



CMS 2012 Tri-Regional PACE CONFERENCE

Programs of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly

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TRANSCRIPT

Elder Abuse Overview

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Good morning, everyone. Can you hear me? Great.

Today we wanted to provide you with a high-level overview of elder abuse. Unfortunately, each year thousands of people are abused, neglected and exploited. Many victims are people who are older and frail and vulnerable and cannot help themselves and depend on others to meet their most basic needs. The National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA), which is directed by the US Administration on Aging, is committed to helping national, state and local partners in the field be fully prepared to ensure that older Americans will live with dignity, integrity, independence and without abuse, neglect and exploitation.

The NCEA is a resource for policy makers, as well as Social Services and health care practitioners, the Justice System, advocates and family. As we know, the PACE participants are at risk in all settings, whether in the community, nursing home, or assisted living facility. We also know that PACE providers are responsible for the care of the PACE participant 24/7. So as we all know with the PACE model, given the nature of that, that we have shared partnerships with the PACE organizations, the state-administering agencies and CMS. So that collaborative partnership will help reduce elder abuse.

So how is elder abuse mistreatment defined? The federal definition of elder abuse, neglect and exploitation appeared for the first time in the 1987 Amendment to the Older American Act. These definitions were provided in law as guidelines for identifying the problems and not for enforcement purposes -- so in general terms, elder abuse referring to knowing, intentional or neglectful act by a caregiver or any other person that causes harm and serious risk to the older folks.

All 50 states have passed some form of elder abuse laws, and these laws are broadly defined and do vary from state to state. What are the types? There's physical abuse, sexual, exploitation, emotional, abandonment and self-neglect. Since these are broad definitions, there's basic categories that have been identified. For example, domestic elder abuse, and that is maltreatment of an older person by someone who has a special relationship with the elder. There's also institutional abuse, which generally refers to the residential -- occurs in a residential facility for older persons, such as a nursing home or a skilled assisted living facility. The perpetrators of institutional abuse usually are persons who have a contractual obligation to care for the older folks. And that is staff, or providers would be in that category.

It's very unfortunate that elder abuse is a growing problem. But through collaborative efforts with the federal, state and local agencies, we can help reduce the spread of abuse. We are honored today to have the esteemed Andrew Penn, a Trial Attorney from the United States Department of Justice, who will be sharing with us his work on elder abuse from the perspective of nursing homes.

And we thank you and are honored to have you.