that provide care for care dependent persons over 60
- Each year reports increase, from FY '09 to FY '10 reports increased 24% from 431 to 535 cases
- Most reports are from Nursing Homes (67%) followed by Personal Care Homes (16%) and then Home Care (3%)
- Reports from Adult Daily Living Programs accounted for a little more than 2% of reports (in PA, PACE programs are licensed as ADL)

# Contact Information

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